

**Annual Reports
of
Government Departments
2011**

**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MALTA**

Annual Reports of Government Departments 2011

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CONTENTS

	Page
House of Representatives	2
Electoral Office	44
Office of the Prime Minister	
Armed Forces of Malta	49
Public Administration HR Office	60
Centre for Development, Research and Training	80
Management Efficiency Unit	93
Defence Matters Directorate	98
Planning and Priorities Co-ordination Division	104
Funds and Programmes Division	109
Corporate Services Directorate	115
Information Management Unit	119
Operations and Programme Implementation Directorate	125
Department of Information	131
Government Printing Press	135
Department for Local Government	138
Department of Industrial & Employment Relations	145
Tourism Directorate	151
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	
Directorate General - Economic and European Affairs	154
External Relations & Mediterranean Affairs Directorate	164
Multilateral & Global Issues Directorate	170
Department for Citizenship & Expatriate Affairs	172
Financial Management Directorate	182
Protocol and Consular Services Directorate	185
Information Management Unit	192
Central Visa Unit	194
Ministry for Gozo	
Directorate General (Operations)	197
Corporate Services Directorate	203
Projects & Development Directorate	207
Customer Services Directorate	218
Directorate General (Strategy & Support)	246
Eco-Gozo Regional Development Directorate	249
EU Affairs Directorate	254
Tourism and Economic Development Directorate	255
Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications	
Permanent Secretariat	259
Corporate Services Directorate	262
Information Management Unit	265
Programme Implementation Directorate	269
EU Affairs Directorate	272
Policy Development Directorate	275
Land & Public Registry	278
Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs	
Information Management Unit	285
Programme Implementation Directorate	287
People Management and Support Services Directorate	290
Financial Management Directorate	295
EU Affairs Directorate	301
Paying Agency	311
Rural Development and Aquaculture Department:	
Agriculture Directorate	325
Animal Welfare, Promotion & Services Directorate	333
Promotion and Information Directorate	335
Wholesale Markets and Fishing Fleet Facilities Directorate	338
Parks and Initiatives Directorate	346
Malta Aquaculture Research Centre	352

Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation Department:	
Veterinary Regulation Directorate	355
Fisheries Control Directorate	376
Plant Health Directorate	391
Project Design & Implementation Department:	
Office of the Director General	401
Project Design & Engineering Directorate	404
Restoration Directorate	422
Projects Implementation Directorate	424
Cleansing & Maintenance Department:	
Office of the Director General	426
Manufacturing & Services Directorate	432
Cleansing Directorate	439
Maintenance Directorate	444
Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family	
Office of the Permanent Secretary	449
Corporate Services Directorate	453
Information Management Unit	460
Policy Development & EU Affairs Directorate	463
Programme Implementation (Social Affairs) Directorate	470
Department of Social Security: Office of the Director General	476
Benefit Fraud and Investigation Department	490
Human Resources Directorate (Social Policy)	492
Social Welfare Standards Department	494
Directorate for Educational Services	505
Department for Student Services	526
Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education:	562
Department for Curriculum Management & eLearning	563
Quality Assurance Department	593
Research and Development Department	609
Directorate for Lifelong Learning	615
Examinations Department	628
Libraries Department	635
Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment	
Corporate Services Directorate	648
EU Affairs Directorate	650
Programme Implementation Directorate	651
EU Paying Authority	656
Policy Development Directorate	661
Enterprise Policy Directorate	665
Information Management Unit	668
Financial Policy & Management Division	673
Strategy and Operations Support Directorate	682
Department of Contracts	685
Value Added Tax Department	689
Inland Revenue Department	694
Customs Department	701
Treasury Department	719
Economic Policy Department	733
Commerce Department	743
Office of the Notary to Government	749
Government Property Department:	
Directorate General	752
Finance and Administration Directorate	754
Estate Management Directorate	756
Joint Office	759
Land Directorate	762
Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs	
Attorney General's Agency	766
Police Department	774
Directorate General (Strategy & Support)	848
Third Country Nationals Unit	851
EU Affairs Directorate	855
Programme Implementation Directorate	857
Policy Development Directorate	860
Information Management Unit	863
Office of the Refugee Commissioner	867

Information and Data Protection Commissioner	870
Airport Security	872
Detention Services	875
Courts of Justice Department	877
Department of Probation Services	900
Civil Protection Department	903
Department of Correctional Services	906
Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care	
Office of the Permanent Secretary	912
Superintendence of Public Health	927
Department of Health	965
Financial Management and Control Division	1077

House of Representatives

House of Representatives

HOUSE BUSINESS

Overview

In 2011, the House met 140 times in plenary to pass 27 Acts of Parliament, as well as to discuss various motions presented, including 13 private Member's motions, one of which was a private Member's bill proposing the amendment of the Civil Code to permit the introduction of divorce legislation. On 83 occasions, the House availed itself of the half-hour adjournment time at the end of the parliamentary sitting, equally divided between Government and Opposition Members.

In addition, 142 meetings of standing and select committees were held throughout the year discussing a range of issues as described in Sections 2 and 3 of this report, including 40 meetings of the Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills.

In 2011, the House received 85 motions including 29 motions for First Reading.

Fourteen Ministerial Statements were delivered to the House as shown in Section 1.4 of this report.

Fourteen rulings from the Chair were delivered relating to the procedures in the House and its Committees, as well as Rulings on alleged breaches of privilege. The use of the casting vote by the Chair was required on one occasion. Details of these Rulings can be found in this report.

8,926 parliamentary questions requiring an oral reply were raised and answered, whereas 182 requiring a written reply were submitted and answered in 2011.

2,848 documents were laid on the Table of the House, 524 of which were legal notices.

Six petitions were presented, whereas 52 divisions were taken, including divisions at the various stages of the parliamentary legislative process.

The website of the House of Representatives www.parlament.mt received a monthly average of 8,750 hits.

Through the scrutiny exercise of pipeline *acquis* legislative proposals issued by the European Commission, the Standing Committee for Foreign and European Affairs examined 191 proposals, 10 of which were retained for requests for further information from the Government.

In 2011, Parliament twice made use of the powers vested in national parliaments through the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty to transmit a reasoned opinion to the President of the European Parliament, of the Council and of the European Commission, when it finds reasons to believe that a legislative proposal is in breach of the principle of subsidiarity. The first reasoned opinion concerned a proposal for a Common Consolidated Community Tax Base (CCCTB) which was transmitted in May. The first initiative was taken by the Hon Speaker after consultation with the Whips of the parliamentary groupings. The second one referred to the proposal for a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT), transmitted in December, following a scrutiny exercise in terms of the principle of subsidiarity by the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs.

On 24 January, at the start of a two-day visit in Malta, HE Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, addressed the House of Representatives touching upon salient issues such as Malta's role in the Euro-Mediterranean region, illegal migration, the Lisbon Treaty and the new role of national parliaments and the issue of the sixth seat for Malta in the European Parliament. President Buzek also met with Members of the Standing Committee of Foreign and European Affairs.

Furthermore, a joint meeting of the Standing Committees on Foreign and European Affairs and on Public Accounts was held on 28 March, during which Dr Louis Galea, Member of the European Court of Auditors, presented the Annual Report on the European Union Budget for 2009, and the role and functions of the European Auditors.

With regard to the Parliament's outreach programme, beyond receiving several groups of school children, Maltese and foreign students interested in the House of Representatives, and following the 2010 initiative of Speaker Michael Frendo on 'Engaging with Civil Society', seven meetings were held with various organisations and commercial entities, namely, Mdina Lions Club, the Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, Fimbank plc, APS Bank, Castell Coch Choral Society of Cardiff (Wales), Fenech & Fenech Associates, and the Malta Confederation of Women Organisations.

Parliament's 90th Anniversary, 1921-2011

Parliamentary Sitting 401 was convened in the Tapestry Chamber on 2 November 2011 in commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the first sitting of the Legislative Assembly and the Senate following the Amery-Milner Constitution of 1921. Dr Alfred Bonnici, Speaker of the House from 25 April 1966 to 15 August 1971, Mr Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House from 23 October 1998 to 10 May 2008, and the Bureau of the Association of Former Members of Parliament were also present for this historical sitting.

This special session was addressed by:

- Dr Alfred Bonnici, former Speaker;
- Hon Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister;
- Hon Joseph Muscat, Leader of the Opposition; and
- Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

New initiatives taken by Parliament in 2011

During 2011, the Maltese Parliament also undertook a number of initiatives with the aim of increasing efficiency in parliamentary work and enhancing the role of Members of Parliament. These included:

- the streaming of the meetings of the parliamentary committees on the Parliament's website, which is expected to be in operation in early 2012, following a memorandum tabled by the Hon Speaker during the 37th meeting of the House Business Committee on 25 May and approved during the 42nd meeting of the committee on 28 September;
- the appointment of the representative of the Parliament of Malta to the European Parliament and European Institutions, following a memorandum tabled by the Hon Speaker during the 34th meeting of the House Business Committee on 26 April, and tabled during the 44th meeting of the committee on 7 December;
- the scrutiny procedure of the European Commission's pipeline *acquis* relating to the principle of subsidiarity adopted by the House Business Committee, following a memorandum tabled by the Hon Speaker during the 34th meeting of the House Business Committee on 26 April, and subsequently a revised memorandum agreed upon during the 44th meeting on 7 December;
- guidelines regarding the appearance of witnesses before the Public Accounts Committee adopted by the House Business Committee, following a memorandum tabled by the Hon Speaker during the 34th meeting of the committee on 26 April;
- the transmission of the Budget Speech and the replies by the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister for the year 2012 in sign language on Channel 22 on the initiative of the Hon Speaker;
- the launch of a year-long celebrations' programme commemorating the 90th anniversary of the first sitting of the Legislative Assembly and the Senate following the Amery-Milner Constitution of 1921, on the

initiative of the Hon Speaker, (during the commemorative parliamentary sitting on 2 November), to include various activities namely, an exhibition, the distribution of a copy of the Constitution of Malta in every household, a TV documentary, and the introduction of a school text book with information on the history and the functions of the Parliament;

- a workshop on parliamentary diplomacy jointly organised by the House of Representatives, under the auspices of the Hon Speaker, the Mediterranean Academy for Diplomatic Studies and the Diplo Foundation on 8 March, during which participants, including students of the Academy were privileged to have access to the extensive experiences of parliamentarians who shared their 'on the ground' knowledge of the subject and interacted with participants over questions; and
- the 'EPLO Malta Meetings' which will be held annually as agreed during the Roundtable Conference of the European Public Law Organisation (EPLO), held in Malta on 8-9 July at the House of Representatives.

Legislative Programme

During 2011, 27 Acts were enacted by Parliament, 11 of which were principal acts and 16 amendment acts.

New legislation and objectives behind the Bills

<i>Act IV of 2011 - Budget Measures Implementation Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to implement Budget measures for the financial year 2011 and other administrative measures.
<i>Act VI of 2011 - Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to provide for the establishment of an Authority to promote, maintain and encourage competition, to safeguard the interests of consumers and enhance their welfare, to promote sound business practices, to adopt and co-ordinate standards in relation to products or services, to regulate such activities and to provide for such matters ancillary or incidental thereto or connected therewith, to provide for the establishment, jurisdiction and procedure of an appeals tribunal and to make amendments to other laws.
<i>Act VI of 2011 - Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to provide for the establishment of an Authority to promote, maintain and encourage competition, to safeguard the interests of consumers and enhance their welfare, to promote sound business practices, to adopt and co-ordinate standards in relation to products or services, to regulate such activities and to provide for such matters ancillary or incidental thereto or connected therewith, to provide for the establishment, jurisdiction and procedure of an appeals tribunal and to make amendments to other laws.
<i>Act VII of 2011 - Malta Libraries Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to repeal and re-enact with amendments the law relating to Public Libraries.
<i>Act XI of 2011 - Small Business Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to enhance the operational environment for medium and small enterprises in order to facilitate their setting up and growth. It seeks to identify those areas where the existing regulatory environment can be improved in order to provide solutions that will benefit enterprises and make it easier for them to operate. It further sets up the Enterprise Consultative Council and the College of Regulators, two advisory bodies, which aim to provide a forum for consultation and social dialogue, advise Government on challenges faced by the business enterprise, address grievances which emanate from the business enterprise and come up with remedial action.
<i>Act XII of 2011 - Building Regulation Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to provide for matters relating to the construction of buildings and other matters connected therewith and to make consequential and other amendments.
<i>Act XVI of 2011 - Retirement Pensions Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to regulate Retirement Schemes, Retirement Funds and Service Providers related thereto.
<i>Act XX of 2011 - Council for Maltese Living Abroad Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to establish a Council for Maltese Living Abroad which shall have the function of protecting and promoting the rights and interests of Maltese living outside Malta and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
<i>Act XXI of 2011 - Restorative Justice Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to make provision for granting parole to prisoners and to provide other restorative justice measures at every stage of the criminal justice process and to provide for such matters ancillary or incidental thereto or connected therewith and to make amendments to other laws.

<i>Act XXII of 2011 - Commissioner for Revenue Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to make provision for the constitution of the office of Commissioner for Revenue.
<i>Act XXIII of 2011 - Protection of Minors (Registration) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to provide for the registration of sexual offenders and other offenders who commit offences of serious violence.
<i>Act XXV of 2011 - Appropriation (2012) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to appropriate a sum not exceeding €2,070,296,229 for the service of the financial year 2012.
<i>Act XXVI of 2011 - Second (2011) Appropriation Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to appropriate a sum not exceeding €148,283,000 for the service of the financial year 2011.

Amendment Acts and objectives behind the Bills

<i>Act I of 2011 – Various Laws (Notarial Acts, Archives and Profession) (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend various laws relating to the Public Registry and Notarial Archives.
<i>Act II of 2011 – Banking (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Banking Act, Cap 371.
<i>Act III of 2011 - Various Laws (Compulsory Eviction and Disposal of Government Land Act) (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend various land laws
<i>Act V of 2011 - Various Laws (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend various land laws related to Traffic Ordinance, Land Acquisition, Department of Health and Local Councils, among others.
<i>Act VIII of 2011 - Broadcasting (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Broadcasting Act to extend further pluralism in broadcasting and to permit the licensing of a general interest objective network operator and general interest broadcasting content licensees.
<i>Act IX of 2011 - Communications Laws (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend various laws relating to communications and to make provision with respect to matters ancillary thereto or connected therewith.
<i>Act X of 2011 - Various Financial Services Laws (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend various financial services laws.
<i>Act XIII of 2011 - Trading Licences (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Trading Licences Act to extend the offences and penalties relative to retail outlets selling alcoholic beverages.
<i>Act XIV of 2011 - Civil Code (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Civil Code, Cap 16, thus, introducing legislation permitting divorce.
<i>Act XV of 2011 - Gaming and Lotteries (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Gaming Act and the Lotteries and Other Games Act.
<i>Act XVII of 2011 - Ġieħ ir-Repubblika (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Ġieħ ir-Repubblika Act to allow foreign citizens to be eligible for the conferment of the decoration <i>Midalja għal Qlubija</i> and to further provide for the method of termination of honorary membership in the <i>Xirka</i> or the Order or of the holding of a medal in an honorary capacity under the Act.
<i>Act XVIII of 2011 - Participation and Guarantees under the European Financial Stability Facility and the Government Borrowing and the Granting of Loans to the Hellenic Republic (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Participation and Guarantees under the European Financial Stability Facility Act (Cap 505) and to amend the Government Borrowing and the Granting of Loans to the Hellenic Republic Act (Cap 502).
<i>Act XIX of 2011 - Malta Membership of the International Monetary Fund (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Malta Membership of the International Monetary Fund Act, Cap 209.
<i>Act XXIV of 2011 - Notarial Profession and Notarial Archives (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Notarial Profession and Notarial Archives Act, Cap 55.
<i>Act XXVII of 2011 - Private Guards and Local Wardens (Amendment) Act</i>
The object of this Bill is to amend the Private Guards and Local Wardens Act, Cap 389.

Parliamentary Questions

8,926 parliamentary questions requiring an oral reply were raised and answered during the year under review, while 182 requiring a written reply were also answered.

Ministerial Statements

The following 14 ministerial statements were delivered in the House in 2011:

- Sitting No 298 – 11 January - Statement by the Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs, Hon George Pullicino, with regard to the UN Climate Change Conference held in Cancun, Mexico, in 2010
- Sitting No 301 – 17 January - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the European Council of 16-17 December 2010
- Sitting No 303 – 19 January - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, concerning the parliamentary honoraria of Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Members of Parliament
- Sitting No 310 – 7 February - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the European Council of 4 February 2011
- Sitting No 318 – 23 February - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, and by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Tonio Borg, regarding Government's efforts to bring to Malta the Maltese citizens presently in Libya
- Sitting No 329 – 21 March - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the Extraordinary European Council meeting of 11 March 2011 and on the meeting of the Heads of Government of the Eurozone
- Sitting No 332 – 28 March - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on bird hunting
- Sitting No 334 – 4 April - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the European Council of 24-25 March 2011
- Sitting No 376 – 4 July - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the European Council of 23-24 June 2011
- Sitting No 386 – 25 July - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the meeting of the Heads of State or of Government of the Eurozone and EU Institutions, of 21 July 2011
- Sitting No 387 – 3 October - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the situation in Libya, on the participation of Malta in the meeting of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, and on the Eastern Partnership Summit
- Sitting No 396 – 24 October - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the European Council of 23 October 2011
- Sitting No 399 – 31 October - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the meeting of the Heads of State or of Government of the European Union and on the Euro Summit of 26 October 2011
- Sitting No 432 – 10 December - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the European Council of 8-9 December 2011.

Petitions

During 2011, the following six petitions were deposited in Parliament:

- Sitting No 342 – 4 May - Petition presented by the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Joseph Muscat, signed by over five thousand citizens to take measures in accordance with the European laws and regulations to protect cab horses during the summer months
- Sitting No 388 – 4 October - Petition presented by Hon Anthony Agius Decelis on behalf of a number of residents of Hal Balzan on the public transport situation in their locality
- Sitting No 400 – 1 November - Petition presented by Hon Chris Cardona on behalf of a number of residents of Birkirkara for the relocation of the bring-in sites in B Bontadini Street
- Sitting No 400 – 1 November - Petition presented by Hon Anthony Agius Decelis on behalf of a number of residents of Mosta on the public transport situation in their locality
- Sitting No 406 – 9 November - Petition presented by Hon Silvio Parnis on adequate access by farmers who have fields near Vjal Santa Luċija
- Sitting No 427 – 6 December - Petition presented by Hon Silvio Parnis on behalf of a number of residents on public transport problems on the Hal Ghaxaq-Valletta-Mater Dei routes.

Motions

The Office of the Clerk received 85 motions during the year under review, 29 of which were in respect of First Readings of Bills. Out of the total number of motions presented, 13 motions were private member's motions and one was a private Member's bill.

Other than the motions for First Reading of Bills and a number of motions regarding the approval of the estimates of various government authorities and entities, a number of other motions deposited in Parliament during 2011 included the appointment of the Ombudsman, a motion amending the composition of the Standing Committee for Social Affairs, and the amendment of the Parliamentary Standing Orders to permit the setting-up of the Standing Committee on Family Affairs, and the judicial process in Gozo.

Motions were also raised in connection with the accession of Malta to the Cybercrime Convention; the International UN Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, a motion to ratify the Additional Protocol and the Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, a motion to ratify the amendments to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, a motion amending the Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, and a motion concerning Government Borrowing and Granting of Loans to the Hellenic Republic.

The 13 private Members' motions received, which included one private Member's bill, were the following:

- Motion No 200 - Provision of liquid gas to consumers, presented by Hon Joe Mizzi
- Motion No 208 – Proposal to hold a Consultative Referendum on the introduction of divorce, presented by the Members of the Opposition
- Motion No 209 - Adjournment of the House for 22 February 2011 to discuss Motion 208 concerning a Consultative Referendum on the introduction of divorce, presented by the Members of the Opposition
- Motion No 213 - Appointment of a Standing Committee on Family Affairs, presented by Hon Carmelo Abela, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, and Hon Justyne Caruana
- Motion No 214 - Acquisition of immovable property by foreign residents, presented by Hon Charles Mangion and Hon Roderick Galdes
- Motion No 216 - Discussion on the present state of affairs of Maltese investment in Libya, presented by Hon Charles Mangion and Hon Karmenu Vella
- Motion No 218 - Payment of parliamentary honoraria to Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, presented by Hon Joe Mizzi
- Motion No 222 - Judicial process in Gozo, presented by Hon Justyne Caruana
- Motion No 242 - Public transport reform, presented by Hon Joseph Sammut
- Motion No 253 – Introduction of a service charge for companies operating in industrial zones, presented by Hon Chris Cardona
- Motion No 260 – Proposals to review the judiciary sector, presented by Hon Franco Debono
- Motion No 280 - Reforms in the justice and home affairs sectors, presented by Hon José Herrera and Hon Michael Falzon
- Motion No 206 - Private Members' Bill - Civil Code (Amendment) Bill - presented by Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando and Hon Evarist Bartolo

Other motions of significant importance presented during the course of 2011 were:

- Motion No 258 – Confidence in the Government, presented by Hon Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister; and
- Motion No 276 – Filling of Malta's sixth seat at the European Parliament by Mr Joseph Cuschieri, presented by Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Papers Laid

In 2011, a total of 2,848 documents were laid on the Table of the House, 524 of which were legal notices. The majority of these documents were replies given to parliamentary questions submitted by Members of Parliament to the various Ministers.

A number of documents were tabled by the Speaker. These documents included replies to parliamentary questions submitted to the Speaker, the Annual Review of the House of Representatives for 2010, and reports received from the Office of the Ombudsman and from the National Audit Office.

Divisions

Divisions called and taken in 2011 totalled 52.

The casting vote of the Deputy Chairman of Committees was required and cast on one occasion.

Rulings

In 2011, Members of the House called upon the Hon Speaker 14 times to give a ruling on various issues arising during debates in plenary as well as during committee meetings. The rulings given by the Chair were the following:

- Sitting No 315 – 16 February - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a request raised by Hon Joe Mizzi in respect of the adjournment of the House
- Sitting No 315 – 16 February - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a request raised by Hon Joe Mizzi in respect of a vote on the adjournment of the House and on the agenda for the following day's sitting on 14 February 2011
- Sitting No 322- 7 March - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a breach of privilege raised by Hon Evarist Bartolo and Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando concerning telephone tapping
- Sitting No 322 – 7 March - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a point of order raised by Hon Joe Mizzi with regard to the parliamentary honoraria paid to Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries and another point of order raised by the same Member on the parliamentary/executive role of the Parliamentary Assistants
- Sitting No 354 – 31 May - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker following a correspondence received from the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) during Sitting 296 of 10 January 2011 concerning breaches of privilege raised by Hon Evarist Bartolo and Hon Austin Gatt during the meeting No 29 of the PAC on 14 December 2010 concerning a number of advertisements published in local papers referring to the committee's debate on the BWSC contract
- Sitting No 357 – 2 June - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a point of order raised by Hon Joe Mizzi concerning the role of parliamentary assistants and their right to submit parliamentary questions
- Sitting No 358 – 2 June - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a point of order raised by Hon Gino Cauchi on whether there existed a case of contempt of the House, with regards to the implementation of certain provisions of the Broadcasting (Amendment) Bill prior to the approval of the Act in Parliament.
- Sitting No 358 – 2 June - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a point of order raised by Hon David Agius with regards to Parliament's right to discuss a motion on the transfer of government land following its approval by the National Audit Office Accounts Committee in accordance with Article 3(7) of the Transfer of Government Land Act
- Sitting No 366 – 15 June - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker with regard to a point raised by Hon Evarist Bartolo concerning the reply given by Hon Tonio Fenech, Minister of Finance, the Economy and Investment, to parliamentary question 26769 concerning the Bank of Valletta La Valette Property Fund issue
- Sitting No 389 – 5 October - Ruling delivered by the Hon Deputy Speaker on a point of order raised by Hon Alfred Sant during same sitting, concerning the validity of the Participation and Guarantees under the European Financial Stability Facility Act

- Sitting No 390 – 10 October - Ruling delivered by the Hon Deputy Speaker on a point of order raised by Hon Alfred Sant in same sitting, with regard to the parliamentary procedure adopted in enacting the Government Borrowing and Granting of Loans to the Hellenic Republic Act and the Participation and Guarantees under the European Financial Stability Facility Act
- Sitting No 399 – 31 October - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a breach of privilege raised by the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Joseph Muscat, during Sitting 395 of 19 October 2011, concerning the hacking of emails
- Sitting No 399 – 31 October - Ruling delivered by the Hon Speaker on a breach of privilege raised by Hon Joe Mizzi during Sitting 300 of 12 January 2011, concerning the alleged harassment by NET TV crew.

Parliamentary Whips

Parliamentary Whips are Members of Parliament appointed by each political party represented in the House of Representatives to facilitate the contribution of the parliamentary political group to parliamentary business, so that it can proceed smoothly. By virtue of the nature of this role, both Whips are members of the House Business Committee.

Another responsibility of the Parliamentary Whips is to ensure the regular presence in Parliament of Members in their respective parliamentary group especially when votes are taken and when divisions are called.

Whips are also responsible for keeping Members in their respective parliamentary group supplied with information about the business of the House, propose Members to serve on standing and select committees and also nominate Members on delegations participating at meetings abroad.

Hon David Agius is the Government Whip whilst Hon Joe Mizzi is the Opposition Whip.

Leader of the House

The Leader of the House features in the Standing Orders, defined as being the Minister responsible for Parliamentary Affairs. By virtue of this role, the Leader of the House is primarily responsible for the arrangement of Government business in the House, and for setting the parliamentary schedule of the House together with the Government Whip and the Opposition Whip during the meetings of the House Business Committee, presided by Hon Speaker of the House.

STANDING COMMITTEES

The Standing Committees of the House, established with the cooperation and approval of both sides of the House in 1995, are of particular relevance in the workings of the House of Representatives. The Standing Committees, which are an extension of the House itself, have provided that professional touch by which various issues are discussed.

The Standing Committees have furthermore introduced an element of consultation with civil society. Technical experts and representatives from various organisations are invited to discuss and contribute through their expertise on particular subjects. More than that, meetings of the Standing Committees are open to the public and the media and are streamed on the parliamentary website, thus facilitating an even closer relationship between the people and their elected representatives in Parliament.

Committees may submit recommendations to the House for its consideration.

The House has seven Standing Committees, namely,

- Standing Committee on House Business
- Standing Committee on Privileges

- Standing Committee on Public Accounts
- Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs
- Standing Committee on Social Affairs
- Standing Committee for Consideration of Bills
- Standing Committee for Family Affairs

The latter was set up following motion 213 presented by Hon Carmelo Abela, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca and Hon Justyne Caruana and approved in Sitting 358 on 2 June 2011 at the height of the debate for the introduction of divorce legislation in Malta, during which it became increasingly evident that the family in Malta was facing a number of challenges and difficulties for which assistance and means were not always available.

The Environment and Development Planning Act (2010) (Cap 504) and the Auditor General and National Audit Office Act (1997) (Cap 396), provide for the setting up of the Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning and the National Audit Office Accounts Committee, respectively.

Standing Committee on House Business

The Standing Committee on House Business was set up by way of Motion 9 of 12 May 2008 and is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Members	Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Leader of the House
	Hon David Agius
	Hon Frederick Azzopardi
	Hon Angelo Farrugia
	Hon Joe Mizzi

- “120C (1) The Standing Committee on House Business shall have power to:
- (a) distribute Bills and other business among the Standing Committees appointed in accordance with the provisions of Standing Orders 96, 120A and 120B;
 - (b) (i) determine the number of sittings to be allotted for the consideration of a Bill by a Standing Committee;
 - (ii) allocate business to each sitting of a Standing Committee; and
 - (iii) determine the time when any business, if not previously concluded, shall be concluded by a Standing Committee; and
 - (c) consider all matters of procedure and business of the House, and report its opinion thereon to the House from time to time.
- (2) A report of all resolutions carried by the Standing Committee on House Business shall be made to the House at the next sitting after a resolution is carried, immediately after Question time, and shall be recorded in the Minutes of the proceedings of the House.
- (3) (a) The Standing Committee on House Business shall be constituted of the Leader of the House, two members nominated by the Prime Minister and two members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition.
- (b) Three members in attendance shall constitute a quorum.
- (4) Substitute members shall also be appointed for each member of the Standing Committee on House Business and the provisions of paragraph (4) of Standing Order 120B shall also apply.
- (5) The Standing Committee on House Business shall be chaired by the Speaker who shall not vote unless on any question the votes are equally divided, in which case he shall have and exercise a casting vote.”

The principal task of this Committee is to organise the business of the House by distributing Bills and other work to the other Standing Committees and the House, establishing and scheduling the number of sittings

to be allocated to parliamentary debates and to consider other procedural issues. Correspondence received by the Speaker is also brought to the attention of the Committee.

The Standing Committee on House Business was convened 16 times in 2011.

Besides procedural House Business, the Committee also discussed the following:

- The honoraria of Members of Parliament
- Witnesses appearing before the Public Accounts Committee
- The role of national parliaments following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty with reference to the subsidiarity principle
- Approval of a reasoned opinion on CCCTB
- Video streaming of Committee meetings
- The appointment of a representative of the Parliament of Malta to the European Parliament and European Institutions.

Standing Committee on Privileges

The Standing Committee on Privileges was set up by way of Motion 17 of 2 June 2008. It is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Members	Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Leader of the House
	Hon Owen Bonnici
	Hon Angelo Farrugia
	Hon Beppe Fenech Adami
	Hon Francis Zammit Dimech

- “120D (1) The Standing Committee on Privileges shall have power to consider cases referred to it by the Speaker or by the House and to take such decisions and to make such recommendations as provided in the Standing Orders and in the House of Representatives (Privileges and Powers) Ordinance or in any law from time to time substituting the said Ordinance;
- (2) The Standing Committee shall be constituted of the Leader of the House, two Members nominated by the Prime Minister and two members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition;
- (3) The provisions of paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) of Standing Order 120C shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Standing Committee on Privileges;
- (4) The Standing Committee on Privileges shall, without prejudice to the provision of the Standing Order 164, have power and authority to summon witnesses and order the production of documents before it. The Standing Committee on Privileges may request the attendance of the Attorney General or of his representative, who may also be authorised to participate in the proceedings, but he shall in no case have a vote thereat.”

The Standing Committee on Privileges met twice in 2011 to discuss the following:

- Breach of privilege raised by the Parliamentary Secretary Hon Jason Azzopardi on 19 May 2010 against ‘One TV’ and ‘maltastar.com’ with regard to parliamentary reports in connection with the privatisation of the Malta Dockyards. Ruling delivered by Mr Speaker on 12 July 2010
- Breach of privilege raised by the Hon Joe Mizzi on 19 May 2010 on parliamentary procedure relating to the taking of a vote during the committee stage of a bill.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts was set up by Motion 16 of 2 June 2008, amended by Motion 51 and subsequently by Motion 185, and is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Charles Mangion
Members	Hon Robert Arrigo Hon Evarist Bartolo Hon Helena Dalli Hon Tonio Fenech, Minister of Finance, the Economy and Investment Hon Austin Gatt, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications Hon Philip Mifsud

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts is chaired by a Member nominated by the Opposition. This follows the system adopted in the UK House of Commons.

Standing Order 120E outlines the powers and the composition of the Public Accounts Committee as follows:

- “120E. (1) The Standing Committee on Public Accounts shall have the power to:
- (a) inquire into matters relating to public accounts referred to it by the House, a Minister or the Director of Audit;
 - (b) inquire into expenditures as is referred to in subsection (3) of section 103 and section 104 of the Constitution;
 - (c) examine the accounts of statutory authorities, including parastatal organisations, whose accounts are presented to Parliament;
 - (d) request the Director of Audit to submit memoranda on any matter where a request for such submission is made by at least three members of the Standing Committee;
 - (e) consider memoranda submitted by the Director of Audit, made upon a request made to him in virtue of paragraph (d) hereof, or on his own initiative;
 - (f) examine reports, and related documents, made by the Director of Audit;
 - (g) report to the House on any accounts, reports or documents referred in the previous paragraphs hereof;
 - (h) report to the House on any change that it considers desirable in the form of the accounts, on the manner in which they are kept, on revenue or expenditure or the control of money; and
 - (i) discuss Malta’s monetary policy and receive reports thereon from the Governor of the Central Bank of Malta.
- (2) The Public Accounts Committee shall consist of not more than seven members of whom four shall constitute a quorum. The members shall be chosen so as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in particular;
- (3) The provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of Standing Order 120B shall apply to the Public Accounts Committee;
- (4) One of the members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition and so designated by him after consultation with the Leader of the House shall be appointed Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. The Chairman shall have an original vote but shall not have a casting vote.”

In 2011 the Public Accounts Committee met 11 times. Details of the meetings are as follows:

11 January	Report by the Auditor General on the Enemalta Corporation Tender for Generating Capacity (GN/DPS 8/2006).
31 January	Letter dated 11 January 2011 sent by Hon Evarist Bartolo addressed to the Chairman of the Public Affairs Committee concerning the Enemalta Corporation Tender for Generating Capacity (GN/DPS 8/2006) and the issue of BWSC. Motion presented by Hon Austin Gatt, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communication concerning the Enemalta Corporation Tender for Generating Capacity (GN/DPS 8/2006), during Meeting No 30 held on 11 January 2011. Motion presented by Hon Evarist Bartolo concerning the Enemalta Corporation Tender for Generating Capacity (GN/DPS 8/2006) during Meeting No 30 held on 11 January 2011.

21 February	Two motions presented by Hon Evarist Bartolo on 31 January 2011.
28 March	Presentation by Dr Louis Galea, Member of the European Court of Auditors, on the Annual Report on the European Union Budget for 2009.
6 April	Report by the Auditor General on the Public Accounts 2008 - Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs - Local Councils. Report by the Auditor General on the Public Accounts 2009 - Office of the Prime Minister - Local Councils.
18 May	Performance Audit Report on Road Surface Repairs on the Arterial and Distributor Road Network by the Auditor General.
15 June	Report by the Auditor General on the Public Accounts 2008 - Ministry for Gozo - Gozo General Hospital - Operating Materials and Supplies (including Internal Audit and Investigations Directorate Report - September 2004); Home Help/Care Service Scheme. Report by the Auditor General on the Public Accounts 2009 - Gozitan Students Accommodation Subsidy, Gozitan Students/Workers Subsidy Scheme.
12 October	Report by the Auditor General concerning the Enemalta Corporation Tender for Generating Capacity (GN/DPS 8/2006) - Discussion regarding the hearing of witnesses.
1 November	Hearing of witnesses concerning the Enemalta Corporation Tender for Generating Capacity (GN/DPS 8/2006) (cont.).
2 November	Hearing of witnesses concerning the Enemalta Corporation Tender for Generating Capacity (GN/DPS 8/2006) (cont.).
15 November	Central Bank Monetary Policy.

Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs

The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs was set up by Motion 18 of 2 June 2008 and is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Francis Zammit Dimech
Members	Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Francis Agius Hon Charlò Bonnici Hon Owen Bonnici Hon Luciano Busuttil Hon Leo Brincat Hon Beppe Fenech Adami Hon George Vella

In addition to Motion 18, Motions 50, 139 and 142 determine the current list of Committee Members, as shown above.

“120F. (1) The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs shall consist of not more than nine members of whom five shall constitute a quorum. The members shall be chosen so as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in particular:

Provided that the Government members appointed on the Standing Committee shall include the Minister for Foreign Affairs who shall have the right to participate and to vote:

Provided further that members of the European Parliament elected from Malta shall have the right to participate in the work of the Standing Committee but shall not have the right to vote or to move motions and amendments.

(2) The Chairperson of the Committee shall be nominated by the Leader of the House from amongst the members representing the Government side, provided that any member of the Committee may, at any time, be appointed by the Leader of the House to act as Chairperson in case of the unavoidable absence of the Chairperson.

(3) The Standing Committee shall have the power to appoint select sub-committees and to delegate any of its functions to such sub-committees.

Provided that the composition of any sub-committee appointed by the Standing Committee shall be determined by the Standing Committee so as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in particular.

(4) Subject to what is stated in this Standing Order, the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of Standing Order 120B shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs.

(5) The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs shall have the following functions:

- (i) to deal with matters relating to foreign and European Union affairs which may be referred to it by the House or by the Standing Committee on House Business;
- (ii) in the context of European Union issues and measures to be taken by the Council of Ministers of the European Union, to scrutinise on its own initiative:
 - (a) any proposals under the Community treaties for legislation by the Council or the Council acting jointly with the European Parliament;
 - (b) any document which is published for submission to the European Council, the Council or the European Central Bank;
 - (c) any proposal for a common strategy, a joint action or a common position under Title V of the Treaty on European Union which is prepared for submission to the Council or to the European Council;
 - (d) any proposal for a common position, framework, decision or a convention under Title VI of the Treaty on European Union which is prepared for submission to the Council;
 - (e) any document (not falling within (b), (c) or (d) above) which is published by one Union institution and which does not relate exclusively to the consideration of any proposal for legislation; and
 - (f) any other document relating to European Union matters placed on the Table of the House by any Minister; and
- (iii) to represent the House of Representatives of Malta at the Conference of European Affairs Committees (COSAC)."

During 2011 the Foreign and European Affairs Committee met 13 times in plenary which included meetings with HE Prof Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, and Michel Barnier, European Commissioner responsible for Internal Market and Services.

The Committee also met with Dr Louis Galea, Member of the European Court of Auditors, who presented the ECA Annual Report on the European Union Budget for 2009.

Details of the meetings held in 2011 are as follows:

17 January	Meeting with HE Janos Balla, Ambassador of Hungary to Malta, on the priorities of the Hungarian Presidency of the EU for the period January to June 2011.
18 January	Presentation by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs on (i) issues discussed in recent Council Meetings on Foreign and General Affairs; and (ii) the visit to the Middle East in December 2010.
24 January	Meeting with HE Prof Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament.
25 February	Presentation by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs on (i) the situation in the Arab World; and (ii) his visit in Tunisia.
28 March	Presentation by Dr Louis Galea, Member of the European Court of Auditors (ECA), on the ECA Annual Report on the European Union Budget for 2009.
11 April	Meeting held <i>in camera</i> on (i) COSAC questionnaire on procedures and practices relevant to parliamentary scrutiny - Input of National Parliaments and the European Parliament to the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU economic governance and to the elaboration of the Commission Work Programme 2012; and (ii) scrutiny of <i>pipeline acquis</i> .
10 May	Meeting with Dr Vanni Xuereb, Head of the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC), and meeting with Prof Peter G. Xuereb on the application of the principle of

	subsidiarity in connection with the Council Directive on a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) COM(2011)121.
2 June	Presentation by the Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, on developments in the Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood.
12 July	Presentation by Dr Gavin Barrett, Senior Lecturer and Director of Doctorial Studies at the University of Dublin, on the evolving role of national parliaments in the European Union legal order.
30 November	Consideration of the following two legislative proposals with regard to the principle of subsidiarity: (i) Proposal for a Council Directive on a Common System of Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) and amending Directive 2008/7/EC (COM(2011)594 final); and (ii) Amended proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 and Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards distribution of food products to the most deprived persons in the Union (COM(2011) 634 final).
1 December	Meeting with Michel Barnier, European Commissioner responsible for Internal Market and Services, focusing on (i) the agenda for financial reforms; and (ii) the Single Market Act
5 December	Consideration of the following legislative proposals with regard to the principle of subsidiarity: (i) Commission Proposal (COM(2011)634) proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 and Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards distribution of food products to the most deprived persons in the Union (cont.); and (ii) a list of 28 EU legislative proposals.
9 December	Presentation by Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the situation in Libya and North Africa.

Subsidiarity

During 2011, the Standing Committee for Foreign and European Affairs also considered 31 EU legislative proposals with regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality as laid down in Protocol No 2 of the Lisbon Treaty. Acting on the recommendations of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, the House of Representatives has sent a reasoned opinion to the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament with regard to the (i) Proposal for a Council Directive on a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) (COM (2011)121); and (ii) Proposal for a Council Directive on a Common System of Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) and amending Directive 2008/7/EC (COM (2011)594 final).

Informal Meetings

During 2011, Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, held the following meetings:

- 21 January – Meeting with Ambassador Vladimir Drobnjak, Chief Negotiator for the negotiations on the accession of Croatia to the European Union and the Ambassador of Croatia to Malta on the final stages of Croatia’s journey towards EU membership
- 17 February – Meeting with a delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro which was on a TAIEX Study Visit on EU Membership Negotiations
- 18 February – Meeting with HE Vaqif Ismayil Oglu Sadigov, non-resident Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Malta, on bilateral relations and the situation in the Caucasus region
- 25 November – Meeting with HE L M A Hosseini, non-resident Ambassador of Iran to Malta, and Mr Ali Piri, Minister Counsellor (Political Affairs) in the Iranian Embassy in Rome, on the role of Parliaments in enhancing bilateral relations and the reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the nuclear programme of Iran.

Sub-Committees

In accordance with paragraph 3 of Standing Order 120F, four Working Groups were set up in 2008:

Working Group 1

Chairperson	Hon Francis Zammit Dimech
Members	Hon Luciano Busuttil Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia Hon Beppe Fenech Adami Hon George Vella

The objective of this Working Group is to analyse the EU *pipeline acquis* in preliminary scrutiny, that is, to identify those documents of political or legal importance and to reach a decision on whether a particular document should be cleared without reserve or referred for debate at the plenary of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, Working Group 2, Working Group 3, Working Group 4 or the Social Affairs Committee.

Working Group 2

Chairperson	Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia
Members	Minister responsible for the <i>acquis</i> Hon Francis Agius Hon Roderick Galdes Hon Gavin Gulia Member <i>ad hoc</i> from Government Member <i>ad hoc</i> from Opposition

Working Group 2 addresses issues related to economic and monetary affairs, taxation, transport and energy, budget, internal market and customs union.

Working Group 3

Chairperson	Hon Charlò Bonnici
Members	Minister responsible for the <i>acquis</i> Hon Joseph Falzon Hon Noel Farrugia Hon Joseph Sammut Member <i>ad hoc</i> from Government Member <i>ad hoc</i> from Opposition

The areas of competence of Working Group 3 include health, development and humanitarian aid, rural development, agriculture and fisheries, and justice and home affairs.

Working Group 4

Chairperson	Hon Beppe Fenech Adami
Members	Minister responsible for the <i>acquis</i> Hon Chris Agius Hon Evarist Bartolo Hon Francis Zammit Dimech Member <i>ad hoc</i> from Government Member <i>ad hoc</i> from Opposition

The areas of competence of Working Group 4 include research, employment and culture, consumer protection, environment and regional policy.

The Foreign and European Affairs Committee, in Plenary and through its Working Groups, also has the power to scrutinise on its own initiative legislative proposals or documents that originate from European Union institutions and measures to be taken by the Council of Ministers.

Meetings of the Working Groups

Working Group 1 held six sessions during 2011 to scrutinise 256 legislative and non-legislative proposals including reports, staff working documents, Green Papers and White Papers. Of these documents, 236 were cleared by Working Group 1; seven were referred to and cleared by the plenary of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee and 13 documents were referred to the ministries concerned for further information.

Standing Committee on Social Affairs

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs was set up by Motion 19 of 2 June 2008 and is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Edwin Vassallo
Members	Hon Frederick Azzopardi
	Hon Justyne Caruana
	Hon Michael Farrugia
	Hon Michael Gonzi
	Hon Stephen Spiteri
	Hon Anthony Zammit

In addition to Motion 19, Motions 53, 71 and 211 determined the current list of Committee Members, as shown above.

Standing Order 120G states that:

- “120G. (1) The Committee for Social Affairs shall deal with all matters relating to social policy, including social assistance and family matters, which may be referred to it by the House or by the Standing Committee on House Business.
- (2) The provisions of paragraphs (2) and (3) of Standing Order 120E shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Social Affairs Committee.”

The Social Affairs Committee met 28 times during 2011, during which various subjects concerning family issues and other socially related matters were discussed.

After several meetings dedicated to the elderly in the Maltese community, the Committee finalised and published the report – ‘The Family and the Elderly’. This was the seventh report compiled by the Social Affairs Committee in the 11th Legislature. It was drawn up to highlight the reality of the elderly in Malta and Gozo and to recommend a better way forward for the Maltese family and the elderly.

Following the appointment of members in the Council for the Voluntary Sector, the Social Affairs Committee held a number of meetings in 2011 to discuss the voluntary sector. The members of the Social Affairs Committee were given presentations by the Office of the Commissioner of Voluntary Organisations and by the Council for the Voluntary Sector, followed by discussions with the representatives of both entities.

The issue of disability was discussed with different stakeholders. A presentation was given with regard to *Dar il-Kaptan* and the services offered to disabled persons. The Education Department also gave a presentation, outlining the policies used in teaching disabled students. The subject of disability was further explored through a meeting with the Torball Blind Association. At the end of 2011, the Social Affairs Committee visited the *Dar tal-Providenza* where it met with the residents and staff. The Committee members held discussions with the management in order to discuss the difficulties that are encountered and recommendations that can be proposed in the report that will be drawn up by the Committee on the subject of disability.

The National Curriculum Framework 2011 was another issue that featured on the Social Affairs Committee's agenda. A number of presentations were given by the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education and lengthy discussions followed these presentations.

The Social Affairs Committee held a number of meetings on the protection of human life from conception. A number of informative documents were presented to the Committee and lengthy discussions were held with the members of the 'Professionals against Embryo Freezing' and various other professionals in the field. Other groups present for these discussions included 'Gift of Life and Helping Couples Overcome Infertility' and the 'Loss of a Pregnancy or Stillborn Baby'.

The *ad hoc* Committee set up in 2011 to discuss the influx of irregular immigrants to Malta, continued discussing the subject of irregular immigration. The Minister of Justice and Home Affairs updated the Members on the prevailing situation and the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office gave a presentation on the setup and the work being carried out by the European Union and the EASO on the issues of irregular immigration. A report on the issue of Irregular Immigration in the EU was also presented by the Maltese Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

At the end of 2011, the Social Affairs Committee held meetings on the issue of students' school uniforms and youth behaviour in Paceville. A number of informal meetings were held between the Chairman of the Committee and each of the various stakeholders involved in both subjects with the aim of finding a suitable way forward. The Chairman also visited the Millennium Chapel, where he had a meeting with the residents of Paceville to get their views on the current situation in Paceville. These two subjects will continue being discussed and a report will be drawn up during 2012.

Details of the meetings held in 2011 are as follows:

18 January	SWOT analysis of the works at the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. Presentation by the Commissioner Prof Kenneth Wain
19 January	Presentation by members of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector
25 January	SWOT analysis of the works at the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. Presentation by the Commissioner Prof Kenneth Wain (cont.)
26 January	Presentation by members of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (cont.)
1 February	Discussion to approve the Seventh Report of the Social Affairs Committee entitled 'The Family and the Elderly'
8 February	Presentation by Mr Joseph Gerada (Administrator) and Ms Antonella Agius Micallef (Funding PR Executive) at <i>Dar il-Kaptan</i>
22 February	Discussion with members of the 'Professionals Against Embryo Freezing' on the subject of protecting human life from conception
23 February	Presentation by the Education Department regarding policies used in teaching students with disability
29 March	Presentation by Dr Charles Azzopardi on the subject of Upbringing of children in our families: Towards a better way
5 April	Discussion with members of the 'Professionals Against Embryo Freezing' on the subject of protecting human life from conception (cont.)
11 May	Presentation by Prof Mark Brincat on the subject of best medical practice in connection with embryo freezing
17 May	Discussion to approve the Seventh Report of the Social Affairs Committee entitled 'The Family and the Elderly' (cont.)
24 May	Discussion to approve the Seventh Report of the Social Affairs Committee entitled 'The Family and the Elderly' (cont.)
8 June	Discussion with members of the 'Professionals Against Embryo Freezing' on the subject of protecting human life from conception (cont.)
14 June	Discussion to approve the Seventh Report of the Social Affairs Committee entitled 'The Family and the Elderly' (cont.)
21 June	Discussion to approve the Seventh Report of the Social Affairs Committee entitled 'The Family and the Elderly' (cont.)

28 June	1. Presentation of the Fifth Report of the Social Affairs Committee entitled 'Safeguarding Children's Rights and Interests - Proceedings in the Family Court' to members of the political parties represented in Parliament 2. Presentation by Can Rev Mario Cassar with regard to the situation of the elderly in Gozo
7 July	Discussion with the Maltese Delegation in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on irregular immigration
11 July	Presentation by Prof Grace Grima, Director General, Quality and Standard in Education on the National Curriculum Framework 2011
11 October	1. Meeting with the Torball Blind Association 2. Discussion on youth behaviour in Paceville
12 October	Report by the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority on students' school uniforms. Discussion with Dr Sylvann Aquilina Zahra
17 October	Discussion on youth behaviour in Paceville (cont.)
18 October	National Curriculum Framework 2011. Presentation by Prof Grace Grima, Director General, Quality and Standard in Education (cont.)
19 October	Presentation by the Education Department regarding policies used in teaching students with disability (cont.)
1 November	Presentation by legal officials from the Family Court, Dr Alexia Aquilina, Assistant Registrar in the Civil Courts and Tribunal, Mrs Carmen Borg, Deputy in the Family Court and Dr Katya Vassallo regarding the problems and difficulties that married persons going through a separation encounter
8 November	Irregular Immigration - Report by the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
9 November	Presentation by the Department of Education and the Department of Health on the subject of sexual health education
22 November	Irregular Immigration. Presentation by Mr Robert Visser, Executive Director, 'European Asylum Support Office' (EASO).

Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills

The Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills was set up by Motion 20 of 2 June 2008, amended by Motion 146 of 6 May 2010, and is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Francis Agius
Members	Seven Members: four Government Members including the Chairperson, and three Opposition Members appointed according to the Bill under discussion

The principal task of the Committee for the Consideration of Bills is to consider Bills referred to it by the House after the conclusion of the debate in the Second Reading stage or by the House Business Committee. The work of the Committee is regulated by Standing Order 120B:

- “120B. (1) In addition to the Standing Committees listed in Standing Order 120A, the House may, on motion made after notice, appoint such Standing Committee as may be necessary for the consideration of Bills or other business committed or referred by the House to a Standing Committee.
- (2) A motion as is referred to in paragraph (1) of this Standing Order shall:
- fix the number of members to serve on the Standing Committee which is to be so composed in such manner as appears practicable to the House as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in the House in particular; and
 - name the Chairman who shall preside the Standing Committee.
- (3) Each side of the House shall nominate the members representing it on a Standing Committee, and shall also nominate alternate members for any members so appointed. The members and alternate members representing the Government side shall be nominated by the Leader of the House while the members and alternate members representing the Opposition side shall be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition. The name of members and alternate members so nominated and appointed by the House shall be recorded in the Minutes of the sitting.

(4) Each side of the House may substitute any member or alternate member nominated by it in accordance with paragraph (3) hereof to represent it on a Standing Committee. Such substitution shall only have effect after the Speaker is notified therewith. The Speaker shall, at the first available opportunity, notify the House, or, if the House is in recess, the Standing Committee on House Business.

(5) Government Bills referred to a Standing Committee shall have precedence over the other business of the Standing Committee and shall unless otherwise ordered by the House, be considered in such order as the Standing Committee on House Business may determine.”

The Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills met 40 times in 2011. Twenty-two Bills were discussed, approved and referred back to the House for Third Reading.

Details of the meetings held in 2011 are as follows:

9 February	Building Regulation Bill – Bill No 60
15 February	Various Laws (Notarial Acts, Archives and Profession) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 71 Land (Various Laws) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 68
21 February	Malta Competition and Consumers Affairs Authority Bill – Bill No 66
23 February	Building Regulation Bill – Bill No 50
28 February	Land (Various Laws) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 68 Banking (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 70
1 March	Budget Measures Implementation Bill – Bill No 61 Land (Various Laws) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 68
2 March	Budget Measures Implementation Bill – Bill No 61
7 March	Budget Measures Implementation Bill – Bill No 61
9 March	Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Bill – Bill No 66
15 March	Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Bill – Bill No 66
21 March	Various Laws (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 67
22 March	Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Bill – Bill No 66
23 March	Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Bill – Bill No 66
29 March	Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Bill – Bill No 66
5 April	Various Laws (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 67
11 April	Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Bill – Bill No 66
2 May	Malta Libraries Bill – Bill No 69
20 May	Broadcasting (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 75
23 May	Broadcasting (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 75
30 May	Communications Law (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 74
6 June	Various Financial Services Laws (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 79
8 June	Building Regulation Bill – Bill No 50
10 June	Various Financial Services Laws (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 79
13 June	Small Business Bill – Bill No 76
13 July	Gaming and Lotteries (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 77 Civil Code (Amendment No 2) Bill – Divorce Bill – Bill No 80
14 July	Civil Code (Amendment No 2) Bill – Divorce Bill – Bill No 80
18 July	Civil Code (Amendment No 2) Bill – Divorce Bill – Bill No 80
19 July	Civil Code (Amendment No 2) Bill – Divorce Bill – Bill No 80 Trading Licences (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 81
20 July	Retirement Pensions Bill – Bill No 72
25 July	Civil Code (Amendment No 2) Bill – Divorce Bill – Bill No 80
7 November	Various Laws (Notarial Acts, Archives and Profession) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 83
8 November	Various Laws (Notarial Acts, Archives and Profession) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 83
15 November	Various Laws (Notarial Acts, Archives and Profession) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 83 Restorative Justice Bill – Bill No 73
22 November	Council for Maltese Living Abroad Bill – Bill No 89 Protection of Minors (Registration) Bill – Bill No 62
23 November	Commissioner for Revenue Bill – Bill No 82
29 November	Various Laws (Notarial Acts, Archives and Profession) (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 83
9 December	Private Guards and Local Wardens (Amendment) Bill – Bill No 88

Standing Committee on Family Affairs

The Standing Committee on Family Affairs was set up by Motion 213 of 2 June 2011 and is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia
Members	Hon Charlo Bonnici
	Hon Justyne Caruana
	Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca
	Hon Jesmond Mugliett

The principal task of the Committee on Family Affairs is to discuss matters and legislation related to family affairs. The work of the Committee is regulated by Standing Order 120H:

- “120H. (1) The Standing Committee on Family Affairs shall deal with all matters relating to the family, including the appraisal, analysis and monitoring of current and future family legislation and policies, and such other matters relating to the family as may be referred to it by the House or by the Standing Committee on House Business;
- (2) The Standing Committee on Family Affairs shall consist of five members, three of whom shall be appointed from the Government side, one of whom shall be nominated as Chairman and two from the Opposition side; a majority of all the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum;
- (3) The provisions of paragraph (3) of Standing Order 120E shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Standing Committee on Family Affairs.”

The Standing Committee on Family Affairs was set up following private Members’ motion 213 presented by Hon Carmelo Abela, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca and Hon Justyne Caruana and approved in Sitting 358 on 2 June 2011 at the height of the debate for the introduction of divorce legislation in Malta, during which the family and marriage were accorded centre-place, and it became increasingly evident that the family in Malta was facing a number of challenges and difficulties for which abilities and means were not always available.

The motion was put forward with the welfare of children, young people and adolescents at heart and to ensure that their upbringing, most importantly their social and emotional formation, takes place in the care that the family’s institutional framework can offer.

The Committee on Family Affairs held its first meeting on 10 October 2011, and met three times in 2011, as follows:

10 October	Presentation by the Principal Permanent Secretary on the subject of family friendly measures in the Public Administration
1 November	Presentation by the Malta Employers’ Association and the Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry on the subject of family friendly measures
22 November	Presentation by the working group on family friendly measures of the MCESD on the subject of the extension of family friendly measures in private enterprise in Malta.

National Audit Office Accounts Committee

The National Audit Office Accounts Committee was set up by Motion 21 of 2 June 2008, amended by Motion 55 of 22 September 2008, in accordance with Part IV of the National Audit Office Act as follows:

“13. There shall be a Committee to be styled the National Audit Office Accounts Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") which shall be composed as follows:

- (i) the member of the House of Representatives who is for the time being Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Representatives or such other committee of the said House from time to time replacing such Committee;

(ii) the Minister responsible for parliamentary affairs (hereinafter referred to as "the Leader of the House of Representatives");

(iii) three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the said House upon a motion by the Leader of the House of Representatives, as to two members from among members supporting the Government and as to the remaining member from among the members in Opposition.

14. The Committee shall from time to time but not less often than once a year present to the House of Representatives (through the Leader of the House of Representatives) a report of its activities and the report of its examination of any estimates prepared by the Auditor General.

15. The Committee shall elect a chairman from among its members, and may regulate its own proceedings.

16. Upon the dissolution of the House of Representatives the Committee shall be deemed to be dissolved until it is next reconstituted after the House next meets. Where upon the dissolution of the House of Representatives the sum to be established for the purposes of paragraph 8 of Part III is not so established or the House has not after the end of a financial year established the said sum, the Auditor General shall be entitled to expend, each month, a sum equivalent to one twelfth of the sum or sums established for the previous financial year, until the said sum is so established.

17. The validity of any proceedings of the Committee shall not be affected by any vacancy among its members or by any defect in the appointment or nomination of any of its members."

It is composed as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Leader of the House
Members	Hon Charles Mangion, Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee Hon Chris Agius Hon Philip Mifsud Hon Jesmond Mugliett

The National Audit Office Accounts Committee met three times in 2011.

Details of the meetings held in 2011 are as follows:

2 February	Motion regarding the transfer of Government Property (Rui Seabank Hotel and Spa, Mellieħa)
27 June	Motion regarding the transfer of Government Property (Rui Seabank Hotel and Spa, Mellieħa)
16 November	NAO Annual Report 2010 and Financial Statements as at 31 December 2010 NAO Financial Estimates for the year 2012.

Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning

Motion 196 moved in the House by Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi on 6 December 2010 set up the Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning, replacing the former Development Planning Committee that had been established in terms of Article 17B of the Development Planning Act. This change was a result of the entry into force of the Environment and Development Planning Act of 2010 Article 34 of the said Act states that:

- “34. (1) There shall be a Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning which shall consist of five members appointed by the House, of whom three shall be members supporting the Government, one of whom shall be appointed as Chairman, and the other two shall be members from the Opposition.
- (2) The Standing Committee shall:
- review any plan referred to the House of Representatives in terms of this Act. The Standing Committee shall also recommend to the House whether the plan should be approved, with or without amendments, or rejected;
 - discuss any report referred to it by the Minister relating to the structure plan or any review thereof;

(c) discuss any other plan or policy referred to it by the Minister and report thereon to Parliament. Such a report may also include any dissenting opinion on the plan or policy. The Minister shall take cognisance of the said report and shall forward the report to the Authority for its consideration in the determination by the Authority of the plan or policy if the said plan or policy has not yet been approved by the Authority:

Provided that where the said Standing Committee fails to report to Parliament within the period by which it was requested to do so, the Minister may request the Authority to finalise the said plan or policy, and the Minister may also approve the said plan or policy as forwarded to him by the Authority.

(3) When notice of a motion, as is referred to in article 53(2), is given by the Minister, that motion shall be referred to the Standing Committee of the House, and the said Standing Committee shall discuss the said motion and report thereon to the House.

(4) Not later than one month after a notice as is referred to in subarticle (3) has been referred to the Standing Committee of the House, the said Standing Committee shall discuss the structure plan or any review thereof, and shall, not later than one month after the said plan or review thereof has been referred to it, report thereon to the House:

Provided that where the said Standing Committee fails to report to the House within the said period of one month, the House may pass on to discuss the motion.

(5) Where the report of the Standing Committee on a motion is unanimous, the House shall proceed to vote on such motion and on any amendments that are proposed in the said report without debate.”

Motion 196 provides for a Committee comprising three Members from the Government, one of whom will be the Chairman, and two Members from the Opposition. In terms of the same Motion, the Committee was set up as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Jesmond Mugliett
Members	Hon Ċensu Galea Hon Leo Brincat Hon Charles Buhagiar Hon Philip Mifsud

Motion 281 of 6 December 2011 amended the composition of the Committee as originally established by Motion 196 of 6 December 2010.

The Committee held six meetings in 2011. Details of the meetings are as follows:

1 February	Plan Policy BEN 8
14 February	Discussion on the following draft legal notices (i) Daily Penalty Regulations, 2011; (ii) Schedule of Penalties Regulations, 2011
28 February	Continuation of the discussion on the following draft legal notices (i) Daily Penalty Regulations, 2011 (ii) Schedule of Penalties Regulations, 2011
11 April	Continuation of the discussion on the following draft legal notices (i) Daily Penalty Regulations, 2011 (ii) Schedule of Penalties Regulations, 2011
16 November	Continuation of the discussion on the following draft legal notices (i) Daily Penalty Regulations, 2011 (ii) Schedule of Penalties Regulations, 2011 (<i>Parliamentary Secretary Hon Mario de Marco addressed the Committee</i>)
14 December	Continuation of the discussion on the draft legal notice Schedule of Penalties Regulations, 2011

SELECT COMMITTEES

Standing Order 121 states that:

‘The House may appoint a Select Committee of its Members for the purpose of investigating any subject. It shall be competent for the Speaker to be appointed a Member of any Select Committee of the House.’

Select Committee on Strengthening Democracy

The Select Committee on Strengthening Democracy was set up in terms of Standing Order 121, by way of Motion 47 moved by the Prime Minister, seconded by Hon Angelo Farrugia, on 16 July 2008 and approved unanimously by the House.

The resolution established the main themes to be considered by the Committee:

- strengthening of Parliament
- strengthening transparency and accountability, including public financing of political parties, the Commission against Corruption, the Office of the Ombudsman, conflicts of interest of the Members of Parliament, Parliamentary Secretaries and Ministers
- public broadcasting in Malta, including the regulation of TV stations pertaining to the political parties
- strengthening the Constitution in order to improve the electoral process.

The Members of the Committee are as follows:

Chairperson	Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Substitute	Hon Ċensu Galea, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives
Government Members	Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Leader of the House Hon Austin Gatt, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications Hon Francis Zammit Dimech
Substitutes	Hon Charlò Bonnici Hon Beppe Fenech Adami Hon Michael Frendo
Opposition Members	Hon Angelo Farrugia Hon Charles Mangion Hon Karmenu Vella
Substitutes	Hon Evarist Bartolo Hon Michael Falzon Hon George Vella

The Committee did not meet in 2011. On 7 May 2010, the Leader of the Opposition issued a statement stating that following events that took place in the House in the beginning of May, the Opposition parliamentary group agreed to withdraw its participation from the Select Committee.

Select Committee on Re-Codification and Consolidation of Laws

On 14 December 2009, the House approved a motion moved by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Motion 114, calling for the setting up of a Select Committee of the House tasked with the simplification of Maltese laws by way of re-codification and consolidation. This Committee, chaired by Hon Franco Debono and composed of Hon José Herrera and Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, met 10 times.

Chairperson	Hon Franco Debono
Members	Hon José Herrera Hon Francis Zammit Dimech

During these meetings, the Members of the Committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of developing a Maltese Administrative Code. Prof Kevin Aquilina, Prof Ian Refalo, Dr Marse-Ann Farrugia, Dr Peter Grech, Dr Godwin Grima and Dr Vanni Bruno, all experts on the Administrative Code, discussed the viability of such an exercise.

The Committee is to report to the House on its progress every six months, and regularly produce special reports regarding the various aspects of its mandate.

Details of the meeting of the Select Committee on the re-codification and consolidation of laws in 2011 are as follows:

25 January	Approval of the Select Committee's First Year Report
1 February	Code of an Administrative Law - continued discussion with Prof Kevin Aquilina, Associate Professor and Head of Department of Media, Communications and Technology Law at the Faculty of Laws of the University of Malta; Laws, suggested for repeal
8 February	Consolidation of the press laws - discussion with the Chairman and members of the Malta Press Club; Laws suggested for repeal
14 February	Consolidation of the electoral laws - discussion with President Emeritus Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici - Discussion with the Attorney General, Dr Peter Grech, on laws, suggested for repeal
2 March	Report by Prof Kevin Aquilina on the Administrative Code and the revision of statutory laws; Presentation by Prof Kevin Aquilina on the need to have a Code of media law
14 March	Approval of the First Year Report of the Select Committee on Re-codification and Consolidation of Laws; Discussion with Prof Kevin Aquilina
15 June	Upgrading the right to legal assistance for arrested persons
28 June	Upgrading the right to legal assistance for arrested persons (Cont.)
11 July	Consolidation of Criminal Law
12 December	Report by Prof Kevin Aquilina on the Administrative Code and revision of statutory laws.

Select Committee tasked with establishing the facts about the issue of Black Dust Precipitation over the southern localities of Malta

Towards the end of 2010, the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, presented to Parliament a Motion - Motion 176 - on the setting up a Select Committee tasked with establishing the facts relating to the issue of black dust precipitation over the southern localities of Malta.

This Motion established that the Committee be chaired by the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker in his absence, and composed of two Members from each side of the House. Hon Leo Brincat, Hon Franco Debono, Hon Joe Mizzi and Hon Jesmond Mugliett are members on this Committee.

The Committee met twice during 2011.

15 February	Establishment of the work of the Select Committee
27 September	Report by Prof Alfred J Vella - Report on the nature, distribution and likely source of black particles in dust fall in Malta dated March 2011

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

An important aspect of the work of the House of Representatives is establishing contacts with foreign parliamentarians.

This aim is reached, other than by receiving foreign delegations and visitors to the Parliament, when the Speaker and the Members of Parliament participate in inter-parliamentary meetings organised by various parliaments or international organisations.

Outgoing Visits and Participation in International Fora by the Hon Speaker

Official Parliamentary Visit to Kuwait, 18-22 March 2011

Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives, led a parliamentary delegation on an official visit to Kuwait. The visit was made in response to an invitation by the Head of the Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Foundation.

The delegation, which included Hon Jesmond Mugliett and Hon Joe Mizzi, participated in the ceremony of the Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Award Foundation for Arabic Poetry.

Hon Speaker met with His Highness the Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Hamad in the presence of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. A meeting also took place with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

EU Speakers Conference, 3-5 April 2011

Hon Michael Frendo participated in the annual EU Speakers' Conference which was held in Brussels.

The main topics under discussion were: the role of Parliaments in the field of European economic governance and the European semester; their role in the oversight of the European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice; the parliamentary scrutiny of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as well as the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP); and the communication strategies of parliamentary chambers.

Fourth Parliamentary Forum on Shaping the Information Society, 18-20 May 2011

Hon Michael Frendo attended the Fourth Parliamentary Forum on Shaping the Information Society held in Geneva. The forum is an event co-organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA), and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), through the *Global Centre for ICT in Parliament*, a partnership initiative of the UN and IPU. This year's debate focused on the representative, law-making and oversight responsibilities of Members of Parliament in the area of cyber-security. The forum addressed the particular challenges posed by the illicit use of information and communication technologies, such as the safeguarding of citizens in the connected environment; the protection of State information, data and infrastructures; and the transnational response to cybercrime.

Hon Michael Frendo presided over the session: Exercising oversight on the security of critical infrastructure, focusing on Parliament's oversight role in ensuring that the Executive is appropriately building its capacity to respond to the increasing number of cyber-attacks on national infrastructure from internal and external sources, and whether this capacity is being exercised effectively.

Whilst in Geneva, Hon Michael Frendo also participated in a round-table session on Parliamentary Diplomacy on 17 May 2011, organised by the DiploFoundation in cooperation with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, reflecting on how parliamentary diplomacy could possibly contribute towards stabilisation and democratisation in northern Africa.

Official Parliamentary Visit to the Hellenic Republic (Greece), 21-23 July 2011

Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives, visited Greece between 21 and 23 July 2011. The accompanying delegation was composed of Hon David Agius, Parliamentary Whip for the Government, and Hon Joe Mizzi, Parliamentary Whip for the Opposition.

An extensive programme included a courtesy call on the President of the Hellenic Republic, HE Karlos Papoulias; as well as meetings with the President of the Hellenic Parliament, Mr Philippos Petsalnikos, who invested Hon Speaker with the Gold Medal Award; the President of the Democratic Coalition Party, Ms Dora Bakoyannis; the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Ioannis Valinakis; the Vice-President of the New Democracy Party, Mr Dimitrios Avramopoulos; the Parliamentary Spokesman of the Greek Communist Party, Mr Athanasios Pafilis; and the Representative of the LAOS Party, 6th Vice-President of the Hellenic Parliament, Mr Vaitsis Apostolatos.

Official Parliamentary Visit to Australia, 8-16 October 2011

Upon a joint invitation from the President of the Federal Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Hon Harry Jenkins, and that of the President of the Senate, Hon John Hogg, Hon Michael Frendo led a delegation on an official parliamentary visit to Australia – the first of its kind. The Maltese delegation was composed of both Parliamentary Whips – Hon David Agius and Hon Joe Mizzi – as well as Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, Chairperson of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, together with Hon Luciano Busuttil, also a member of the said Committee.

During this visit, meetings were held with representatives of the State Legislative Parliamentary Councils and the State Legislative Senate Assemblies of Victoria and New South Wales, as well as with members of the Maltese-Australian Commercial Association, high officials within the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, the Commonwealth Bank and the Austrade (the Australian Commission for Trade). Meetings were also held with the management of the Centre for European Studies of the National University of Australia (ANU) which was encouraged to urge students to seek a European experience and to use Malta for their studies. The parliamentary delegation also met with Maltese communities in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

The Maltese High Commission, and the Consulates-General in Melbourne and Sydney, were instrumental for the success of this official parliamentary visit.

Vth Meeting of the Standing Committees and Vth Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), 26-30 October 2011

Hon Michael Frendo led a parliamentary delegation composed of Hon Jesmond Mugliett, also Head of the Malta Parliamentary Delegation to the PAM, Hon George Vella and Hon Justyne Caruana. The meeting, which took place in Palermo, Italy, focused on the reports of the workings of the PAM Standing Committees: the Middle East, constitutional changes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the interconnection between organised crime and terrorism in the Mediterranean, new strategies and perspectives in countering terrorism, external trade and investments in the Mediterranean, disaster prevention and management in the Mediterranean marine space resulting from oil and gas leakage, water and tourism, civil nuclear energy, domestic violence, and migrations.

During the meetings reviewing the work of the 1st Standing Committee, Hon George Vella presented the Report on the Middle East.

The PAM Prize 2011 was awarded to Hon Michael Frendo for his commitment in supporting PAM activities with the aim of enhancing cooperation between the Parliament of Malta and the institutional functioning of the PAM Secretariat.

HE Dr Fayez Al-Tarawneh from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was appointed President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

Outgoing Visits of Maltese Parliamentary Delegations

Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs

February	Hon Beppe Fenech Adami attended the meeting of the COSAC Conference of Foreign Affairs Committees Chairs, held in Budapest on 10-11 February
May	Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, and Hon George Vella represented the Maltese Parliament in the XLV COSAC Meeting, held in Budapest on 29-31 May
October	Hon Charlò Bonnici and Hon Michael Farrugia participated in the XLVI COSAC Meeting, held in Warsaw on 2-4 October.

European Parliament and European Union Presidency Meetings

Joint Parliamentary Meetings are organised and co-chaired by the President of the European Parliament (EP) and the President of the national parliament of the country holding the rotating EU Council Presidency. Particular emphasis and priority is given to policy issues where the EU at present does not legislate, but nevertheless takes important decisions. The common foreign, defence and security policy, the macro-economic monetary policy coordination and areas of freedom, security and justice, and climate change, cover such issues.

The aim of the Joint Parliamentary Meetings is not to arrive at common positions between the representatives of national parliaments and the EP, but to establish better parliamentary oversight and control with intergovernmental and non-legislative decisions taken at the EU level. They also seek a parliamentary input for the European Council meetings.

Inter-parliamentary Committee meetings with national parliaments, proposed on the initiative of the individual parliamentary committees of the European Parliament, invite national colleagues from their corresponding committees. These meetings are a continuation of existing practice and mainly cover the policy areas where the European Union has legislative powers using the co-decision procedure. The aim of these meetings is to promote exchange of views between European and national parliamentarians with a view to influencing the legislative decisions of the European Parliament. They are co-organised by the Legislative Dialogue Unit of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments and the European Parliament committee concerned.

During the course of the year under review, Maltese Members of Parliament participated in the following European Parliament and European Union Presidency meetings:

February	Hon Philip Mifsud and Hon Charles Mangion participated in the Conference of Chairpersons of Committees on Budget and Finance, held in Budapest on 24-25 February
March	Hon Charlò Bonnici and Hon Stefan Buontempo participated in the Joint Meeting of Chairpersons of Regional Development and Sustainable Development Committees, held in Budapest on 3-5 March
April	Hon Stephen Spiteri participated in the Joint Parliamentary Meeting on 'Western Balkans – towards a more integrated Europe', held in Brussels on 13-14 April. Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia and Hon Michael Farrugia participated in the Conference of Chairpersons of Committees on Health, held in Budapest on 14-15 April. Hon Karl Gouder and Hon Leo Brincat participated in the Interparliamentary Meeting with the National Parliaments organised by the European Parliament on Climate Change, held in Brussels on 19 April. Hon Philip Mifsud and Hon Anthony Agius Decelis participated in the Meeting of Chairpersons of Agriculture Committees, held in Budapest on 31 March -1 April
May	Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, attended the Conference of Foreign Affairs Committee Chairs (COFACC), held in Budapest on 5-6 May. Hon Carmelo Abela participated in the Joint Meeting of Chairpersons of Education, Science and Research and Employment and Labour Committees, held in Budapest on 19-20 May. Hon Joe Mizzi participated in the Joint Committee Meeting on Energy, held in Brussels on 24 May
July	Hon Philip Mifsud and Hon Anthony Agius Decelis participated in the Inter-Parliamentary

	Committee Meeting with National Parliaments organised by the European Parliament on ‘The CAP towards 2020’, held in Brussels on 12 July. Hon David Agius and Hon Luciano Busuttil participated in the Meeting of the Economic Affairs, Regional Policy and Infrastructure Committee Chairs, held in Warsaw on 17-19 July
September	Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, attended the Conference of Foreign Affairs Committee Chairs (COFACC), held in Warsaw on 4-6 September. Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia and Hon Charles Mangion participated in the Meeting of Chairpersons of Economic Affairs Committees, held in Warsaw on 11-12 September. Hon Charlò Bonnici and Hon Karmenu Vella participated in the Meeting of Chairpersons of Finance Committees, held in Warsaw on 18-19 September. Hon Philip Mifsud and Hon Anthony Agius Decelis participated in the Meeting of Chairpersons of Agriculture Committees, held in Warsaw on 25-26 September
October	Hon Karl Gouder and Hon Stefan Buontempo participated in the Single Market Forum, organised under the auspices of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Polish Presidency, held in Krakow on 2-4 October. Hon Michael Falzon participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Committee Meeting with National Parliaments on Democratic Accountability of the Internal Security Strategy and the Role of Europol, Eurojust and Frontex, held in Brussels on 5-6 October. Hon Jesmond Mugliett and Hon Karmenu Vella participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Committee Meeting with National Parliaments on the Future Cohesion Policy in the light of new legislative proposals, held in Brussels on 5-6 October. Hon Stephen Spiteri and Hon Noel Farrugia participated in the Joint Committee Meeting on ‘Relaunching the Single Market: State of Play and Challenges Ahead’, held in Brussels on 10-11 October. Hon Stephen Spiteri participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Committee Meeting with National Parliaments on Human Rights Conditionality in Development Policy, held in Brussels on 11 October. Hon Karmenu Vella participated in the High-Level Conference on the European Union’s Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the 2014-2020, held in Brussels on 20-21 October
December	Hon Jesmond Mugliett and Hon Carmelo Abela participated in the Joint Parliamentary Meeting on ‘Social Cohesion and Demographic Development in a Sustainable Europe’, held in Brussels on 5-6 December.

On 22-24 June, following an invitation issued by the European Commission, a delegation made up of 14 Members of Parliament visited the European Institutions in Brussels. The delegation was composed of Hon Chris Agius, Hon David Agius, Hon Anthony Agius Decelis, Hon Frederick Azzopardi, Hon Charlò Bonnici, Hon Gino Cauchi, Hon Franco Debono, Hon Karl Gouder, Hon Philip Mifsud, Hon Joe Mizzi, Hon Silvio Parnis, Hon Anton Refalo, Hon Stephen Spiteri and Hon Anthony Zammit.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) brings together democratically elected Members of Parliament from the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe. Its powers extend only to the ability to investigate, recommend and advise, nevertheless, its recommendations on issues such as human rights have significant weight in the European political context. The European institutions often refer to the work of the PACE, especially in the fields of human rights, legal cooperation and cultural cooperation. The Assembly has 10 permanent committees that meet throughout the year to prepare reports and projects for resolutions in their respective fields of expertise.

The Assembly sets its own agenda; it discusses European and international events and examines current subjects which interest the populations of the countries of Europe covering issues related to human rights, democracy, protection of minorities and the rule of law.

The Maltese delegation to the PACE is composed as follows:

Members	Hon Francis Agius, Leader of the delegation Hon Giovanna Debono Hon Joe Debono Grech
Substitute Members	Hon Joseph Falzon Hon Beppe Fenech Adami Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca

In 2011 the members of the delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe participated actively in both the plenary sessions of the Assembly as well as in the various committees of which they are Members.

The following information lists the Maltese delegation's participation in both the Assembly plenary sessions and Committee meetings where Members had the opportunity to participate in discussions on a number of texts which later were adopted or otherwise, by the Assembly:

January	Hon Francis Agius, Hon Joe Debono Grech, Hon Joseph Falzon, Hon Beppe Fenech Adami and Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca participated in the First Part Session of the PACE, held in Strasbourg on 24-28 January. Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the Fact-Finding Visit to Azerbaijan on 31 January-4 February
March	Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the meeting of the Committee on Political Affairs, held in Paris on 9 March. Hon Francis Agius and Hon Joseph Falzon participated in the meeting of the Standing Committee, held in Paris on 11 March. Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the meeting of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, held in Brussels on 15-16 March. Hon Joseph Falzon and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the meeting of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, held in Monaco on 22 March. Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca participated in the meeting of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs, held in Paris on 22-23 March. Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the meeting of the Monitoring Committee, held in Paris on 25 March.
April	Hon Francis Agius, Hon Giovanna Debono, Hon Joe Debono Grech, Hon Beppe Fenech Adami, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca and Hon Joseph Falzon participated in the Second Part Session of the PACE, held in Strasbourg on 7-15 April.
May	Hon Joseph Falzon participated in the meeting of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, held in Ljubljana and Zagreb on 12-13 May. Hon Francis Agius and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the meeting of the Sub-Committee on External Relations of the Political Affairs Committee, held in St. Petersburg on 16-17 May. Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca participated in the meeting of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs, held in Paris on 19 May.
June	Hon Francis Agius, Hon Joseph Falzon, Hon Joe Debono Grech and Hon Beppe Fenech Adami participated in the Third Part Session of the PACE, held in Strasbourg on 19-24 June
September	Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the Meeting of the Political Affairs Committee, held in Caserta on 6 September
October	Hon Francis Agius, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, Hon Joe Debono Grech, Hon Beppe Fenech Adami and Hon Joseph Falzon participated in the Fourth Part Session of the PACE, held in Strasbourg on 2-7 October
November	Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the fact-finding mission in Azerbaijan organised by the Monitoring Committee on 22-25 November. Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the meeting of the Monitoring Committee, held in Paris on 17 November. Hon Francis Agius participated in the meeting of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs, held in Florence on 17-18 November. Hon Francis Agius participated in the meeting of the sub-Committee on Children of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs, held in Monaco on 20-21 November. Hon Francis Agius participated in the meeting of the Standing Committee, held in Edinburgh on 24-26 November. Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the meeting of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, held in Paris on 29-30 November. Hon Joseph Falzon participated in the meeting of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, held in Paris on 27-28 November

Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean

Since the Helsinki process in 1973 - which led to the setting up of the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) - countries like Malta strongly underscored the principle of indivisibility of security and vehemently underscored that peace, security and stability in Europe and in the Mediterranean were intrinsically and inextricably interlinked. The 'Mediterranean dimension' (better known as the CSCM – Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean), within the Charter of Paris for a New Europe signed in November 1990, is synonymous to Malta which advocated since the very start of the Helsinki process that there cannot be security in Europe without security in the Mediterranean. To underscore the importance of this dimension and its commitment towards the region, Malta hosted three

CSCE/OSCE seminars on the Mediterranean, the first one in 1979, followed by another one in 1993 and another in 1998.

Following seven Inter-Parliamentary Conferences on Security and Cooperation in Europe between 1972 and 1991, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) decided on a similar process in the Mediterranean, launching the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and including all littoral states of the Mediterranean.

In April 1990, during the convening of the 83rd IPU Conference in Nicosia, a resolution entitled 'The Promotion of Peace and Security in the Mediterranean region in the light of developments in Europe and the new spirit prevailing internationally' recommended the convening of a Conference of Parliamentarians of all Mediterranean States to discuss measures addressing various fields of cooperation. The idea of an Inter-Parliamentary CSCM was met with interest among Parliamentarians around the Mediterranean who supported it. IPU decided therefore to launch an 'inter-parliamentary' CSCM which convened meetings in Malaga (Spain) in June 1992, in Valletta (Malta) in November 1995, and in Marseilles (France) in April 2000.

The Malaga Conference confirmed the basic principles of the process and set up the general framework for cooperation between the Mediterranean partners; the Valletta Conference affirmed the need to give the CSCM process a solid institutional basis, both at governmental and parliamentary level, and further recommended, on Malta's initiative, the setting up of an Association of Mediterranean States. The Marseilles Conference urged that 'concurrent action should continue to be taken to establish an inter-parliamentary cooperation structure as advocated in the Final Document of the Second Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean, with a view to creating, in the long run, a Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean' and 'to establish an inter-parliamentary structure as advocated in the Valletta (1995) document' which enjoys a superior status, thus institutionalising the CSCM process.

In February 2005, the Fourth and final CSCM Conference was held in Nafplion, Greece. During that meeting, representatives of national parliaments of the Mediterranean States finalised and adopted the Statutes of the Parliamentary Assembly and decided to hold the first meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean in Amman, Jordan in 2006.

During PAM's inauguration on 10-11 September, 2006 in Amman, Jordan, Malta was unanimously selected to host the PAM's Secretariat at Palazzo Spinola in St Julians.

In November 2007, Malta hosted the second plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, with the participation of Pier Ferdinando Casini, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and Abdelwahed Radi, President of the Bureau of the Assembly and Moroccan Minister of Justice. Then French Ambassador for the Union for the Mediterranean initiative, Alain Le Roy, made a presentation on the UfM. As French President Sarkozy pressed forward with the proposed UfM, Malta indicated that the Parliamentary Assembly for the Mediterranean would be the Union's ideal parliamentary branch. However, that status was accorded to the EMPA, after the French proposal was expanded to incorporate all EU27 under the Franco-German Agreement of March 2008. Nonetheless, a Commission's Communiqué issued on 20 May 2008 invited the PAM at the 13 July Paris Summit when the UfM was officially launched.

The Charter of the Mediterranean, launched in 2009 and unanimously approved by PAM's members at the Monaco Plenary Session, considers the Middle East issue as an area of priority, reflected also in the establishment of an *ad hoc* Committee, which has already produced a report and a resolution on the Middle East compiled by Hon Dr George Vella (Malta), both endorsed and unanimously adopted in Monaco.

The aim of the Parliamentary Assembly is to provide the Mediterranean with a unique parliamentary forum of its own and to bring together, on an equal footing, the national parliaments on the Mediterranean littoral. By addressing issues of common concern to foster and enhance further confidence between Member States to ensure regional security and stability and promote peace, the Assembly works to develop cooperation among its Members in its fields of action by promoting political dialogue and understanding between parliaments concerned.

PAM obtained Observer Status within the structures of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), through a unanimous decision of the Plenary Session of the UNGA on 17 December 2009, through which the PAM has also been granted the possibilities of participating and intervening in consultation sessions and discussion forums under the framework of the UNGA. Malta was instrumental in the attainment of this status for PAM.

The detailed work of the Assembly is carried out by three Standing Committees which draw up opinions and recommendations. The committees of the PAM are:

- 1st Standing Committee on Political and Security Related Cooperation
- 2nd Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation
- 3rd Standing Committee on Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights.

Furthermore, in early 2008, the Standing Committees of the Assembly set up a number of working groups under the form of *ad hoc* Committees and Special Task Forces.

HE Mohammed Abu El Enein (Egypt) who was elected President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean for the biennium 2011-2012 during the 5th Plenary Session held in Rabat, Morocco between 28-29 October 2010, following HE Rudy Salles who had completed his two-year tenure at the helm of the PAM, had to relinquish his position due to the political and social unrest in Egypt until a formal Egyptian Parliament could be composed through free and democratic election. In the *interim* period following his resignation, HE Abdelwahad Radi of Morocco undertook the PAM Presidency until the 6th Plenary Session held in Palermo, Italy in October 2011, HE Fayez Al-Tarawneh, former Member of the Senate and former Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was elected to the post of PAM President.

By way of Motion 36 of 27 June 2008, amended by Motion 41 of 7 July 2008, the parliamentary delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean is composed of the following:

Members	Hon Jesmond Mugliett, Leader of the delegation
	Hon Justyne Caruana
	Hon Franco Debono
	Hon Louis Deguara
	Hon George Vella
Substitute Members	Hon Stephen Spiteri
	Hon Michael Falzon

Details of its participation in PAM meetings are as follows:

January	Hon George Vella participated in the Bureau Meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, held in Rome on 22 January.
June	Hon Justyne Caruana and Hon George Vella participated in the meeting of the Special Task Forces of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, held in Dubrovnik on 19-20 June.
September	On 18-26 September, Hon George Vella participated in the High level meetings and debate of the 66 th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in New York; and at a visit to the US Administration and Congress, held in Washington D.C.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly was officially established in Athens on 22-23 March 2004 as the parliamentary dimension of the Partnership set up by the Barcelona Declaration of November 1995.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA of UfM), formerly EMPA, consists of 280 members: 130 EU members (81 members from the twenty-seven EU national parliaments - three from each Parliament - and 49 members from the European Parliament), 10 members from new European Mediterranean partner countries (two for each delegation from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Monaco and Montenegro), 130 members from the ten countries on the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey), and 10 members from Mauritania.

There are five Standing Committees of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean:

- Committee on Political Affairs, Security, and Human Rights
- Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs, and Education
- Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies, and Culture
- Committee on Women's Rights in Euro-Med countries
- Committee on Energy, Environment, and Water.

The PA of UfM Bureau may establish, upon request of the Assembly one or more working groups. The Bureau shall establish the nature, duration, number of members, composition, remit and reporting obligations of such working groups.

At present, there are three such working groups: Working Group on the Financing of the Assembly and the Revision of the PA of UfM's Rules of Procedure, Working Group for Transferring the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) into a Euro-Mediterranean Development Bank and a Working Group on the Euro-Mediterranean University.

The PA of UfM is a consultative institution. Its resolutions and recommendations focus on the partnership's objectives and areas of cooperation and are not legally binding. At present, the PA of UfM is the main parliamentary dimension of the Union for the Mediterranean, which absorbed the Barcelona Process and was officially launched at the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of 43 countries held in Paris on 13 July 2008.

On 28 April 2010, the European Parliament adopted Motion 2009/2215(INI) on the Union for the Mediterranean, whereby, in its clause 37, stresses that the purpose of the EMPA is to become the parliamentary assembly of the UfM, which will guarantee its democratic legitimacy, and supports the proposal of the 6th plenary session of the EMPA held in Amman on 13 and 14 March 2010 that the name of the EMPA should be changed to Parliamentary Assembly – Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM).'

By way of Motion 35 of 27 June 2008, amended by Motion 42 of 7 July 2008, the parliamentary delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean is composed of the following Members:

Members	Hon Ċensu Galea, Leader of the delegation Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia Hon George Vella
Substitute Members	Hon Leo Brincat Hon Edwin Vassallo Hon Ninu Zammit

Details of the delegation's participation in PA-UfM meetings are as follows:

January	Hon George Vella participated in the meeting of the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights, held in Brussels on 27 January.
March	Hon Ċensu Galea, Hon Leo Brincat, Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia and Hon George Vella participated in the Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, held in Rome on 3-4 March.
July	Hon George Vella participated in the meeting of the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, held in Barcelona on 1 July. Hon Leo Brincat participated in the meeting of the Committee on Energy, Environment and Water, held in Salzburg on 1-2 July.
October	Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia participated in the meeting of the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education, held in Anatalya on 19-20 October.
December	Hon Leo Brincat participated in the meeting of the Committee on Energy, Environment and Water, held in Vienna on 5-6 December.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an association of Commonwealth parliamentarians united in their interests, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, and by the pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy. The CPA works in the fields of good governance, of democracy and elections, and of human rights, while special attention is also paid to gender sensitising (thus the appointment of the branch of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians) and to promoting awareness of parliamentary democracy among the youth of the Commonwealth. It was founded in 1911 as the Empire Parliamentary Association.

The mission of the CPA is to promote the advancement of parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance. It seeks to build an informed parliamentary community able to deepen the democratic commitment of the Commonwealth and to further cooperation among its parliaments.

Members of the Maltese House of Representatives took part in the following CPA gatherings in 2011:

March	Hon Gino Cauchi and Hon Karl Gouder participated in the CPA 60 th Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure, held in London on 7-11 March.
July	Hon David Agius, Hon Angelo Farrugia and Hon Karl Gouder attended the 57 th CPA Annual Conference and the 31 st CPA Small Branches Conference, held in London on 21-28 July. Hon Justyne Caruana attended the 15 th Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Steering Committee Meeting, held in London on 20-24 July.
November	Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando participated in the CPA UK International Parliamentary Conference on the Millennium Development Goals, held in London on 28 November-2 December. Hon David Agius participated in the 22 nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar, held in New Delhi on 24-29 November.

Inter-Parliamentary Union

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is an international organisation established as a forum for political multilateral negotiations. The Maltese Parliament, together with the parliaments of 142 other countries, is a member of the IPU. The IPU has a permanent observer status at the United Nations.

One of the organs of the IPU is the Assembly which meets twice a year. The Assembly is composed of parliamentarians designated as delegates by the parliaments of the countries in the Union. It is assisted in its work by a number of Standing Committees which normally prepare reports and draft resolutions for the Assembly.

By way of Motion 34 of 27 June 2008, the Executive Committee of the National Group comprises:

President	Speaker of the House of Representatives
Vice Presidents	Prime Minister Leader of the Opposition

The parliamentary delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union is made up of:

Members	Hon Michael Gonzi Hon George Vella
Substitute Members	Hon Philip Mifsud Hon Joe Mizzi

Members of the Maltese delegation to the IPU attended the following Assembly meetings during the year under review:

April	Hon Michael Gonzi and Hon Joe Mizzi participated in the 124 th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Panama City, 15-20 April.
October	Hon Joseph Falzon and Hon Anthony Zammit were appointed as temporary members to attend the 125 th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Berne, 16-19 October (By way of Motion 244 of 28 September, and Motion 252 of 4 October 2011).

Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Originally established in 1990 with 320 members, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA) brings together parliamentarians from 56 participating states. The aim of the OSCE PA is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue which is an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area. It offers a forum for political negotiations and decision-making in the fields of early-warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, and puts the political will of its participating states into practice through its unique network of field missions.

By way of Motion 33 of 27 June 2008, the Maltese Parliament is represented in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe as follows:

Members	Hon Louis Deguara, Leader of the delegation Hon Frederick Azzopardi Hon Angelo Farrugia
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Members of the Maltese delegation participated in the following meetings:

February	Hon Louis Deguara, Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Angelo Farrugia participated in the Winter Meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, held in Vienna on 24-25 February.
July	Hon Louis Deguara, Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Angelo Farrugia participated in the Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Belgrade on 6-10 July.
October	Hon Louis Deguara, Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Carmelo Abela participated in the Fall Meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Dubrovnik on 7-10 October. (Hon Carmelo Abela was appointed substitute member by way of Motion 243 of 28 September 2011, to attend this meeting in lieu of Hon Angelo Farrugia).

Others

May	On 25 May, Hon Joe Debono Grech, Hon Beppe Fenech Adami and Hon Francis Agius participated in a visit to Azerbaijan organised by the Association of Civil Society and Development in Azerbaijan.
July	On 3-8 July, Hon Michael Gonzi, Hon Joe Mizzi, Hon Leo Brincat and Hon Ninu Zammit as members of the Malta-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group, visited Germany to meet with their counterparts in the German Parliament.
September	Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Michael Falzon participated in the Conference on Migration and Asylum organised by the Home Affairs Committee of the House of Commons, held in London on 12

	September. On 23-24 September, Hon Joe Debono Grech, Hon Francis Agius, Hon Beppe Fenech Adami, Hon Angelo Farrugia and Hon Joe Mizzi participated in the Celebration of the 20 th Anniversary of Independence of Azerbaijan. Hon Philip Mifsud and Hon Marlene Pullicino participated in the 11 th Parliamentary Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency of the EUFORES, held in Stockholm, 30 September-1 October.
October	On 10-11 October, Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the International Humanitarian Forum, Baku, Azerbaijan.

Incoming Visits and Conferences organised by the Maltese Parliament

Visit to Parliament by HE Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, 24-25 January

On 24 January, at the start of a two-day visit in Malta, HE Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, addressed the House of Representatives touching upon salient issues such as Malta's role in the Euro-Mediterranean region, illegal migration, the Lisbon Treaty and the new role of national parliaments and the issue of the sixth seat for Malta in the European Parliament. President Buzek also met with Members of the Standing Committee of Foreign and European Affairs.

Meeting of the Public Sector Ombudsmen of the British and Irish Ombudsman Association, 2 June

The Speaker of the House, Hon Michael Frendo, chaired a round table titled 'The Ombudsman and Parliament' on 2 June and which saw the participation of Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Hon Helena Dalli, Main Spokesperson for the Public Service and Gender Equality.

The Association first came into being in 1993 as the United Kingdom Ombudsman Association and only later became the British and Irish Ombudsman Association when membership was extended to include Ombudsmen from the Republic of Ireland in 1994.

Roundtable Conference of the European Public Law Organisation (EPLO), 8-9 July

In conjunction with the European Public Law Organisation, with the support of the Embassy of the Hellenic Republic in Malta, Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives, hosted the Conference on 'The Sovereign Debt Crisis and the New Boundaries of the State' at the House of Representatives in Valletta.

Flanking Hon Speaker, high-profile interlocutors included Hon Prof Giuliano Amato, Former Prime Minister of the Italian Republic, and Prof Spyridon Flogaitis, Director of the European Public Law Organisation (EPLO).

The conference was sectioned into two debating schedules entitled:

- The Sovereign Debt Crisis and the New Boundaries of the State; and
- National Perspectives.

Other participants included Hon Ċensu Galea, Deputy Speaker; Hon Tonio Fenech, Minister of Finance, Investment and the Economy; Hon Karmenu Vella, Shadow Minister of Finance; Prof Michael Brenner, University of Jena, Germany; Dr Olivier Clerc, University of Bordeaux, France; Prof Ioannis Drossos, University of Athens, Greece; Prof Jorge Bacelar Gouveia, University of Lisbon, Portugal; Prof John O'Dowd, University College of Dublin, Ireland; Dr Nilay Arat, Kadir Has University, Turkey; Prof Migena Leskoviku, European University, Albania; and Prof Giulio Napolitano, University Roma Tre, Italy.

Sixth Conference of Presidents of the Parliaments of Small European States, 5-8 October

Hon Michael Frendo hosted the Sixth Conference of Presidents of the Parliaments of Small European States which included the participation of the Principality of Andorra, the Republic of Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Principality of Monaco, Montenegro and the Republic of San Marino. The Republic of Cyprus could not be represented due to unforeseen circumstances. The conference was held at the Tapestry Chamber at The Palace.

Presidents of Parliaments debated three main themes, namely,

- Parliamentary Diplomacy – Maximising on the Parliamentary Dimension
- Setting up an Information Database – Sharing of Information, Resources and Experiences
- An Increasing Legislative and Debating Workload – Addressing the Challenges of Smaller Parliaments.

The programme included also a courtesy call on HE George Abela, President of Malta, at San Anton Palace, as well as cultural visits including The Malta Experience, a tour of St. John's Co-Cathedral, a guided tour of Mdina, a tour of the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum and the Tarxien Temples.

ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

The Association of Former Members of Parliament of the House of Representatives held a number of meetings during the course of 2011. The Maltese Association has been a member of the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe since 2006.

The principal objective of the European Association is to promote the European ideal, based on individual and political liberties, the primacy of law and true democracy, and to contribute to the European construction. To this end, the association works to make the European institutions better known to the general public and organises meetings and colloquies aimed at examining the major problems of society.

During 2011 the Maltese members participated in a number of meetings of the European Association of Former Parliamentarians.

Mr Lino Debono took part in two meetings of the Bureau and General Assembly of the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Council of Europe on 25 February held in Paris and on 27 May held in Berne.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Cultures for Peace Programme – 1st Conference: Managing Intercultural Dialogue

The Foundation of Abdul Aziz al-Babtain in collaboration with the *Società Dante Alighieri* and the University Emuni, held a conference titled *Managing Intercultural Dialogue* at the Corinthia Hotel, Malta on 2-3 March. The conference discussed the role of the Al-Babtain Foundation in promoting intercultural dialogue and the roles of civil and political society vis-à-vis intercultural dialogue.

The Speaker of the House, Hon Michael Frendo, delivered an opening speech.

Mediterranean Day

The Maltese Parliament commemorated Mediterranean Day during the parliamentary sitting of 23 March. The Speaker of the House, Hon Michael Frendo, delivered a message from the General Secretary of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean addressed to Parliament.

Hon Tonio Borg and Hon George Vella both delivered a speech on the current situation in the Mediterranean.

Seminar on Parliamentary Diplomacy

On 8 March a one-day seminar on Parliamentary Diplomacy, organised jointly by the House of Representatives, DiploFoundation and MEDAC, was hosted by Hon Michael Frendo.

Speaker Michael Frendo delivered the opening speech which was followed by introductions by Prof Stephen Calleya, Director MEDAC and Dr Jovan Kurbalija, Director, DiploFoundation.

The seminar, which saw as its participants MEDAC students and Commonwealth participants of a workshop in Modern Diplomacy at DiploFoundation, focused on parliamentary work, experiences and institutions. Hon Francis Agius, Hon George Vella, Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, Hon Leo Brincat, Hon Angelo Farrugia, Hon Ċensu Galea, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, the Parliamentary Secretary Hon Mario Galea, Dr Simon Busuttil (MEP), Dr Roseanne Cortis and Dr Monika Wohlfeld intervened during the seminar.

NSTF Mini-European Assembly

On 13 May, the House of Representatives hosted the 22nd edition of the NSTF Mini European Assembly. This year's topic was 'Securing the people's aspiration to Freedom: How far should Europe participate in nurturing and assisting the emergence of new democracies?' The session was chaired by the Deputy Speaker Hon Ċensu Galea, whereas MEP Dr Simon Busuttil delivered the keynote address to the Assembly. A number of MPs participated during this annual event.

Mr Chris Bergedahl from the University of Malta was awarded the Prize for Best Speaker offered by the Parliament of Malta.

Europe Day

Schuman Day, also known as Europe Day, held yearly on 9 May and marking the day when Robert Schuman proposed his famous eponymous declaration suggesting the organisation of European States in a form of supranational community, was celebrated in the Chamber of the House of Representatives by way of a parliamentary debate that pitched secondary school students against Ministers and Members of Parliament on the low number of students in tertiary education, on how volunteering can change one's life and on measures to reduce our carbon footprint. Education Minister Hon Dolores Cristina and Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs Hon George Pullicino, as well as a number of Members of Parliament participated in the debate and discussed these issues with students from state and church schools who were selected through an essay competition.

Ekoskola Parliament

On 8 June, the Chamber of the House of Representatives once again hosted the Ekoskola Parliament session. The event provides participating students with an opportunity to meet Members of Parliament and discuss with them their environmental concerns. During this session students shared their experience of Climate Change projects that they conducted in their community as part of the HSBC Eco-Schools Climate Initiative.

This was the seventh edition of the programme. Ninety students from 45 different schools accompanied by 19 Members of Parliament participated during this session.

Sette Giugno

The Speaker of the Parliament of Malta, Hon Michael Frendo, delivered a speech at the annual commemoration of the 7 June 1919 events in which six Maltese men lost their lives and which led to the granting of self-government in 1921.

The Speaker reflected on this sacrifice in his speech and its significance in the constitutional history of Malta for the people's right to self-determination through freely-elected representatives, calling for Parliament to be given its autonomy as a Constitutional Institution in order to strengthen parliamentary democracy and put the Maltese Parliament on the same level as the National Parliaments of other European Union Member States.

In relation to this, the Speaker also called for the creation of a parliamentary authority on parliamentary procedure – equivalent to the 'Erskine May' – that Parliament can make recourse to when necessary, an initiative which would strengthen the primary resources of our parliamentary guide.

The commemorative ceremony was held at Hastings Garden in Valletta, the location of the *Sette Giugno* monument, with the traditional laying of wreaths at the foot of the monument by distinguished persons including the Speaker, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

During his address, Speaker Michael Frendo made reference to the 90th anniversary from the first legislative assembly in 1921.

National Youth Parliament

As in previous years, the 2011 session of the National Youth Parliament organised by the *Kunsill Nazzjonali taż-Żgħażaġh* was held in the Chamber of the House of Representatives on 14 September. This activity aims at bringing Maltese youth closer to both the parliamentary and democratic systems of our country, by discussing a number of issues of specific concern to the younger generation. Topics discussed this year included alternative sources of energy, peer pressure, the need of apprenticeships, poverty and delinquency.

Two sessions (Junior and Senior) of the National Youth Parliament are held in order to cater for the different age groups of participants.

The session was chaired by Speaker Hon Michael Frendo and Deputy Speaker Hon Ċensu Galea. Members of Parliament from both political parties participated in the discussion.

Notte Bianca

For the fifth year running, the Maltese Parliament participated in the *Notte Bianca* activity held on 1 October by opening its doors to the public. As in previous years, the venue attracted a large number of people who were shown around the Parliamentary Chamber and Committee Rooms by the parliamentary staff.

A number of Members of Parliament, as well as the Speaker of the House, were present to meet the public.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, commemorated on 25 November, was marked by Parliament on 29 November. During the adjournment time of the day's parliamentary sitting, Hon Helena Dalli, Main Spokesperson for the Public Service and Gender Equality, and Hon Edwin Vassallo, Chairman of the Social Affairs Committee, delivered a speech.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is an annual reminder that violence against women is one of the most widespread human rights abuses in all countries.

Engaging with Civil Society

As part of the continuation of the Outreach Programme ‘Engaging with Civil Society’ embarked on by Speaker Michael Frendo in 2010, with the aim of bringing Parliament and civil society closer together, various meetings and tours were arranged with different groups, public bodies and companies.

The programme informs the public of the function of Parliament in society thus enriching parliamentary democracy. To this end, a booklet was published detailing the composition of Parliament, describing the legislative process and explaining how Parliament functions.

This year, the programme saw the involvement of, amongst others, the Chamber of Commerce, FIMbank PLC, the Malta Women’s Organisations, Police Recruits, Fenech and Fenech Advocates and APS Bank.

Synergia: Igniting the Mediterranean Innovation Society

On 24 May the House of Representatives hosted a seminar organised by *Fondazzjoni Temi Zammit*, entitled ‘Synergia: Igniting the Mediterranean Innovation Society’, with the aim of promoting the transferring of knowledge and methodologies used with regard to creativity and innovation among Maltese public and private bodies.

Speaker of the House Hon Michael Frendo delivered the welcome speech to this event.

Commemoration of Dun Karm Psaila – 50th Anniversary from the National Poet’s Death

To commemorate the 50th anniversary from the death of the National Poet, Dun Karm Psaila, Parliament held a remembrance night, in which experts and academics gave talks. During this activity, Prof Oliver Friggieri gave a detailed analysis of the Maltese National Anthem penned by the poet, whereas Prof Henry Frendo discussed the historical aspect of the National Poet as well as his social undertakings.

Hon Edwin Vassallo and Hon Angelo Farrugia addressed the audience amongst whom were a number of Members of Parliament.

IDEAT

Together with Hon David Agius, Hon Helena Dalli and Hon Owen Bonnici, the Hon Speaker Michael Frendo addressed an audience attending a debate organised by the organisation IDEAT with the topic ‘The Maltese Parliament – Challenges and Opportunities in the coming years’.

Parliament for Persons with a Disability

The Parliament for persons with a disability was held on 3 November in the Tapestry Chamber. The initiative helps to promote inclusion by bringing the democratic process to persons with disability and emphasising that Parliament is an institution serving the whole population.

The session was addressed by, amongst others, Adam Kosa, the first MEP who is hard of hearing and uses sign language to deliver his speech.

The Speaker of the House Hon Michael Frendo, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Tonio Borg as well as the Leader of the Opposition Hon Joseph Muscat and various other Members of Parliament from both sides of the House participated in this event.

International Leadership Conference: A New Vision for Cooperation between Europe and Africa and the Culture of Peace

The International Leadership Conference organised by the Universal Peace Federation and entitled 'A New Vision for Cooperation between Europe and Africa and the Culture of Peace' was held in the Presidential Palace on 4-6 November.

The event brought together leaders from all over Europe and Africa to focus on the theme. Other participants included high level religious leaders, internationally renowned academics, representatives from intergovernmental bodies and from a broad range of civil society in Europe and Africa.

Hon Michael Frendo delivered a speech on 'Europe and Africa, Past and Present' during the opening session of the conference. Hon Alfred Sant participated in the session that addressed the European Perspectives.

Official Launch of the International Year of Cooperatives (2012) in Malta

15 December saw the launch of the International Year of Cooperatives (2012) in Malta.

The launch took place in the Parliamentary Committee meeting place under the auspices of the Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon Michael Frendo, with the participation of the Parliamentary Secretary responsible for Cooperatives Hon Jason Azzopardi, and Main Spokesperson for Work, Worker's Rights and Quality of Life, Hon Angelo Farrugia.

The United Nations declared 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives, with the theme 'Cooperatives Build a Better World'.

The International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) celebrates a different way of doing business, one focused on human need not human greed, where the members (who own and govern businesses) collectively enjoy the benefits instead of all profits going just to shareholders.

Having an International Year of Cooperatives provides an opportunity to captivate the attention of national governments, the business community and, most importantly, the general public on the advantages provided by the cooperative model.

Photo Exhibition

A photo exhibition entitled 'Save Women's Lives' and organised by SOS Malta was hosted by Parliament.

The exhibition, which ran between the 2 and 5 May, aimed at fostering a positive attitude towards maternal health in the developing world, with the hope of putting the issue high on the European political agenda.

OBITUARIES

During 2011, the House expressed its grief:

- on 17 January at the death of Dr Philip Muscat, ex-Minister and ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 31 December 2010; the death of Mr Renato Agius Muscat, ex-Mayor and ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 8 January 2011; and the death of Dr Mario Felice, ex-Shadow Minister and ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 1 January 2011;
- on 15 February at the death of Dr George Hyzler, ex-Minister and ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 20 January 2011;
- on 12 April at the death of Mr Freddie Micallef, ex-Minister and ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 7 April 2011;

- on 12 July at the death of Mrs Mary Fenech Adami, wife of Dr Edward Fenech Adami, President Emeritus, and mother of Hon Beppe Fenech Adami, who passed away on 8 July 2011;
- on 4 October at the death of Mrs Josephine Agius, mother of Hon Francis Agius who passed away on 16 August 2011;
- on 5 October at the death of Dr Philip Saliba, ex-Deputy Speaker and ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 26 September 2011;
- on 9 November at the death of Mr Emidio Caruana, ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 1 November 2011.

On 26 January, the House commemorated the victims of the Holocaust, victims of World War II and victims of other war crimes in recent years and observed a few moments of silence.

As part of the commemoration of Members of the House, or former Members, who pass away during the year, Parliament publishes a booklet containing a reproduction of the oath of allegiance taken by the Member as well as the reproduction of the maiden or final speech made by the Member in Parliament. The commemorative booklet is distributed to all the Members of Parliament and to the family of the deceased who is invited to attend the commemoration in the House.

PAULINE ABELA
Clerk to the House

Electoral Office

Electoral Office

RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE ISSUE OF IDENTITY CARDS

The Commissioner of Police is the authorised officer designated to issue the Identity Card in terms of the Identity Card Act (Cap 258), however this function was delegated to the Electoral Office many years ago. The Electoral Office, through the ID Cards Section, issues the ID card to all persons aged from 14 years upwards who are entitled to it, administers the whole process, and is responsible for the regular maintenance of the ID card database. The Electoral Office receives applications for the issue of ID cards, registers the changes resulting from transfer of residence, change of status or other particulars and prints the ID cards. The whole process for the issue of an ID card to an individual takes only a few minutes, the computer system prints the plastic ID card with security features conforming to international standards and this is given to the applicant on the spot. During the year under review, about 58,500 ID cards were issued to Maltese nationals, nationals of other Member States, third country nationals and irregular migrants, and nearly 8,150 ID cards were issued to replace the ID cards that were reported lost or stolen. Electoral Office staff regularly goes to hospitals, institutions for old-age persons and private residences, where sick and aged persons residing there apply for the issue or renewal of their ID card.

From 1 May 2004 onwards, the Maltese ID card has been accepted as a travel document in all EU Member States and in December 2004, the Council of the European Union issued regulations regarding additional security features including biometrics in travel documents. Consequently, the Maltese ID card had to conform to those regulations and significant changes to the ID card data capture and issuing processes are envisaged in the near future. Government awarded a contract to De La Rue for a National Identity Management System including the issue of eID cards, and several detailed discussions and workshops were held throughout the year on various aspects of the eID card and related processes. A legal notice was published in January 2011 whereby expired ID cards were to remain valid up to the end of the year; however, persons who opted to use their ID card as a travel document or required changes to their particulars could call at the Electoral Office to renew their ID card and have the correct expiry date or particulars printed on it. Naturally, this measure avoided waste of resources and duplication of work whilst it also gave the necessary time to the competent authorities to take appropriate decisions and prepare the infrastructure for such an important and complex matter.

COMPILATION AND PUBLICATION OF THE ELECTORAL REGISTERS

The information collected in connection with the issue of ID cards was used as the basis for the compilation of the Electoral Registers. Applications for registration as voters and/or for transfer of residence were received at the Electoral Office and these were initially verified against records held at this Office, the Public Registry, the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs and at any other appropriate Department. The applications were processed and, provided the applicants had the requisite qualifications in terms of the provisions of the Constitution of Malta, their names were included in the Electoral Registers published in April and October. Confirmation from the competent authorities was obtained prior to deleting from the Electoral Registers those persons reported to be deceased, of unsound mind, or sentenced to more than one year imprisonment. Investigations in conjunction with Police Officers were also carried out prior to deleting persons from the Electoral Registers. At the end of each month, a list showing the additions, changes and deletions to the

Electoral Registers was given to the delegates of the political parties as laid down in Article 28 of the General Elections Act (Cap 354) and Regulation 7 (Third Schedule) of the Local Councils Act (Cap 363).

When Malta became a Member of the European Union, nationals of other Member States who resided in Malta and had the necessary qualifications became eligible to vote in elections for local councils and had the option to participate in elections for Members of the European Parliament held in Malta. Consequently, a separate register to include the names of persons eligible to vote in these elections was compiled and published according to the European Parliament Act (Cap 467).

UPDATING OF INFORMATION

The information held at the Electoral Office is regularly updated. This process comprises the inclusion of new voters, the transfer of voters from one locality to another and the deletion of deceased persons, emigrants and others who lose their qualifications to vote according to law. The Electoral Office also updates regularly the Identity Card database that contains information on all persons aged from 14 years upwards, who were issued with an ID card, and this process also includes changes due to new street names and door re-numbering exercises. The updated information is copied on a weekly basis to the Director of Civil Registration who maintains the Government Common Database which is accessed by government departments on a daily basis. During the year, inspections were carried out as necessary to verify the correct address of persons and to ensure that voters were included under the correct street names, localities and electoral divisions.

The computer system at the Electoral Office is built on a relational database and the particulars of voters and their digitised images both form an integral part of the system. All textual and image data is checked before being computerised because ultimately this is used for printing Identity Cards, compiling, updating and publishing Electoral Registers, printing voting documents and lists of persons entitled to vote, as well as for carrying out other electoral processes. Regular consolidation exercises are carried out to ensure the data is correct and appropriate measures are taken, including back-up facilities, to protect the data and comply with the Data Protection Act.

HOLDING OF ELECTIONS

The main task of the Electoral Office during 2011 was the holding of a national referendum on Saturday 28 May. The electoral processes covering a referendum are very similar to those involving a general election, except for the nomination of candidates. Such a major task required deployment of additional staff, selection of about 3,600 AECs and Counting Staff, printing and distribution of over 325,000 voting documents, setting up of nearly 600 polling booths in 107 polling places and printing of ballot papers. Following recent amendments to the electoral laws, facilities were provided for advance voting by those persons who declared that they would be away from Malta on polling day and, for the provision of special templates with Braille script and a recorder in polling places to facilitate voting by visually impaired persons. In the absence of a permanent counting complex, the Mediterranean Conference Centre was converted into a counting hall and facilities for the media, political parties, the Police and other authorised users were set up in the short time available and within the physical constraints of the building. The result of the referendum was published on 30 May 2011. After the referendum was over, ancillary work still had to be done including compilation of statistical information and reports, dismantling of polling booths and transport of equipment, payment to personnel who were assigned tasks during the electoral processes, payment to suppliers for services rendered during the elections and other work.

During the year under review, a casual election was held in a local council to fill the seat vacated by a councillor who died, and three casual elections and two co-options were held for members of administrative committees after resignations. The Electoral Office also carried out a call for

nominations for an election for a member to be appointed on the *Bord tal-Warrant tal-Periti*; however, only one candidate submitted his nomination and consequently, there was no need for a poll.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Electoral Commission that conducted the national referendum was appointed on 29 August 2009 for a period of three years. During the year under review, besides holding the referendum, the Electoral Commission reviewed the boundaries of electoral divisions according to the provisions of the Constitution. This exercise was carried out over a long period and the Commission met several times to discuss various options before finalising the report on the revision of the electoral boundaries. The report, which was approved unanimously by the Commissioners, was presented to the Prime Minister and to the Leader of the Opposition on 17 October 2011. During 2011, the Commission met regularly each month and more frequently as necessary, held meetings with the delegates of political parties and representatives of organisations and public institutions, and discussed matters covering different topics. The Commission took decisions on the registration and deletion of voters, on matters related to the compilation of the Electoral Registers and on the conduct of the national referendum. Members of the Commission participated in seminars and conferences held abroad where the main themes of discussions were electoral processes and related issues.

OTHER MATTERS

The Electoral Office has a Section in Gozo where facilities are provided for the issue and renewal of ID cards and for other relevant information requested by persons residing there. This Section also serves as the focal point in Gozo whenever elections are held there.

During the past years it emerged that several households in Malta and Gozo had either a house name only or sometimes a wrong house number and this situation created problems both for the Electoral Office to identify correctly the address of a person and for other government departments that obtain address information through the Common Database. A long-term exercise to rectify this problem began in 1998 and initially was expected to affect over 60,000 households; however, this number increased substantially over the years and is likely to increase further in the future. During 2011, the Electoral Office in conjunction with the Police and the Door Numbering Unit of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs continued with the exercise whereby every door in Malta and Gozo would eventually be assigned an official door number. During 2011, about 2,500 households involving 6,050 voters in 50 streets were either re-numbered or assigned a door number and 44 streets in various localities were either re-named or given an official name. Persons residing in those households and streets were then required to change their ID card to reflect the changes and corrections resulting from this exercise.

During the year under review, female employees took an active participatory role in the day to day running of the Electoral Office and currently, they out-number their male colleagues in most sections within the Office. They were assigned various major exercises throughout the year, supervised and participated in electoral processes and attended board meetings and Court sittings as necessary. Statistics and information on electoral processes continued to be compiled and published on a gender basis and the satisfactory outcome of this measure should continue in the future.

Staff from the Electoral Office participated in seminars held locally and attended courses organised by the CDRT of the Office of the Prime Minister, and were often appointed to represent the Electoral Office on various boards. They were also asked to give advice and support to other departments, particularly to the Department for the Care of the Elderly by printing the *Kartanzjan* card on a regular basis, to the Police, the Public Registry and the Department for Local Government by providing updated information as required.

The Electoral Office always took initiatives to provide a good service to the public and the Service Quality Charter that was launched in November 2004 continued to provide the basis for an efficient customer service. The services provided by the Electoral Office were given with courtesy, within defined time frames, and in an efficient manner. Following the positive outcome of discussions held during 2006 to introduce new opening hours at the Electoral Office particularly on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings, the same office hours were retained during 2011. This measure was welcomed very well by the public because it provided an even better and more convenient service.

Since 2004, the Electoral Office has had its own website and this was regularly updated with the relevant information throughout the year. The website was accessed by many persons including those living abroad and proved very useful particularly during the period covering the national referendum.

SAVIOUR GAUCI

Chief Electoral Commissioner

Office of the Prime Minister

Armed Forces of Malta

GENERAL

During the year under review, the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) was extensively engaged in events linked to the Libyan Crisis. Despite this, the Force continued to evolve as, inter alia, additional assets were procured, participation in overseas crisis management increased, and procedures were put in place to ensure that AFM continues to deliver at the highest possible levels.

ROLES

The AFM is tasked to perform two defence roles:

- *Primary Defence Role:* AFM is responsible for the external security and integrity of the Maltese Islands in peacetime and in crisis.
- *Secondary Defence Role:* AFM provides military support in specified areas to the Police Force on a regular basis and to other Government Departments when required.

Primary Defence Roles

- Maintain territorial integrity (particularly at the Malta International Airport and other sensitive locations).
- Maintain integrity of the Maltese waters (physical and electronic surveillance against smuggling, illegal trafficking of immigrants and law breaking at sea).
- Provide for the limited surveillance of the Maltese Airspace.
- Provide search and rescue services in Malta and its Search and Rescue Region.
- Provide Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) cover.
- Contribute towards international peace and stability by participating in overseas crisis management operations.

Secondary Defence Roles

- Provide military assistance to government departments and the civil community.
- Provide civil emergency protection support (explosives, marine pollution, floods and other disasters).
- Provide military aid to Malta's Police Force and the Security Services (Internal Security, Anti-narcotic patrols and vehicle checkpoints).
- Provide state ceremonial and other public duties.

OPERATIONS

Local (Libya Crisis)

The Libyan Crisis had a direct bearing on the AFM, particularly during its initial stages when the organisation was involved both directly and indirectly in non-combatant evacuation operations. The AFM was at the forefront of those that assisted the Government of Malta (GOM) in coordinating the national evacuation process and the international non-combatant evacuation operation. AFM hosted and extensively supported both British and Canadian forces here in Malta in connection with the evacuation of their and other nationals. Concurrently to this, AFM put in place contingencies aimed at managing the

extraordinary events taking place at the Malta International Airport. AFM also heightened its security posture including out at sea.

One particular event that needs to be singled out is that concerning the landing of the two Libyan F1 Mirage Fighter Aircraft. Having rendered the aircraft safe, these were guarded for months whilst the pilots were being hosted at the AFM Officers' Mess. AFM also supported the Libyan authorities in rendering the planes airworthy once again. Another noteworthy operation was that which saw AFM clearing the Maltese Embassy and Consulate in Tripoli of any explosives ordnance.

For a number of months, on the express wish of the Prime Minister, AFM also headed a Humanitarian Hub intended to facilitate the onwards transmission and act as a staging post of humanitarian aid to Libya. During the time that AFM was coordinating the efforts of the Humanitarian Hub, over 1,000 tonnes of aid passed through Malta to Libya.

Local (Others)

The instability in the North African region has had an effect on migratory flows and local efforts to counteract the phenomenon. In this regard, AFM assisted the Ministry of Home Affairs in their preparation of plans for a possible mass exodus from North Africa. On the operational front, the patrolling increased substantially, as did the Search and Rescue (SAR) operations coordinated by the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) Malta. A total of 1,575 Third Country Nationals (TCNs) were rescued by AFM and disembarked in Malta. Worth mentioning is also the fact that more than 500 incidents of boats carrying TCNs were reported in the central Mediterranean involving about 60,000 migrants.

A number of Control and Search Operations were successfully conducted during 2011 aimed at safeguarding and restoring authority within Closed Detention Centres located in Safi and Lyster Barracks. In most cases these were uneventful. On one occasion however, a limited number of non-lethal pellets had to be fired to disperse violent detainees. No major injuries were sustained by either the detainees or the security forces.

In 2011, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Industry, the Fisheries Control Directorate and AFM. The MOU commits AFM to provide patrolling activity at sea in support of the Fisheries Directorate whilst the Ministry of Finance provides the financial support necessary for such an effort. Based on this MOU, AFM successfully fulfilled the agreed commitments in respect of the CFCA-mandated Joint Deployment Plan for the control of the Blue Fin Tuna fishing as well as regular patrols aimed at enhancing the protection of general fisheries.

For the first time ever, AFM was audited by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in its roles as the National Coastal VTS, Coast Radio Station and Rescue Coordination Centre. Headquarters AFM led the preparations in advance of the audit, which included a re-vamped edition of the AFM SAR Plan, and also carried out meetings with the IMO Auditors. Although the written report is still not available, the AFM is informed that the Auditors were very positively impressed and also noted a couple of AFM adopted procedures that they intend proposing as *best practices* to the IMO.

The level of SAR operations once again soared to pre 2010 levels with a total of 410 separate cases including 87 cases involving TCNs. Apart from TCNs, over 375 other persons in distress were rescued or assisted by AFM.

Overseas

AFM continued to support international peace and stability through its participation in EU led crisis management operations (CMOs), and also through participation in anti-illegal migration operations abroad.

Since September 2008, AFM contributed two monitors to the EU's Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia. In September 2011, this commitment was renewed through the deployment of two NCOs, including Malta's first female soldier to deploy on CMOs abroad. These monitors will be serving in this mission for one year. The Maltese Monitors are presently operating in the French controlled sector of Gori, Georgia. Malta is committed to maintaining its participation in this mission at least until September 2012.

In December 2008, the Council of the European Union adopted the decision to launch the EU military operation to contribute to the deterrence, prevention and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast. Thereafter in November 2008, Malta confirmed its offer to fill the J2 Intelligence Analyst 3 post at the EUNAVFOR ATALANTA Operation Headquarters. The nomenclature of the post has since changed to CJ2/10 Chief Intelligence Analyst. This uninterrupted commitment was reconfirmed in successive six-month terms in 2011, and with AFM officers currently posted for service in Northwood until June 2012. AFM is committed to maintaining this deployment for at least the next 12 months.

In October 2011, and pursuant to a second Dutch-Maltese Memorandum of Understanding signed in August 2011, Malta extended its support towards EUNAVFOR ATALANTA by deploying a second AFM Vessel Protection Detachment (VPD) comprising twelve personnel (2 Officers and 10 Other Ranks) on the Dutch naval vessel HNLMS *Zuiderkruis*. The Dutch warship and its complement were successful in disrupting a number of pirate actions, and returned to port in Valletta on 3 December 2011.

Following an EU decision to renew and re-tailor its training mission in Uganda with particular focus on training Somali Non-Commissioned and Commissioned Officers, Malta decided to contribute with another infantry training team, and for the first time in this mission, with an officer at Mission Headquarters (MHQ) Kampala. In September 2011, one staff officer was deployed for six months as the Personal Assistant to the Mission Commander, Irish Colonel Michael Beary. Following the final scheduling of EUTM Somalia's Third Intake of Somali soldiers, the three-person Maltese training team deployed for a period of six months on 5 November 2011. AFM is committed to maintaining this deployment until the end of the fourth intake of Somali trainees which is expected to last until the end of 2012.

Following a Council Decision on 1 April 2011 to open an EU military headquarters in order to plan for any request from the UN Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) for assistance in dealing with the humanitarian situation in Libya, in that same month, Malta deployed one officer to the designated EU OHQ in Rome. In October 2011, a second officer was posted to take over the same duties in the EU OHQ until its closure in November 2011. One AFM officer, who at the time was serving at the EU Military Staff in Brussels, was deployed by the EU to EUFOR Libya in a dual-hat capacity as a Political Advisor to the Operation Commander Admiral Claudio Gaudiosi, and EUMS Liaison Officer to the OHQ.

In 2009, the Council of the EU decided to reactivate the EU's Border Assistance Mission in Rafah. The AFM offered two Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) to serve as Malta's Force offering towards this mission. To this effect, during 2011, AFM maintained two NCOs on standby to deploy in theatre at a fourteen day notice-to-move, pending the EU's decision to reactivate the mission.

During the reporting period, one officer deployed on an operational attachment with the Italian Contingent deployed in the South of LEBANON as part of UNIFIL. During his tour, he occupied CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation) staff posts at different levels of command. This was done in order to gain operational experience in preparation for his posting to the EU Military Staff in Brussels.

Throughout 2011, Malta continued to support the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) by deploying AFM officers as assistants during Verification Inspections in the Balkans held under the Dayton Peace Accords. AFM officers participated in two such Verification Inspection missions in 2011.

For the fifth successive year, the AFM participated in Frontex Joint Operation Poseidon (JOP) Sea as well as JOP Land. In support of JOP Sea, AFM deployed an offshore patrol vessel to the Greek island of Samos

and was supported by the presence of a National Officer seconded by the Operations Branch to the International Coordination Centre (ICC) in Piraeus. The deployment lasted for a period of thirty days. Additionally, AFM contributed troops in support of JOP Land between 21 June and 15 September 2011. An additional deployment of troops also saw commencement in December and is expected to continue throughout the first quarter of 2012.

Towards the end of 2011, planning for JOP Land during 2012 was commenced with a view to deploying personnel to the Evros region, close to the Greek/Turkish border during the months of April and May and November and December 2012. For the first time ever, AFM intends to deploy a vehicle and a thermal vision camera during the term of operation. Deployment has to date focused on six-man teams deploying to the Evros region tasked with conducting border surveillance tasks.

TRAINING

Exercises

Due to events in Libya, a number of programmed exercises had to be postponed; this includes the 2011 edition of Exercise CANALE (postponed by Italy), a bilateral maritime exercise organised between Malta and Italy through the 5+5 Defence Initiative. The exercise is scheduled to be held in Italy in 2012.

Nonetheless, other training activities and exercises did take place in 2011. Noteworthy is Phoenix Express, an annual multi-national maritime exercise between the US, North African and European naval forces. The exercise is designed to enhance regional maritime partnerships and this year's edition included forces from 14 countries which participated with troops and assets between 23 May and 15 June. The exercise served as a training opportunity to enhance each country's ability to work together and to deter illicit trafficking at sea. Exercise events consisted of training in maritime domain awareness (MDA) and interdiction operations (MIO), command and control from an ashore combined maritime operations centre (CMOC), search and rescue operations (SAR), communications, division tactics, and medical response. AFM participated with a Ship boarding team, a Maritime Patrol Aircraft, and a Staff Officer.

Also during the year under review, a number of Unit and Sub-unit level exercises were carried out outside Barracks in training areas around Malta to assess soldiers in Basic Battles Skills, Defence, Patrolling Techniques and Internal Security. These exercises were generally meant to enhance the theoretical training particularly of personnel undergoing the infantry trade course.

The annual Emergency Volunteers Reserve Forces (EVRF) camp and exercise were also carried out this year. The event included a gunnery shoot using the 14.5 mm Anti-Aircraft machine guns. Such training is geared to assess and bring to culmination the yearly training evolution of the Force's reserve troops. Other exercises were carried out by 1 Regiment's C (Special Duties) Company, particularly in preparation for their overseas deployment. These exercises were meant to create scenarios and test individual and collective skills. Prominent in 2011, were exercises meant to test Peace Keeping drills and Ship Boarding techniques. These exercises, which brought together the AFM land component together with assets from Air Wing and Maritime Squadron, were also intended to improve interoperability amongst AFM Units. The preparation of the AFM's Vessel Protection Team which late in the year deployed off the coast of Somalia featured prominently in these exercises.

Furthermore in August 2011, AFM issued a policy on the safety of personnel intended to guide Units preparing for exercises/training. The enhanced policy will improve AFM's ability to undertake training and exercise what could be considered as challenging. This policy paper assists commanders at all levels with managing the balance between the risks faced and the benefits that may accrue, whilst also indicating how they must integrate risk management into their planning and estimates. The Risk Management Process outlined in this policy will provide an improved tool which will mitigate inherent risks in the life of each and every soldier.

Education and Trades

In 2011, AFM embarked on a project to better the educational qualification of soldiers who do not possess an ACE 1 level of education standard. This ACE 1 level standard is an AFM standard not recognised by outside entities. Arrangements were made with the Directorate of Life Long learning to include this level with that of the National Standard as an NVQ level one. This means that soldiers who are successful in the ACE exams will be given a civilian qualification.

Attendance at these EU funded educational programmes is not compulsory; however the attainment of an educational certificate is a prerequisite for promotion. In all, about 400 AFM personnel have availed themselves of this opportunity.

Training Overseas

There were significant training opportunities for members of the AFM. Personnel attended IMET funded courses in the United States whilst others attended courses in Italy, United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. Such courses focused on infantry and leadership training, marine engineering and EOD. Also during 2011, six Officer Cadets benefited from a military officer formation course held at the Irish Military Academy in Ireland. The Irish Department of Defence has also offered the AFM two vacancies on the Senior Command and Staff course and two vacancies on the Junior Command and Staff course in 2010 and 2011 respectively. In 2011 the AFM availed itself of this opportunity and two officers attended such courses.

Trades

During the period under review, several Trade Testing Boards were convened to assess AFM personnel. These Boards concerned soldiers new to the force and who were undergoing initial training in their trades (Class III) or long serving members who were seeking to better their trade qualification (Classes I and II). A total of seven Trade Testing Boards were convened by AFM throughout the year for this purpose. A B3 Infantry Trade was carried out to expose and specialise new recruits to the basic skill sets of soldiers serving within 1st Regiment. These later joined Units involving key point protection. A B2 Infantry trade was also carried out meant to specialise NCO's to lead men at Section (10 men) level in Infantry related tasks. Trades for Storeman which include updated practices on health and safety and storage for Armourers, Maritime Mates Trade and Radio Operator Trades were also undertaken.

Training - Local

Excellent military to military links with a number of friendly nations have provided AFM with the opportunity to send many of its officers and other ranks on courses overseas. In the US, AFM attended courses specialising in leadership, infantry, flight training and engineering and in Italy courses focused on the maritime and signals domains. AFM personnel also attended Peace Support Operations training related courses in the Czech Republic offered by British Army.

Thanks to the ever improving relationship between AFM and the Irish Defence Force, for the third time in a row AFM managed to secure a number of cadetship and staff course vacancies at the Irish Cadet School and Military College at Curragh Camp Co. Kildare. During the year under review, no less than six AFM Officer Cadets and two commissioned officers have trained in Ireland.

Furthermore, two AFM Officer Cadets attended commissioning courses at the prestigious Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst and the Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

Maritime Safety and Security Training Centre (MSSTC)

Previously known as the AFM Search and Rescue Training Centre, the MSSTC has been successfully operating for the past seven years and offers specialised training in search and rescue, maritime law and maritime security operations. A number of international courses were planned with funding secured from AFRICOM with the support of the US Embassy in Malta. This year, AFM negotiated agreements with the Swiss Government the outcome of which, in partnership with Malta, the Swiss Government will be funding a number of students from Libya, Tunisia and Egypt to attend Search and Rescue related courses at the Centre.

During the year under review, AFM also came to an agreement with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and as a result, in 2012 the Centre will be organising Search and Rescue related courses for the Black Sea States on behalf of IMO.

Eurasia Capstone Partnership Seminar

For the second year in a row, supported extensively by AFM, the United States held its Eurasia Partnership Capstone training seminar in Malta. The aim of this seminar is to train Navy personnel in the various aspects of Maritime Law Enforcement and Security.

Over 100 representatives from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and the United States attended the training seminar.

AFM's primary role in the effort was the provision of training sessions on SAR and Basic Boarding officer training. AFM also supported by making its facilities available for the kick-off ceremony, training for a Non-Commissioned Officers' development course and catering.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Common Security and Defence Policy (European Union)

The year under review saw AFM continuing its participation in overseas deployments by maintaining its commitment towards supporting the EU's Monitoring Mission to Georgia, its anti-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia, the Training Mission in Somalia aimed at contributing to the stability in Somalia through training Somali Security Forces and also in the EU's mission that was set up to assist the UN's effort to provide humanitarian assistance to Libya. AFM also monitored events in the Gaza Strip with a view of deploying two of its members once the EU's mission thereat is reactivated

NATO/Partnership for Peace (PfP)

Over the past 12 months, AFM continued to engage with NATO through the Partnership for Peace programme. AFM attended the following activities organised by NATO/PfP:

- NATO Defence Planning Symposium held in Germany
- NATO Chiefs of Staff meeting held in Belgium
- NATO Training and Exercise Conference held in France
- NATO Standing Group of Partners Logistics Experts
- Malta - NATO Individual Partnership Cooperation Programme

Also during the period under review, one AFM Staff Officer attended a meeting in connection with NATO/PfP namely, the conference pertaining to the Cooperative Exercise 2012. Such participation assisted the AFM in the reviewing of the list of exercises and training opportunities organised by NATO for partner countries. The AFM envisages its participation in a multi-national exercise in the near future.

During the month of December, a NATO Security Audit was held at the International Affairs Branch within Headquarters AFM. The result of the audit positively addressed the AFM's handling of NATO/PfP classified material.

5+5 Defence Initiative

Malta has been a member of this defence initiative since 2004, when together with another nine Western Mediterranean littoral countries signed a declaration of intent that established this initiative. The initiative provides a framework for dialogue and cooperation in the field of security between member states.

During 2011, a number of key 5+5 Defence Initiative meetings were organised by, and held in Malta. AFM was responsible for organising the 5+5 Defence Initiative Chiefs of Air Meeting in October and at very short notice, organised the 5+5 Defence Initiative Defence College Second Cycle Module at Senior Level in November. For this 5+5 Defence College module, AFM also provided the complete set of presentations and panels to the academic forum. Besides activities held in Malta, a number of AFM officers participated in meetings organised under the umbrella of this initiative. This also included the Commander's participation in the meeting for Chiefs of Defence of Member States held in Mauritania in September.

United Nations (UN)

AFM deals with all UN originating military related correspondence and completed all UN related national returns that involve defence and military matters.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Throughout the year, Malta continued to support the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) by deploying AFM Officers as assistants during Verification Inspections in the Balkans held under the Dayton Peace Accords. AFM Officers participated in two such Verification Inspection missions in 2011.

Malta was also represented at the 21st Annual Implementation Assessment meeting that was held in Vienna between February and March, and at the OSCE High Level Military Doctrine Seminar in Austria in May. The AFM's Deputy Commander also covered the OSCE Meeting of Heads of Verification Centres in Vienna in December this year.

FINABEL

After a visit to Malta by the Luxembourg Chief of Defence Staff in December of 2007 in his capacity as Chairman of FINABEL to brief the AFM on the benefits and obligations of membership in this organisation, AFM formally joined the organisation in 2010 following a two year stint as an observer.

During 2011, Commander AFM attended the FINABEL Chiefs of Staff in Rome accompanied by another AFM Staff Officer.

Malta Quota Post (EU Military Staff)

During the period under review, the AFM officer occupying Malta's Quota Post holder concluded his posting to the Crisis Response Planning/Current Ops Branch, within the Operations Directorate of the EU Military Staff (EUMS). During his term of service between April 2008 and July 2011, he was the desk officer responsible for Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC), Use of Force/Rules of Engagement, Human Rights, Protection of Civilians and Gender Aspects of Operations. In July 2011, his successor took over the Malta Quota Post, retaining both the CIMIC and Gender Aspects of Operations portfolios.

Visits

Between 5 and 7 October 2011, the Chairman of the EU Military Committee, General Håkan Syrén paid an official visit to Malta. For this visit, General Syrén paid courtesy calls on the Honourable Prime Minister of Malta in his capacity as the Minister responsible for Defence Matters and the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, and held talks with Commander AFM and his senior staff.

Following the visit by the Chairman of the EU Military Committee, between 4 and 6 December 2011, the Director General of the EUMS Lieutenant General Ton Van Osch paid an official visit to Malta. For this visit, Lieutenant General Van Osch also paid courtesy calls on the Honourable Prime Minister of Malta and the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and held talks with Commander AFM and his staff.

Additionally and on two separate occasions, AFM hosted two Chiefs of Defence, namely His Excellency Hamad bin Ali Al-Attiyah, the Minister and Chief of Staff of the Qatari Armed Forces and Lieutenant General Sean McCann, the Irish Chief of Defence. The occasions enabled the AFM to, in the case of Ireland, enhance its already well established ties and, in the case of Qatar, embark on new ventures of cooperation.

LOGISTICS

Major Procurements

The EU External Border Funded (EBF) Project 2009 for the procurement of one fixed-wing maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) which enhanced AFM's operational capability was concluded and the aircraft was commissioned in the first quarter of the year. The package included training intended to upgrade the skills of the aircraft crews and technicians.

AFM's contract bid under EBF 2010 for the purchase of a second fixed-wing MPA for maritime surveillance purposes was successful and an aircraft identical to that commissioned this year will be commissioned in 2012.

In June 2010, the European Commission approved to finance the building of a new hangar at Air Wing under the European External Borders Fund (EBF) 2010. The approved total budget for this project is of €602,393, 75% of which will be covered by the External Border Fund 2010. This new hangar will house the two new Maritime Patrol Aircraft referred to above.

Also utilising EBF funds, a study for the integration of operations with an Alouette III helicopter on board the P61 will be commissioned; with the addition of this capability, the area that the Patrol Vessel can cover in the course of a patrol will be increased by a factor of 5 to 10. The helicopter will also be far more efficient when compared with operations from land, given that it will have the ability to refuel aboard thus increasing significantly its on-scene operational time whilst also providing an alternate landing place for the aircraft when operating offshore, thus increasing the safety factor.

Besides the EU funded projects mentioned above, AFM's Logistics Department was busy working on another three EBF funded projects aimed at further enhancing AFM's capability in border control and Maritime Law Enforcement. These are the procurement of Rubber Hulled Inflatable Boats (RHIBS) complete with towing vehicles, the upgrading of the AFM's Fast Response Craft and the procurement of night vision and thermal imaging equipment.

The programme for the modernisation and standardisation of the vehicle fleet continued last year by the procurement of new vehicles and the withdrawal of unserviceable vehicles. Six new Land Rovers (three through EBF Funds) were ordered during the second half of the year and five buses were acquired through

Transport Malta. The modernisation and standardisation programme also included the removal of vehicles which were classified as Beyond Economical Repair (BER) or Beyond Repair (BR).

Projects

During the year, a number of projects were terminated, some were ongoing and some saw their commencement. The refurbishment of Pembroke Barracks and the Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess in Luqa Barracks, the completion of the Administration Block at the Maritime Squadron's Base in Hay Wharf and Ammo & Explosives stores at Mosta Fort were successfully completed during the period under review. Also during the year, AFM concluded an extensive refurbishment and embellishment project of Safi Pistol Ranges.

Efforts associated with the refurbishment of two existing buildings within Luqa Barracks, aimed at housing AFM's Maritime Safety and Security Training Centre and an accommodation floor continued throughout the year. Following the US's position not to pursue the funding of the project due to the financial cutbacks by the US Government, the AFM are presently looking into other funding options.

In recent years, the need has always been felt to either expand or relocate AFM's Headquarters within Luqa Barracks. The recent changes and the increase of the number of staff working within Headquarters have prompted the AFM to conduct a feasibility study that would see the former Coin Depot complex within Luqa Barracks transformed into a contemporary building intended to accommodate officers and staff that form part of Headquarters, AFM. It is also anticipated that a new Data Centre and the Operations Centre will form part of the same complex.

Delineation of Military Zones

For years, it has been the AFM's intent to legally designate the Defence Estate, under the tenancy of the Force, as military zones that would facilitate and expedite MEPA procedures whilst safeguarding cultural and natural forms of protection vis-à-vis local plans and in the interest of national security.

Occupational Health and Safety

During the first two months of this year, the AFM Occupational Health and Safety cell within the Logistics Branch supervised works conducted by a private contractor for the removal of asbestos containing material from all AFM premises. During these works, further asbestos containing material was found. The removal of such hazardous material is expected to be removed by the end of 2012.

ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

Enlistment and Discharges

Between January and February of 2011, a total of 48 recruits, including nine females, enlisted for specific employment as security guards at Malta International Airport, embarked on a five month recruitment programme that ended in June. After successfully completing such training, these recruits joined the Force in the rank of Gunner during a Passing Out Parade at Luqa Barracks on 17 June 2011, and were subsequently posted to various AFM Units. The Parade was attended by the Honourable Prime Minister in his capacity as the Minister responsible for Defence.

Concurrently, five Officer Cadets completed a year-long cadetship course and were commissioned in the rank of Second Lieutenant in the AFM. All cadets were at the time attending officer formation courses in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Additionally, a Medical Officer was enlisted in the rank of Surgeon Captain following an Expression of Interest call issued by the Force early in the year.

Subsequent to the completion of this soldier enlistment process, in July a call for applications was issued for the recruitment of 45 soldiers for the specific employment as infantrymen with C (Special Duties) Company and seven for specific employment as tradesmen. At the same time, a separate call for the enlistment of nine Officer Cadets of whom two will be enlisted as Pilot Cadets and one as a Sea Cadet was issued. Furthermore, a call for soldier athletes was also issued to cap the launching of the AFM Sports Scheme that was launched in conjunction with the Kunsill Malti għall-Isport in the first quarter of the year.

Following the positive response achieved in the previous year, through the assistance of the Employment and Training Corporation, information sessions were once again held for those AFM personnel who were closing in on their retirement from service. These sessions assisted attendees in providing information related to pensions, social benefits and job-seeking opportunities.

Promotions Officers

A policy was introduced whereby promotion of officers to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel would be made through selection by a high-level adjudicating panel made up of both civilian and military officials. Subsequently, four AFM Majors were promoted to the next higher rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Selection was based on suitability, seniority, qualifications and vacancy to fill the specific posts available. Meanwhile, six Warrant Officers were commissioned in the rank of Lieutenant after having successfully completed the first ever Late Entry Officers' Course (LEOC).

Also during the course of the year, a number of junior officers were promoted to the next higher rank subject to having spent the necessary number of years in the rank, having been recommended time and again and having passed the respective promotions exams, where applicable.

Promotions Other Ranks

During 2011, a total of 99 soldiers were promoted to the next higher rank. These promotions were issued in May 2011 and, in the vast majority, backdated to 1 October 2010. Subsequently, the new soldier promotion exercise for 2011 was concluded towards the end of the year and such promotions are expected to be issued in 2012. This last promotion exercise was tied to a revision of the AFM Rank Establishment that was approved by the Office of the Prime Minister and came into effect in September 2011.

Organisational Establishment

During the period under review, AFM embarked on a reviewing process aimed at fine tuning its Unit Organisational Establishment. The process saw changes in nomenclature of various AFM sub-units and also included the setting up of a Forward Operating Base in Gozo. The later addition involved the transfer of an AFM patrol vessel to Mġarr Harbour and the absorption of land based personnel already stationed in Gozo under the Command of Maritime Squadron. The transfer of this patrol vessel to Gozo will increase AFM's maritime response time in the Northern part of the Island including Gozo and Comino.

Sports

Highlights for this year in the field of sports mainly focused on two occasions of importance. Firstly, the official launching of the AFM Sports Scheme in conjunction with the Kunsill Malti għall-Isport (KMS) was officially launched through a Press Conference at the AFM Officers' Mess in Luqa Barracks. The Scheme will allow national athletes to benefit from employment in the Force with time allowed for training and competition. Following the launch of the scheme, a follow-up information session for all national sports organisations was organised by the KMS in order to explain the workings and benefits brought about by the scheme.

The other occasion that merits mention is the first time the AFM participated in the 5th edition of *Conseil International du Sport Militaire* (CISM) World Military Games. The event was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June and Malta was represented by three AFM athletes in the Triathlon, Marathon and Boxing disciplines achieving satisfactory results.

Also and as done in previous years, a sports programme was implemented in order to increase participation in sports activities and to create healthy competition between AFM units. Participants from all Units took part in several sports and disciplines, endeavouring to obtain as much points as possible towards their respective Unit's tally.

Ceremonial

During 2011, the Force once again was the main pillar in assisting the National Festivities Committee with the performance of ceremonial parades to commemorate national public holidays. State Ceremonial commitments to welcome foreign Heads of State were also held, which this year included the state visits of the German Chancellor, HE Ms Angela Merkel and the Slovakian President, HE Mr Ivan Gašparovič.

Following last year's introduction of the Changing of the Guard Ceremony following the embellishment project of St George's Square in Valletta, during the period under review, the event was held twice monthly throughout the year. The event was once again well received by the general public and especially tourists and has now become a much-awaited ceremonial event that also features in the list of cultural activities in the Malta Tourism Authority website. An addition that featured for the very first time this year was the introduction of the winter great coat for the guards performing ceremonial guard duty at the Palace in Valletta.

The AFM Band was also engaged in other extra activities apart from State Ceremonial. Worth mentioning is the Band's performances in a series of promenade concerts held in the month of July in localities that are highly frequented by tourists, namely Bugibba, Sliema and Marsalforn, Gozo.

Public Relations

The AFM's 41st Anniversary was celebrated on 1 October with a series of activities. These included a Guard of Honour that was followed by a concelebrated mass at St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta held on 30 September and an Open Day for the general public held on 2 October at Luqa Barracks. A week later, on 9 October a maritime oriented Open Day was held at Mġarr Harbour in Gozo during which AFM gave people in Gozo the opportunity to visit and board a variety of naval assets that were anchored in harbour for this specific occasion. Moreover, demonstrations from other AFM Units livened up proceedings and entertained all those present.

Substantial effort was put into enhancing the AFM's public image and in further encouraging recruitment. This was done through articles in local newspapers and magazines, reports and interviews on television and radio stations and through school visits and career orientation talks with students in various educational institutions. There were also occasions where school children visited the AFM's various units, thereby positively gaining first-hand experience to what the work of a soldier entails.

Conclusion

The year 2011 was extraordinary due primarily to the Arab Spring and the Libyan revolution in particular. These events have challenged AFM but they have also provided the Force with another opportunity to demonstrate that it is more than capable of rising up to the challenge and raise the bar. Throughout the year, the Force as a whole has shown that it remains dedicated, flexible and resourceful.

BRIGADIER MARTIN G XUEREB
Commander, Armed Forces of Malta

Public Administration HR Office

Mission Statement

To formulate, develop and promote in close collaboration with line ministries and departments, progressive human resource policies, strategies and management systems in support of the business of Government and to assist and support line ministries/departments to achieve Government plans and programmes and to render an efficient service to the public.

THE ORGANISATION

The Public Administration HR Office, within the Office of the Prime Minister, is led and coordinated by the Director General (PAHRO), supported by the workings of three important directorates, namely, Resourcing, Employee Relations and HR Systems and Data Management. PAHRO is primarily focused on developing and sustaining its strategic role at the centre of HR Management and across the Public Administration. In 2011, PAHRO continued to progress from the traditional concept of micro HR Management, towards a macro and comprehensive outlook to workforce planning, change management, guidance and support provision to line ministries and departments, monitoring the implementation of HR Management in line ministries and departments, as well as promoting leadership development.

PAHRO will continue to spearhead the implementation of the provisions of the Public Administration Act, progressive human resources strategies and policies, the increased decentralisation of procedural processes to line ministries and departments, and the ongoing streamlining of the business of Government in the field of HR Management.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

In 2011, the initiatives and activities undertaken by PAHRO were targeted at addressing specific areas where policy initiation or evaluation was required. PAHRO's human resources, as well as such relevant stakeholders as Directors responsible for Corporate Services and People Management, and HR Managers in line departments, focused their quantitative, qualitative skills and competencies on identifying the policy options that would add the most value to policy substance and yield the best effects and results. Other important stakeholders, such as the Public Service Commission, institutions of oversight, as well as unions positively contributed towards the creation of a healthy consultation process.

The highlights of PAHRO's 2011 programme ranged from the Employee Support Programme, the introduction of the new payroll system, and the issuing of electronic payslips, as well as the outreach visits to line ministries which representatives from each PAHRO directorate held regularly during the course of the year.

The Employee Support Programme continued to sustain the physical and psychological wellbeing of public employees. The information seminars organised for top management were aimed at fostering a culture of awareness and employee support. The results of the Situation Needs Analysis (SNA) will further assist in the identification of sector-specific problems, with a view to instituting remedial action for securing the wellbeing of public employees.

The objectives of the outreach visits were multi-fold - to address HR Management issues within the context-specific scenario of each line ministry, to render decision-making processes more efficient,

effective, reliable, accurate and timely, and to support and assist line ministries in adequately equipping themselves for the upcoming delegation of responsibilities.

RESOURCING DIRECTORATE

INTRODUCTION

During 2011, the Resourcing Directorate focused on the following tasks:

- Driving forward the initiative for the delegation of certain stages of the recruitment and selection process and the delegation of other Resourcing matters;
- Updating current policies and procedures with the aim of ensuring that these are sensitive to changing needs and/or related legislation and also aiming to increase streamlining and transparency.

SECTORAL ANALYSIS – PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

Delegation

In line with the provisions of the Public Administration Act and in consonance with the principle of the delegation emanating therefrom, proposals were submitted for the consideration of the Public Service Commission to make amendments to Regulations 12 and 17 of the PSC 1960 Regulations with the view of delegating to heads of department the issue of the call for applications. The Commission agreed to these proposals and a Task Force, consisting of PSC and Resourcing officials, was set up to discuss the Action Plan prepared by this Directorate.

In addition to the delegation of the issue of the call for applications, the Action Plan contemplates the delegation of other Resourcing matters, namely the (i) renewal of fixed-term contracts, (ii) promotion after a number of years' satisfactory service, (iii) attainment of indefinite status and (iv) progression/promotion of General Service officers. The Task Force agreed at the outset that the delegation of the issue of the call for applications should be the first step taken in the wider delegation programme.

The Task Force concluded its discussions in November. Its workings - consisting of the proposed amendments that need to be made to the PSC 1960 Regulations, the respective amendments to the Public Service Management Code, the templates to be supplied to the line ministries for the purpose of drafting calls for applications and the content of the respective training to be provided to line ministries - were formally presented to the Principal Permanent Secretary and the Public Service Commission for consideration.

In tandem with the above initiative, outreach meetings were organised regularly between the Resourcing Directorate and line ministries, whereby Resourcing staff visit HR units of line ministries, with a view to ironing out at source problems and issues arising from the line. Apart from hastening the decision making process and avoiding lengthy correspondence between PAHRO and the line, these outreach meetings will also serve to facilitate the Resourcing Directorate's enhanced advisory and support role when the above-mentioned delegation comes into force.

Updates to the Public Service Management Code (PSMC)

Various updates to Chapter 1 of the PSMC concerning resourcing policies and procedures were made to reflect policy changes and to secure the availability of up-to-date information on the online version of the Code.

POLICY REVIEWS

The policy regarding *Postponement, Refusal and Abandonment of Appointment* was reviewed with the aims of (i) making its provisions more sensitive to the provisions regarding notice of termination of employment as stipulated in the Employment and Industrial Relations Act, and (ii) allowing more flexibility to heads of department in the approval, or otherwise, of requests for the postponement of an appointment whilst ensuring that any candidates, whose requests for postponement cannot be met, retain their achieved order of merit for the duration of the validity period of the result. This policy review will streamline the process as well as secure transparency and consistency in dealing with such instances.

The draft policy, intended to further facilitate mobility across the Public Administration, continued to be reviewed, in line with the Public Administration Act and the Employment and Training Services (Amendment) Act, 2006. The draft policy contemplates the detailing/deployment provisions and the policy of permanent employment with respect to public officers moving from the Public Service to Public Sector entities.

The policy regarding re-employment and re-instatement is being re-written with the aim of streamlining the policy. The criteria used in recommending or otherwise, whether ex-public officers should re-join the Public Service or not is also being revised.

The policy for the filling of vacancies in Gozo was amended as from 3 June 2011. Vacancies in the departmental/professional/technical grades within the Ministry for Gozo are now invariably filled through a selection exercise, following a call for applications. Whenever the Ministry for Gozo issues an internal call for applications for the filling of such vacancies, Gozo resident public officers working in Malta and holding an appointment in the same substantive grade being advertised are allowed to apply laterally. If a successful applicant is moving laterally, irrespective of whether such a move is a result of an internal or a public call, s/he will be transferred to the respective Gozo department/directorate, carrying his/her substantive grade and salary entitlement, including award of increments and progression to higher scales. Whilst ensuring that the 'merit principle' stipulated in the Public Administration Act is respected, the policy also ensures that Gozo-resident public officers who move laterally from Malta to Gozo are not adversely affected with regard to increments, progression and promotion rights arising from the respective classification agreement.

A policy guideline was issued to the effect that the engagement/re-engagement of suitable persons beyond age 65 should be invariably made through a direct recommendation to the PSC on a one-year contract basis, renewable, without age limit and subject to the exigencies of the Service. This is subject to the provisos that (i) such option be resorted to after a call for applications, issued in advance and in the normal manner, yields no positive result and (ii) concurrently with the engagement/re-engagement of staff over 65 years, measures should be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that trained understudies capable of assuming the duties of such staff on the expiration of their contract are available. The engagement/re-engagement of persons on a trust basis will be restricted to specific positions fulfilling a non-executive role and involving a trust element (e.g. Advisors).

Instructions and Guidelines regarding the Recruitment and Selection Process

Instructions were issued to line departments drawing attention to the provisions of LN 461/2010 entitled Temporary Agency Workers Regulations, which came into effect on 5 December 2011. The regulations oblige the user undertaking to make available to the temporary agency worker any information regarding vacancies by displaying such information in a suitable place and in a timely manner. In this light, line departments are responsible to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place so that all calls for applications, whether advertised through an internal circular or a public call for applications, are displayed in a timely manner and at a prominent place.

New arrangements were introduced whereby written letters of reference by public officers in favour of other public officers are allowed, subject to a number of provisos to ensure that situations of conflicts of interest in the course of a selection process do not arise.

Detailed guidelines were issued to Selection Boards regarding the award of marks for recognised qualifications submitted by candidates. These guidelines distinguish between (i) those qualifications presented by an applicant which form part of the eligibility criteria and on the basis of which the applicant is considered as being eligible as indicated in the relevant call for applications, and (ii) additional qualifications for which marks may be awarded in accordance with the sub-criteria as established by the Selection Board and notified to the PSC.

Instructions were issued to line ministries to nominate not only selection board members in their recommendations to PSC, but also to concurrently nominate for the PSC's approval substitute members who may be appointed to sit on the board should a conflict of interest evolve.

Guidelines were issued informing Selection Boards that oral selection interviews may be supplemented with additional mechanisms for the assessment of candidates, subject to the provisos that (i) such mechanisms are to be used as part of the selection process to be undergone by all eligible candidates, and not as a qualifying stage on the basis of which candidates could be excluded from the interview, and (ii) PSC approval is sought by the board prior to the commencement of the actual assessment exercise.

Following consultation with the PSC and the Operations and Programme Implementation Directorate responsible for Data Protection issues, detailed instructions were issued to Selection Boards regarding the retention period of the notes and workings relating to a selection process.

Matters related to the 'Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations'

LN 51/2007 entitled Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations, amended by LN 239/2008 and LN 376/2009, stipulates that where no objective reason to the contrary exists, a definite contract would turn indefinite after four years. A policy regarding the reckoning of periods of paid and unpaid leave in the computation of these four years was drafted. Concurrently, the policy regarding service in the grade is being revised in tandem.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Government and the UHM on 1 June 2011, whereby public officers appointed 'Officers in Scale' by the PSC on the basis of a contractual position which is neither tied to the maximum point of the salary scale of the position, nor incremental, are to be entitled to increments until they reach the maximum of the salary scale of the position on which basis 'Officer in Scale' status was attained.

Moreover, the procedure to be adopted so that public officers holding a fixed-term contract may acquire 'Officer in Scale' status on the basis of such contract if so entitled in terms of the Regulations, was established and communicated to the line ministries.

Nationality Requirements for Entry in the Public Administration

The draft Nationality Requirements for Appointments in Public Administration Regulations, 2011 was approved and published by means of Legal Notice 315/2011. The Regulations, aligned to pertinent local/EU legislation, regulate the eligibility criteria for entry into the Public Administration insofar as citizenship is concerned. PAHRO Circular 56/2011, dated 5 August 2011, was issued to announce the Regulations.

Increasing the Participation of Disabled Persons in Employment within the Public Administration

Work continued on the initiative launched during December 2010, with the aim of increasing the participation of disabled persons in employment within the Public Administration. It is being proposed that vacancies be filled in the first instance from the ETC register of disabled unemployed, where possible. The approval of the Public Service Commission was sought to extend the existing delegation of powers allowing departments to recruit directly from the ETC register of unemployed in scale 20 without reference to the Commission, so that departments may recruit directly from the ETC register of disabled unemployed at any level. The Commission's endorsement was also sought to widen the existent 'reasonable accommodation' provision in calls for applications so that where a public examination is required for entry into a post/position, the special arrangements allowed by the University of Malta in the case of disabled persons may be likewise applied where examinations are held for entry into the Public Service.

Centrally-issued Calls for Applications

The Directorate continued to take an active role in the filling of crucial vacancies in various ministries. Successful applicants from centrally-issued calls for applications were appointed to the positions of EU Fund Managers, EU Fund Officers and ICT Contracts and Services Officers. Calls were issued for the recruitment of EU Fund Officers, Chief Information Officers, ICT Governance Officers, Management Information Systems Officers and ICT Applications Officers for the filling of vacancies across the Public Service.

Matters Related to Recruitment in Other Sectors to Address Particular Exigencies

The Directorate assisted in facilitating with urgency, the filling of a number of critical vacancies at the Law Courts in order to address the serious depletion of staff at the Courts. Discussions were also held with a view to maximising the experience of officers in certain positions and minimise staff turnover and its negative effect of the operations of the Courts.

The Directorate, in conjunction with PACBU, considered requests from MJHA for the issue of calls for applications for various vacancies relating to the Probation and Parole Directorate and the Correctional Services, arising from the Probation Services and Psychologists' Classes, which to an extent veer from the established Agreements. Discussions were held with the view of satisfying MJHA's demand to issue calls for applications in tune with current needs while ensuring that PACBU's position is fully respected.

The Instrument of Delegation, issued under the provisions of Article 110 of the Constitution, for the re-engagement of retired public officers and engagement of retired persons between the ages 61 and 65, previously applicable to the nursing, midwifery and medical professions within the health sector, was extended to teaching and kindergarten assistant grades and adult educators within the education sector.

Public Sector Recruitment

During the year, 450 requests for the recruitment of staff and involving 1,055 employees were submitted by 51 different government-funded entities. 159 requests were for the filling of 470 vacancies in new positions, whilst 258 requests were for the replacement of 526 employees who had resigned or retired from the service. 33 requests for the filling of vacancies in new positions, and involving the recruitment of 55 employees for a definite period, were approved in connection with ESF and other EU-funded projects. Approval was granted for the commencement of recruitment procedures with the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC).

The 159 requests in new positions were filled by 254 full-timers and 220 part-timers respectively. Full-time staff who resigned or retired in 2011, and for whom a replacement was required, totalled 298, and a

further 228 part-timers, were also replaced. EU-funded projects resulted in the engagement of 30 full-timers and 25 part-timers.

In liaison with the ETC, the Directorate also issued approvals to entities for the extension of the statutory validity periods of work permits which had already expired. Before approvals for extensions of work permits were issued, the Directorate investigated the reasons behind the extension of the selection process and eventual recruitment beyond the stipulated time period.

After careful consideration, approvals to requests for recruitment of staff on short definite contracts or on replacement basis, as in the case of temporary replacements, were also given on several occasions.

Redeployment

Several requests for the redeployment of employees within the public sector in terms of Art 15A of the ETS Act were processed. These requests involved the redeployment of staff from the GSU to Malta Enterprise (involving two staff members), Kalaxlokk to IPSL (two requests involving three staff members), MIMCOL to FMS, and MIMCOL to Transport Malta.

Secondment

Requests for the secondment of public sector employees with ministries/departments were processed and effected during the year.

Calls for Expression of Interest

Six calls for an Expression of Interest, on behalf of various entities, were issued from amongst public officers and public sector employees on behalf of various entities. These concerned calls for Executive Secretaries with Local Councils; Medical Officer with the AFM; Supervisors and Enumerators for the Census of Populations and Housing with the NSO; Planning Coordinator and New Media and Communications Coordinator with the Inter-Ministerial Commission for the 2018 European Capital for Culture; and an Executive Science and Technical Administrative Officer with the MCST.

EU Recruitment

Recruitment at EU level concerned the filling of vacancies in the positions of Technical Attaché and Research Officers, in accordance with the Permanent Representation of Malta in the EU (PREU) Staffing Details Document, and the Secondment of National Experts, together with calls for Temporary Agents with EU Institutions.

The employment contracts pertaining to Technical Attachés and Research Officers were revised and the policy fine tuned. Three Model Agreements were agreed to and distributed to all ministries: Model 1 being applicable in the case of officers who have a permanent employment with the Government (Public Service); Model 2 being applicable in the case of employees of public entities who have a permanent employment with the Government (Public Sector); and Model 3 being applicable in the case of officers who are being engaged as Technical Attachés from outside Government.

Deployment of Public Officers with Entities

During the year, 95 public officers were detailed and 33 public officers were deployed with public entities, whereas 35 officers had their detailing order/deployment revoked, as a result of demand-driven requests or through selection processes for posts in the Public Service.

The total number of public officers who, on 31 December, 2011, were deployed or detailed with public entities was 1,556, as shown in the tables hereunder:

Public Entity	Detailed Public Officers
Water Services Corporation	570
Authority for Transport in Malta	95
Directorate of Educational Services	25
Dir. for Quality & Standards in Education	5
Enemalta Corporation	2
EU Programmes Agency (EUPA)	2
Heritage Malta	132
Housing Authority	11
Kunsill Malti għall-Isport	32
Lotteries and Gaming Authority	3
Malta Communications Authority	11
MCCAA	76
Malta Council for Culture & the Arts	20
MEPA	97
Malta Resources Authority	7
Malta Standards Authority	0
Malta Statistics Authority	57
MCAST	1
Medicines Authority	11
National Archives	8
National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	1
National Commission Persons with Disability	5
OHSA	5
Office of the Attorney General	25
Superintendence of Cultural Heritage	7
University of Malta	1
Total	1,209

Public Entity	Deployed Public Officers
Barriera Tax Warehouses Ltd	3
Fondazzjoni Ċentru għall-Kreattività	1
Foundation for Educational Services	1
Foundation for Medical Services	12
Foundation for Social Welfare Services	69
Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools	1
IPSL	1
Local Councils	60
Local Councils Association	0
MCST	2
Malta Enterprise	1
MITA	2
Malta National Laboratory	0
Malta Qualifications Centre	0
Malta Tourism Authority	3
Maltco Lotteries	1
Management Efficiency Unit	2
Manoel Theatre	1
MCAST	47
MEUSAC	3
MEUSAC/MCESD (Gozo Regional Office)	1
Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations	1
St John's Co-Cathedral Foundation	1
WasteServ Ltd	17
Malta Air Traffic Services Ltd.	116
Total	347

Ongoing Ancillary Activities

During 2011, the following appointments, movements, progressions and promotions were processed by Resourcing – General Service Grades:

General Service progressions to a higher salary scale with the same grade	
Position	No
Senior Principal (Scale 7 to 6)	26
Principal (Scale 8 to 7)	33
(Scale 9 to 8)	15
(Scale 10 to 9)	245
Assistant Principal (Scale 11 to 10)	29
Executive Officer (Scale 14 to 13)	17
Clerk (Scale 16 to 15)	22

Movement of Staff within same Ministry approved by respective Permanent Secretary	
General Service Grades	8
Departmental Grades	1
Industrial Grades	1

Category 'A' Appointments	
Position	No
In an Acting Capacity	17
Assistant Director	32

General Service promotions to a higher grade in terms of the relevant provisions of the Addendum and the 1993 Classification Agreements	
Position	No
Assistant Principal to Principal	5
Executive Officer to Assistant Principal	29
From Clerk to EO	2
Clerk to Senior Clerk	82

General Service Appointments	
Grade	No
Clerk	174

Other Movement of Staff	
<i>Type of Movement</i>	<i>No</i>
Public Officers appt. as Local Council Secretaries	5
Reversion to former grade in terms of para. 1.1.7.2 of the PSMC	5
Re-employment	11
Re-instatement	3

Movement of Staff to & from Private Secretariats	
General Service Grades	2
Departmental Grades	0
Technical Grades	0
Industrial Grades	1
Others	0

Movement of Staff approved by PAHRO	
General Service Grades	46
Departmental Grades	8
Technical Grades	16
Industrial Grades	17
Others	0

Others	
Assimilations	7 recommendations involving 189 officers
Re-designations	9 recommendations involving 41 officers
Renewals of contract	86 recommendations involving 118 officers

Calls for applications issued for Departmental, Technical & Industrial Grades and Contractual Positions	
<i>Type of advert</i>	<i>No</i>
Government Gazette	146
Service-wide PAHRO Circular	67
Departmental Circular	11
Expressions of Interest	8
Deployment	2

Appointment in Departmental, Technical & Industrial Grades and Contractual Positions	
<i>Method</i>	<i>No</i>
Following public calls for application	1,866
Following selection from service-wide calls	248
Following selection from departmental calls	53
After a number of years service in the grade	55
Direct recommendations	1

Recommendations to PSC in respect of Departmental/Technical/Industrial Grades and Contractual Positions	
Local Personnel	387
Expatriate Personnel	10

Pension Files processed by the Department	
Departmental, Technical & Industrial Grades	361
General Service Grades	34

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DIRECTORATE

As established in the Public Administration Act, the Directorate is in the process of assuming a regulatory and monitoring function whilst providing advice to ministries and line departments in the development of effective management of the HR function especially with regard to employee relations. In line with this objective, the Employee Relations Directorate implemented the following initiatives.

Employee Support Programme (ESP)

In line with the objectives of Government to promote the physical and psychological wellbeing of its employees, PAHRO launched the project entitled *Employee Support Programme for Public Employees*, ESF 4.97 co-funded through the European Social Fund, Operational Programme II, Cohesion Policy 2007-2013.

Operating a budget of €670,000, the Programme is designed to deal, on a short-term basis, with a broad range of difficulties such as work-related stress, mental health and emotional stress, marital and family concerns, bereavement and terminal illness, addictive behaviour and disability issues. The support is provided in partnership with the programme's six partners, namely: the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS), Hospice Movement, National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD), OASI Foundation, Richmond Foundation and Cana Movement.

During the first quarter of the year, ten information seminars for top management officials within the Public Administration were held. These half-day seminars were intended to introduce, inform and explain the concept of the programme and the scope of the project, as well as to encourage a culture of employee support in the Public Administration, whilst promoting the services offered by the ESP Unit.

Another major component of the project is the Situation Needs Analysis (SNA) which is being carried out to analyse and identify the psycho-social and disability issues across the Public Administration. During the current year, the SNA was initiated across seven ministries. The studies in respect of four ministries were concluded by the end of the year, followed by the issuance of the respective analysis and recommendations. A total of six training sessions on specific psycho-social and disability issues were delivered by partner organisations to middle management and 18 awareness raising sessions to employees. These training sessions were planned according to the specific needs of each ministry identified through the SNA. Furthermore, in each of these four ministries a thirty-two hour training programme for HR Officers and officers with people management responsibilities was conducted.

Operations within the ESP Unit were officially launched on 14 February 2011. With a total of 88 public employees accessing the Unit for support, the majority of employees accessed the Unit with the aim of receiving support for mental and psychological health issues. The majority of employees accessed the Unit for personal reasons, which were affecting both their personal and working life.

Statistics

The following tables show respectively the age bracket, civil status and grade/scale of the employees accessing the ESP Unit:

Age bracket	No of employees
18-29	16
30-39	22
40-49	25
50-59	24
60+	0

Civil Status	No of employees
Single	28
Married	43
Separated	15
Widowed	0
Other	1

Salary Scales	No of employees
11-20	61
8-10	18
5-7	7
1-4	1

Family-Friendly Measures

Consistent with Government's policy of promoting family-friendly measures to assist officers to achieve a balance between their career and their family life, the Employee Relations Directorate took the following initiatives:

- In line with Government's policy to promote breastfeeding, the conditions of work of breastfeeding employees were facilitated through the introduction of a new policy aimed at addressing the needs of breastfeeding employees, through the temporary adjustment of the work environment and/or the hours of work. The policy provides for the provision upon request of adequate, clean and private facilities for the expression of milk/breastfeeding, whilst allowing breastfeeding employees a maximum of one hour each working day for the expression of milk without incurring any loss of pay. Moreover, during the first 26 weeks from confinement, breastfeeding employees may request temporary alternative working arrangements closer to home.
- The parental leave policy was revised to include eligibility to foster parents, whilst extending the applicability up to the time the respective child reaches eight years of age. The revised policy also enables parents to reserve up to a maximum of four months from their parental leave entitlements to be utilised in periods of one month at a time until the child is eight years old. Another amendment which was introduced provides for the suspension and postponement of parental leave in those instances where the employee is recalled for duty in the public interest in agreement with the employee concerned, without forfeiting the balance of unutilised parental leave which may be utilised up to the time when the child reaches eight years of age.
- The applicability for the utilisation of the five year career break was revised and extended for the care of children under eight years of age.

Political Participation

Directive 5 entitled Political Participation and Communication with the Media was issued on 1 June 2011, under the Public Administration Act. The aim of this directive was to (i) regulate political participation by public officers with a view to reconciling the political impartiality of the Public Service with the personal rights of public officers; (ii) regulate communications with and through the media by public officers; and (iii) establish similar provisions for the employees of government entities and agencies. In order to encourage active participation in the political wellbeing of the country most of the posts in the Public Service were classified as politically free. Public officers who hold a politically free post will be free to indulge in politics and political debate. This list of posts which were classified as politically restricted was published along with the said Directive.

Public Service Management Code (PSMC) and other Manuals

An updated consolidated version of the PSMC was published on 7 March 2011. This update addressed revisions pursuant to the coming into force of the Public Administration Act and included a number of policy updates. Subsequent to the issuance of this consolidated version, updates to the PSMC were included in the online updates document.

Throughout the year, work was initiated on the review and updating of a number of information manuals particularly the Allowances Manual and the Family Friendly Measures Manual. Work was also initiated on the drafting of a manual aimed at providing basic information to recruits. Moreover, the Directorate initiated the identification of a number of policies to be included in a manual in the Maltese language.

PSMC Review Committee

The PSMC Review Committee was set up in February and tasked to review the PSMC with a view to consolidate, streamline policies, simplify policies to ensure reader-friendliness and address particular areas which could be potentially leading to inconsistent interpretations or problematic to implement. The Committee's remit did not include the introduction of new conditions of employment or the broadening of existing conditions stipulated in the PSMC.

As part of this holistic exercise, the Committee held weekly meetings and consulted PAHRO's directorates, Directors responsible for HR matters and HR Managers and trade unions participating in the Collective Agreement negotiations. These consultations were intended to capture the perspectives of the respective stakeholders on the subject. Trade unions were invited to nominate a contact person with whom the Committee was to liaise and discuss matters related to this exercise. The Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Gozo was invited to nominate a contact person to discuss and coordinate with the Committee the review of the PSMC from a Gozitan perspective. Meetings with the nominated persons were held.

The submissions received were assessed and considered. The report is in its final stages.

Other new policy initiatives and policy updates

Throughout the course of the year, the Employee Relations Directorate introduced a number of new policies and policy updates with a view to better address the needs of today's Public Administration and its employees, whilst ascertaining that the Public Administration is at the forefront in the implementation of innovative HR policies and in being a model employer.

Following consultations with the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family and Kunsill Malti għall-iSport, the Employee Relations Directorate launched the 20/20 Sports Training Scheme. This policy is aimed at meeting the needs of public employees who participate as athletes in international sporting events. Through this scheme, identified employees are release for up to a maximum of 20 hrs per week for

training purposes. Such an arrangement is for a period not exceeding 12 calendar months which may be renewed by further periods should circumstances be favourable to further improvement in the applicant's performance. Approval of applications is subject to the authorisation of the Permanent Secretary responsible for Sports. Whilst benefiting of this scheme, employees are entitled to receive their basic salary, with allowances payable on a pro-rata basis.

In consultation with Kunsill Malti għall-iSport, the policy regarding the granting of paid leave to attend international sporting activities locally and abroad was revised. This leave has now been extended to include international sports activities held locally and attendance by officials of National/Local Sports Organisations at mandatory conferences and meetings. The policy has been extended to provide for paid leave for participation at ten international sport events held abroad, and unlimited paid leave for the actual participation in international sport activities held locally. Moreover, the policy provides for special paid leave to cover travel and attendance at mandatory conferences and meetings.

The policy providing for the release of employees to work with voluntary organisations was reviewed and this policy is now applicable to all public employees. In order to reduce the burden on voluntary organisations, these are no longer required to identify and nominate up to a maximum of three potential employees for release. The new policy requires PAHRO to issue an expression of interest on a bi-annual basis enabling public employees to register their interest to be released to work with a voluntary organisation.

The policy on acting allowance was reviewed. A clear demarcation was established between those officers who are performing acting duties concurrently with their normal duties and those officers who are performing acting duties but not performing their normal duties. It has been decided that an acting allowance should only be reserved to Heads of Department and to holders of other offices with statutory powers that are required by law as per Schedule 2 of the Public Administration Act. In respect of other officers holding headship positions a substitution allowance should be paid.

Discipline

The Employee Relations Directorate continued to extend its support to line departments in the management of disciplinary cases. This was done in various ways, namely:

- the issuing of directives, advice and letter-circulars to line departments on the interpretation, management and processing of various types of disciplinary cases;
- the regular auditing of the application of the Disciplinary Regulations in line departments and the undertaking of corrective action, whenever necessary;
- consultation with the Public Service Commission on the interpretation of a number of provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations;
- the delivery of lectures to newly appointed Clerks and Local Councils Secretaries on the salient features of the Disciplinary Regulations, which lectures were organised by the Centre for Development, Research and Training; and the participation in seminars and fora for Directors responsible for HR matters, HR managers and officers responsible for the processing of disciplinary cases in line departments on certain aspects of the Disciplinary Regulations.

In collaboration with the Public Service Commission, a draft legal notice was drafted proposing a number of amendments to the current Disciplinary Regulations. Amongst the amendments that were proposed was that each ministry will have a Standing Disciplinary Panel composed of former public officers from which Heads of Department would select members to sit on the Disciplinary Boards. A new concept that these amendments will introduce is the concept of forced leave. The other amendments are intended to delegate more disciplinary authority to line ministries, to include a number of rulings given by the PSC in the past months and to fine-tune certain provisions.

In order to enable Heads of Department to take immediate action in respect of officers under their responsibility who are undergoing criminal proceedings, instructions were issued to the police authorities to inform the respective Head of Department about a criminal case involving a public officer within 24 hours from the date that the officer is actually arraigned in Court.

A letter-circular was issued to Directors responsible for HR policies stating that corrections to attendance sheets that are made through the use of correcting fluid or any concealing material, is highly irregular and should cease immediately. When amendments to attendance sheets, by way of corrections to the signature and/or arrival/departure times, are required, these should be crossed out and a fresh entry at the side or above, as the case may be, is to be included. Any adjustments to attendance sheets must be signed and authenticated by the senior officer in charge. This circular also pointed out that tampering with attendance sheets may lead to criminal proceedings being instituted against the officer involved.

Client Support Unit

The Client Support Unit embarked on an ongoing process aimed at strengthening the two-way communication with line ministries through outreach meetings with the respective Directors responsible for HR management and HR Managers. These meetings served to address pending HR issues and to identify any policy areas requiring clarification or adjustment, with a view to facilitate the resolution and streamlining of issues and processes.

The Unit served also as the first point of contact for both line ministries and employees requiring assistance with the interpretation of policies pertaining to the remit of the Employee Relations Directorate.

Correctional Services Officers

Following a claim submitted by the Prisons Officers Association Malta, approval was granted so that the period from the date when a Trainee Prisons Officer is engaged up till the date the same officer is formally appointed as Guard be reckoned as service for pension purposes, provided that upon engagement as Trainee Prisons Officer, the officer concerned was assigned the full range of duties pertaining to the grade of Guard and that the officer concerned only attended the training course on his rest days.

Permanent Employment

From an exercise which was carried out by the Employee Relations Directorate, it resulted that there were 19 pensionable public officers in three different entities who will attain either 60 or 61 years of age by the end of 2011 and 2012. As these officers were detailed after 1 April 2002, the entities concerned were requested to offer permanent employment to these officers. In this way, these officers would benefit from a Treasury pension computed on the analogous public service grade and not on their substantive grade. It was also decided that even the detailed pensionable public officers who had been medically boarded out or deceased, whilst still in employment, should be considered as having taken up permanent employment with their entity, one day prior to their retirement or demise, as the case may be. By virtue of this decision even these officers or their heirs, would benefit from a Treasury pension computed on the analogous public service grade. The officers who accepted the offer were permanently employed with their entities in terms of the relevant legislation setting up the entity.

Statistics

Tables showing the total number of cases handled by the Employee Relations Directorate during 2011:

Cases handled by Employee Relations Directorate	
Conditions of Service	1,262
Discipline & Staff Welfare	403
Pensions	182
Total	1,847

Cases of conditions of service handled	
Deputising Allowance	12
Qualification Allowance	45
Allowance	80
Paid/Unpaid Leave	82
Cultural Leave	97
Remuneration to Gov Boards & Committees	5
Medical Boards	86
Trade Union Activities	73
Overseas Development Aid	23
VOs	81
Unpaid Leave - EU	62
Gender Issues	104
Others	512
Total	1,262

The following table shows the number of disciplinary cases that were initiated in 2011 by line departments:

Disciplinary case	
Regulation 18 Admonishment	197
Regulation 19 Summary Warning	730
Regulation 20 Minor	79
Regulation 20 Serious	134
Total	1,140

HR SYSTEMS AND DATA MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE

The functions of the HR Systems and Data Management Directorate for the year under review included the following:

- Finalising the transition from Payper to the new HR/Payroll system and making the preparatory groundwork for the staggered integration of HR modules.
- Analysis and reporting of the data captured through the Skills Profiling Exercise carried out throughout the Public Administration and monitoring updates of the captured data.
- Implementing the Performance Management Programme (PMP) to improve employee performance against approved output and pre-determined quality standards, while striving to improve the Programme as well;
- Improving the competence of Human Resource Management through regular Fora for Human Resource Managers and Directors of Corporate Services;
- Administration and support of the MPO/PAHRO website, the Public Service Recruitment Portal and the HR Managers' restricted area on the Public Service Intranet;
- Collecting and collating data regarding employment within Public Sector organisations and, for this purpose, maintaining an adequate database.
- Performing a feasibility study on the possibility of introducing Childcare Arrangements in the Public Service.
- Performing the annual surveys and any ad hoc surveys as may be required.

New HR/Payroll System for the Public Service

The new Payroll system was successfully implemented on the live environment from the first pay of January 2011 and all payroll calculations are now being undertaken by the new system. Following the successful implementation of the two pilot sites, all ministries and departments were gradually incorporated during the year.

Training was given to payroll officers, in line departments, who will be using the Employee Payment Screen (EPS). This web-based module is the main system through which payroll amendments are made by line departments.

The new electronic payslips feature, successfully introduced in tandem with the implementation of the new payroll, is functioning well and there were positive remarks regarding the new payslip design, which offers more details than the previous 'printed' payslip. All other payroll-related reports, such as departments' paylists are also being sent to line departments electronically.

An absences module, which is meant to complement the present payroll system, is being tested and is scheduled to be implemented service-wide during the first quarter of 2012.

Skills Profiling

Following the Data Collection phase of the Skills Profiling Exercise, this Directorate analysed and reported on the data collected for both Public Service and Public Sector (two different reports).

The data analysis for the Public Service included an analysis of compliance, Education (School Leaving Certificates, Highest Level of Education and ECDL) and Work Preferences (Preferences regarding Teamwork, preferences regarding working indoors vs working outdoors, and preferences regarding job mobility).

Following this first report, this office has conducted further analyses in these areas:

- An analysis of the Qualifications of officers in General Service Grades and officers in Industrial Grades
- Counts of different qualifications, categorised by areas of study and by the Level of the qualification
- Analysis of qualifications relevance to the present posting
- In-depth analysis of the Job Mobility questions.

The final version of the report for the Public Service was submitted on 5 April 2011.

The data analysis of the Skills Profiles of Public Sector Organisations included analyses of Respondents by demographics (Gender, Age Groups and Average Ages), Education (School Leaving Certificates, Highest Level of Education and ECDL), and Work Preferences. This report included also counts of different qualifications, categorised by areas of study and by the Level of the qualification.

The final version of the report for Public Sector Organisations was submitted on 27 June 2011.

Performance Management Programme (PMP)

During March 2011, this Directorate initiated the annual Performance Management Programme (PMP) Quantity Audit for Public Service employees. This annual exercise is undertaken in order to ensure that PMPs covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2011 have been drawn up for all eligible employees. The audits were finalised on 15 June 2011. A report was compiled to establish the 2011 PMP Compliance Rate for each ministry.

In the meantime, discussions were held with the Director, Quality Assurance, MEEF regarding the re-implementation of the Teachers' Performance Management and Development Programme (PMDP), which the Directorate intends to implement in the new scholastic year for newly recruited Teachers.

Fora organised by the Directorate

In order to strengthen the communication between the Directorate and the line ministries, and to further improve the competence in HR Management with the various stakeholders, seven fora for Directors (Corporate Services) were organised during the year. Topics ranged from Flexible Work Arrangements for Public Employees to the Revision of the Policy on the postponement of appointments.

The Directorate also organised a forum for HR Managers and two joint fora for DCSs and Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and for DCSs and HR Managers respectively.

Human Resources Working Group (HRWG)

This Directorate represented the Maltese Public Administration in the HRWG Meetings held during this period. The first two meetings were held in Budapest (28 February – 1 March; 24 – 25 May 2011), organised by the Hungarian Presidency. The themes that were discussed included: Use of EU Structural Funds for administrative capacity building measures reforming ESF; Generation shift in Public Administration; Career Opportunities for Women in the Civil Sector; Integrity policies in the civil service; Women to top positions within the Central Administration; Mobility in the Public Sector, and Future of Social Dialogue within EUPAN.

The meetings under the Polish Presidency took place on 12 – 13 September 2011 in Warsaw and on 17 – 18 November 2011 in Cracow. The themes that were discussed during these two sessions included: Flexicurity Policy – Flexible working time arrangement; Effectiveness of Good Governance and Ethics – Evaluating Reform Outcomes in the context of financial crisis; The future of employment status in the National Public Services; The Role of Think Tanks in supporting decision making processes; Effectiveness of ethics and trust measures; Coordination, cooperation and collaboration at Top Executives level; Social Dialogue, and Building image of public administration.

Casual Substitutes Scheme Audits

An audit of the Casual Substitutes Scheme was conducted in all ministries between November and December 2011. The objectives of this audit are to ensure that the process laid down in the Public Service Management Code is being followed, to clarify any difficulties encountered by line and to ensure that the relevant payroll measures are adhered to. Issues identified in the audits were discussed with the HR section of each ministry and corrective action was taken in each case.

Before the actual audits took place, two processes were carried out by the HR Systems and Data Management Directorate. The first process consisted of data collection concerning the Casual Substitute Officers and their twinned officers from each line ministry, whilst the second process consisted of checking the received data against the Payroll Data to ensure that the twinning concept and the payroll policies in connection with this scheme are being adhered to.

Data Management

Teleworking Data Submission

As from January 2011, Government departments and entities with detailed/deployed public officers were requested to submit a monthly teleworking return. The aim of this exercise is to collate and update statistics about the number of public officers on teleworking arrangements for each month, together with

the monthly variations (new teleworkers, terminations, and pending requests during the month) for each department and entity. From the received data, a monthly teleworking statistical report for each ministry is compiled.

Gozitan Employees Returns Database

During 2011, a monthly exercise was initiated through which data concerning public officers residing permanently in Gozo and working in Malta were inputted in a new database. This information was compiled from the data in the Employment Returns submitted by line ministries' HR departments. The Employment Returns were cross-checked with the HR System before being inputted in this new database. Addresses were also verified and updated as necessary.

Presentations

ILO Delegation

The Assistant Director (HR Systems and Data Management) delivered a presentation during a visit by an International Labour Organisation delegation. The delegation included representatives from the Public Administrations of Malawi, Afghanistan and Nigeria. The presentation gave a historical overview of the Directorate and continued with extensive details regarding the Directorate's data management functions.

Standing Committee for Family Affairs

On 10 October 2011, the Assistant Director (HR Systems and Data Management), together with the Assistant Director (Special Projects – Employee Relations), delivered a joint presentation on Family-Friendly Measures in the Public Administration to the Standing Committee for Family Affairs. The presentation included historical details regarding milestones in the implementation of Family-Friendly Measures, the different measures available to parents and to all employees, and statistics regarding the take-up of Family-Friendly Measures in the Public Service and Public Sector entities.

Appendices A to D show:

- A Comparison report - Public Service Workforce - end December 2010 against end December 2011
- B Recruitment against Terminations in the Public Service 2001 – 2011
Distribution of Public Service employees by Category and Gender as on December 2011
- C Average age by Grade and Gender in the General Service Class as on December 2011
Comparison between causes of terminations from the Public Service during 2011
- D PMP compliance by Ministry during 2011

DOREEN ELLUL

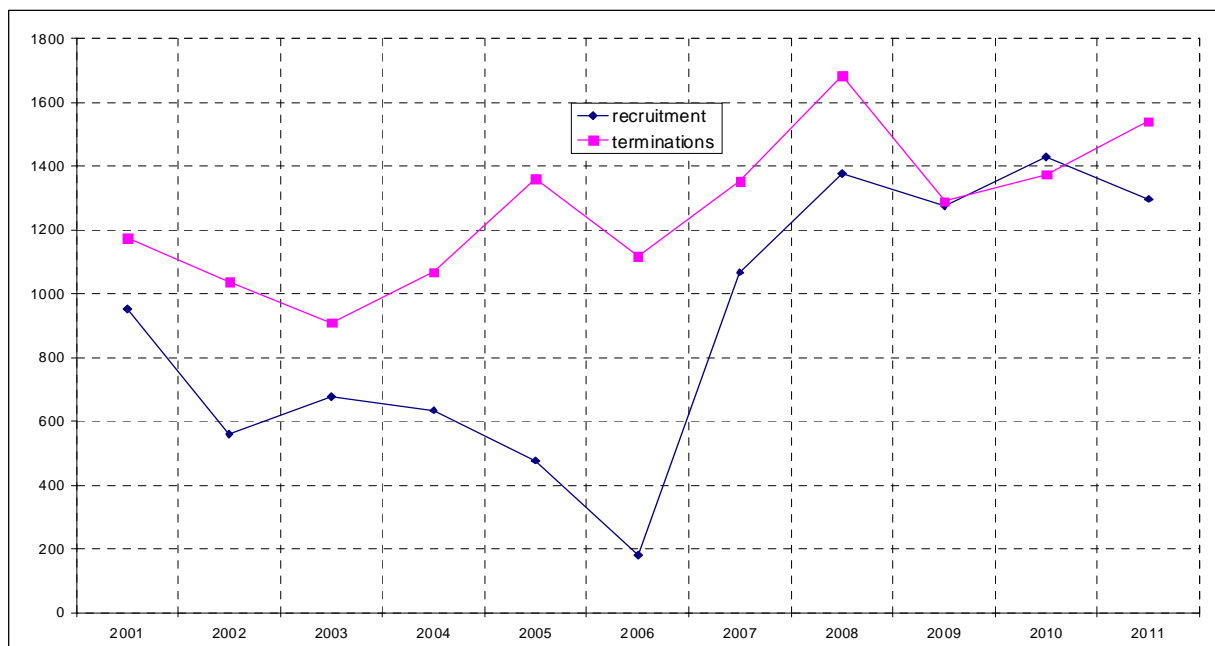
Director General (Public Administration HR Office)

APPENDIX A

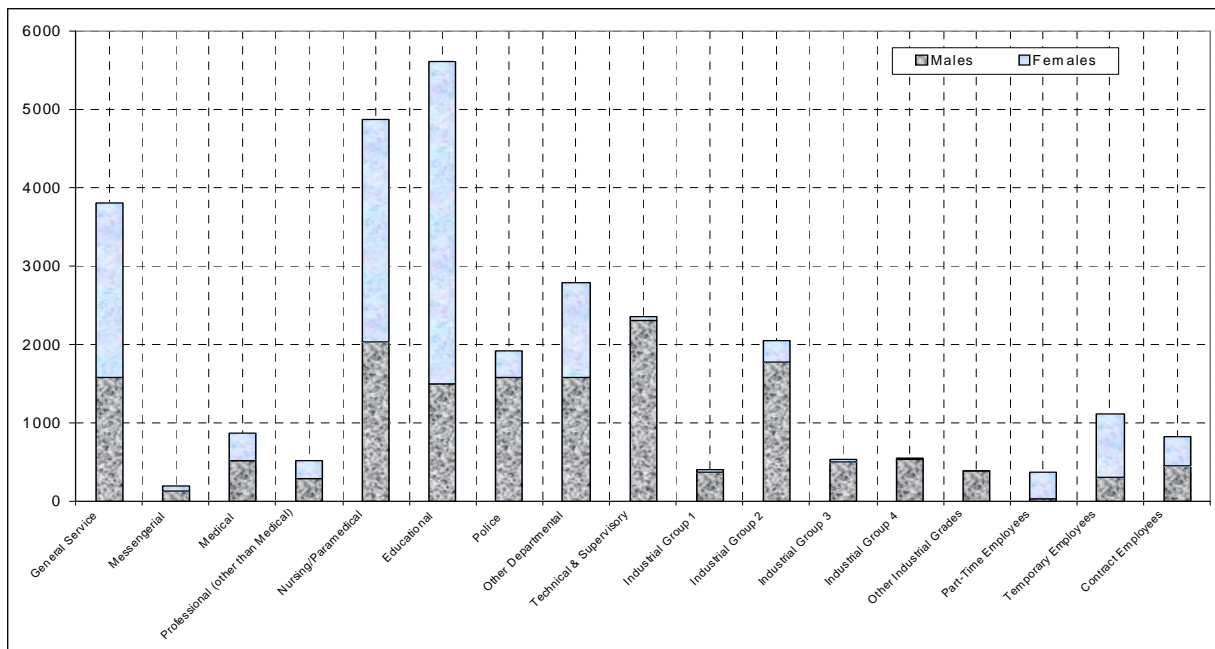
Public Service Totals Including AFM uniformed personnel and Public Service employees seconded/detailed to authorities/public entities December 2010/2011			
Category	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	
Full-Time Public Service Employees			
Administrative & Clerical	3661	3707	
Messengerial	170	193	
Police Force	1922	1928	
Technical	1971	1926	
Professional (Other than Medical)	448	465	
Nursing/Paramedical	4815	4871	
Medical	833	869	
Educational	5190	5612	
Other Departmental Grades	1885	2531	
Industrial	3810	3557	25659
	24705		
Armed Forces (Uniformed)			
Regular	1569	1550	
Revenue Security Corps	110	73	
Reserve	51	50	
Volunteer	34	25	1698
	1764		
Temporary Employees			
Part-Time	438	381	
Temporary	1457	1123	
On definite contract - local & expatriates	705	807	
Trainees	1	1	2312
	2601		
Public Officers with Authorities/Public Entities		1403	1328
GRAND TOTALS	1403	30997	

APPENDIX B

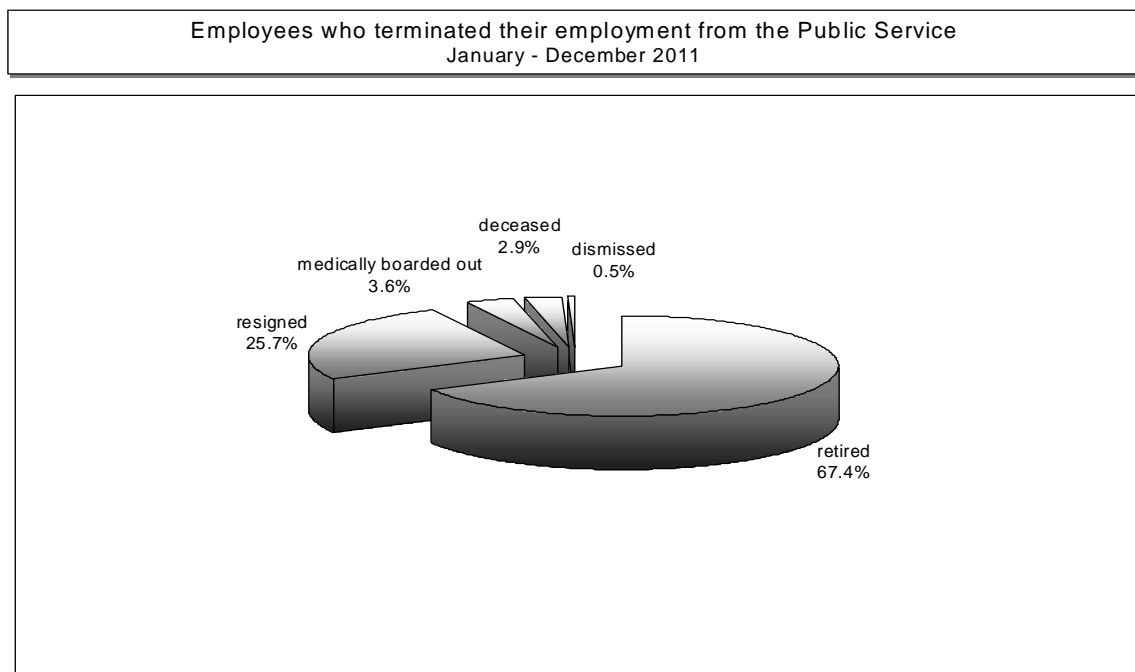
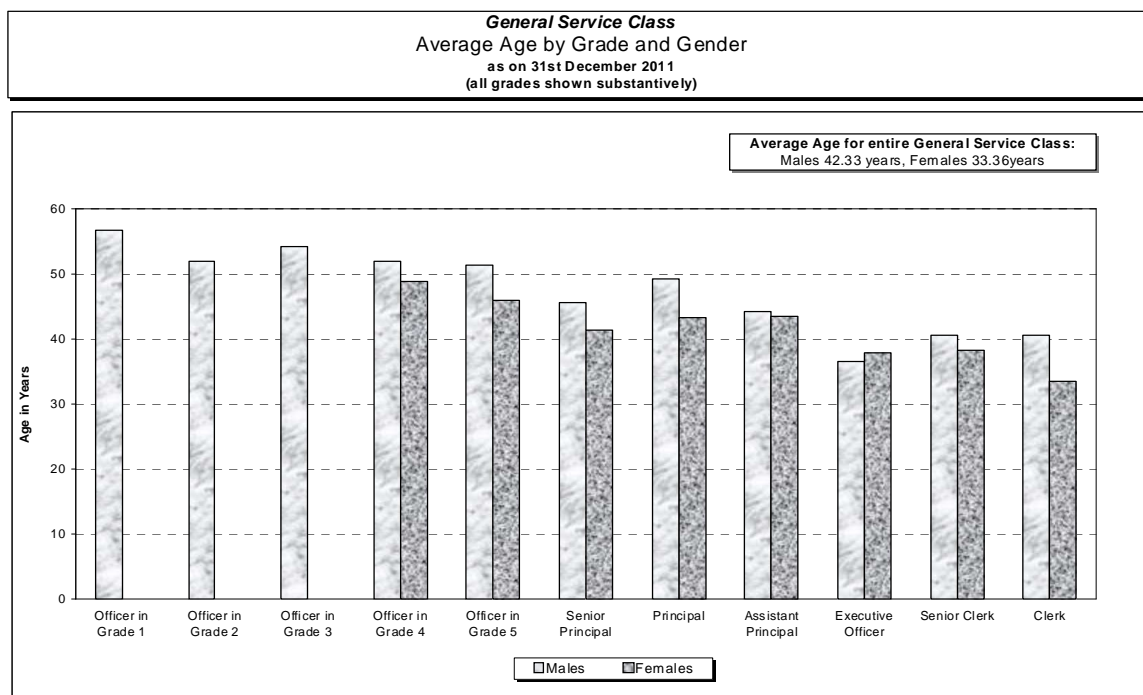
Recruitment against Terminations in the Public Service
2001 - 2011

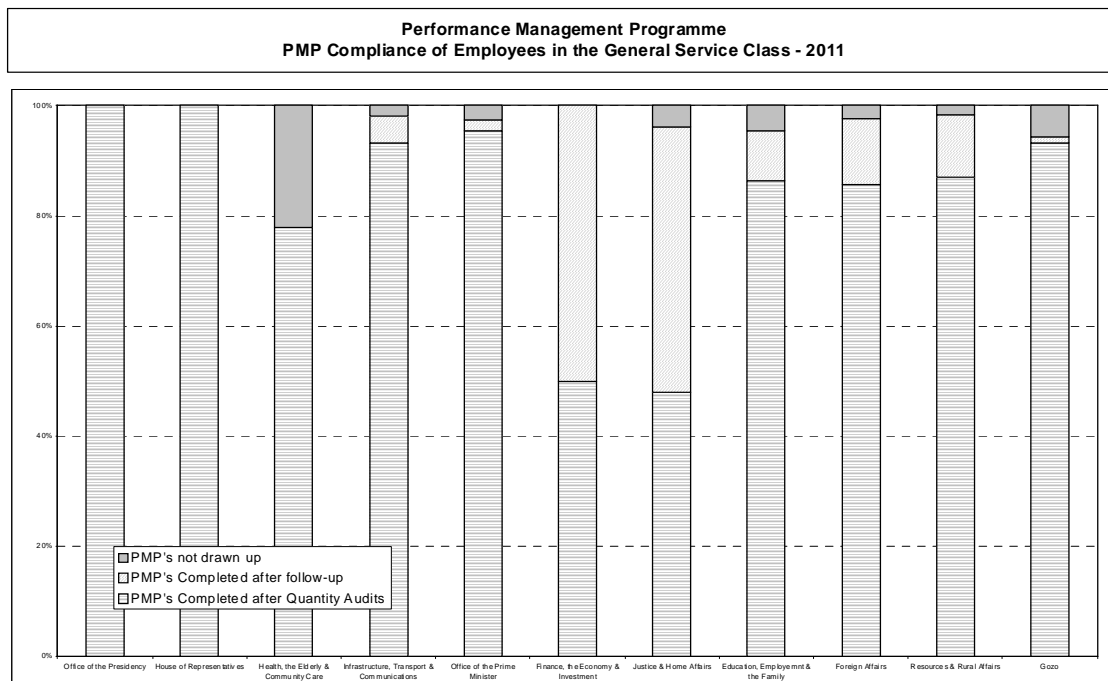


Distribution of Public Service employees by Category and Gender
as on 31st December 2011



APPENDIX C





Centre for Development, Research and Training

INTRODUCTION

2011 saw a record number of public officers being trained, with 5,550 participants attending more than 350 courses, workshops and other training initiatives. With a schedule of varied training initiatives ranging from basic skills to senior management programmes to seminars, 2011 saw the Department's strategy being adapted to suit an ever-changing environment.

Different training methods and initiatives continued to be implemented to ensure more effectiveness and suit the different needs. Action Learning workshops were offered with participants bringing their real job issues to the training room. Coaching was also used as an effective training tool in a number of instances. This included employees who needed individual attention because of personal learning difficulties and coaching in specialised areas. 2011 also saw the launch of the first e-Learning programme developed by trainers from CDRT. Other programmes were offered in Blended Learning format.

All courses held were evaluated at the end of the training. Initial feedback is gathered from participants and from the trainer. This evaluation is followed by questionnaires which are sent to participants and their line managers about six weeks following the end of the training programme. These assess if and how the training has helped the participants in performing their duties.

CORE TRAINING

Management Development

During 2011, a total of 78 courses, workshops and other events were organised for senior and middle managers with 1,616 participants attending. A seminar for senior managers was also held.

Management courses, which form part of the Diploma in Public Management, included *Managing with Leadership*, *Project Management*, *Coaching and Mentoring*, *Developing Personal Influence and Impact*, *Interviewing Skills* and *Delivering Successful Presentations*. All these courses carry a formal assessment which is either a written assignment or a practical session, depending on the subject matter.

As part of our course evaluation, a number of suggestions were received from participants for follow-up sessions to courses and workshops held. A number of follow-up sessions were held during which participants had the opportunity to discuss how the training has helped them perform in their duties and whether any problems were encountered in putting the skills learnt into practice. Follow-up sessions were held for the *Managing with Leadership*, *Stepping up to Senior Management*, *Professional Assertiveness* and *Delegating Effectively* training programmes.

All participants attending Management Development courses are provided with a reading list related to the subject of the training to further their knowledge of the subject.

This year the concept of Action Learning Workshops was introduced for Middle Managers. During these workshops, participants had the opportunity to discuss a particular issue they are facing with other participants with the aim of forming an action plan to tackle this issue. Follow-up workshops were held

where participants had the opportunity to discuss any problems encountered when implementing the action plan.

A blended learning training programme, *Managing and Improving Performance*, was also introduced. This course was designed to develop a greater understanding of a manager's role within an organisation in determining development needs of staff members and how to address them. The objective of the programme was to develop the skills needed to manage individuality, maintain organisational goals, develop responsibility and deal productively with performance problems.

The course consisted of one classroom session and a number of exercises which participants had to complete after the session. Participants were invited to attend a workshop following which the trainer distributed training material to be completed by the participants. When the exercises were completed, a short session was held with each participant to discuss and evaluate.

Seminars

Business Needs Awareness Raising Seminar

A seminar was held in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment. The objective of the seminar was to enhance the awareness and understanding of the needs of business operators so as to ensure a more appropriate service delivery to this very important sector of the Maltese economy. A number of departments and authorities identified by MFEI were requested to nominate officials who are best placed to influence their entity's strategy and service delivery to attend this seminar. The topics covered during the seminar included SMEs, better regulation, the small business survey, starting up and running a business, government initiatives in support of business, Small Business Act, Understanding the Entrepreneurial mindset, a presentation on complaints usually voiced by businesses in their dealings with the Public Administration and a panel discussion focusing on small business issues.

Seminar for Senior Management

The theme for this year's Senior Management Seminar was *Public Administration facing New Dynamics: Constraints, Innovation and Sustainability*. A call for papers was issued and interested senior managers submitted abstracts. Eight abstracts were received, out of which four were selected and presented during the seminar. The Principal Permanent Secretary presided over the seminar and the titles of the presentations given were *Implementing Health Technology Assessments and Pricing*, *Starting up the Engine – Innovation and Sustainability in Economically Constrained Times*, *Equipping Health Sector Leaders with Competent Skills* and also *Values and Public Administration: Themes Worth Pondering*.

The Senior Management Seminar was held on 10 November 2011.

Specialised training

A number of specialised management courses were delivered. Most of these were directly tailored to the needs of the entity following meetings to discuss objectives, participants and other relevant factors to make the training effective. A clear example is *Working as a Team*, which is held for specific departments or sections to improve their performance through better teamwork. Working as a Team sessions were held for the Department of Social Welfare Standards, the Plant Health Directorate and the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra as well as the Restoration Unit. Another three teambuilding sessions were held for the Paying Agency, Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs while another was held for the senior management at the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family.

Workshops

A series of workshops were also held. These are short, focussed sessions which tackle particular issues.

- *Managing Teleworkers Workshop* helps managers assess individuals and jobs suited for telework, understand and address the common perceptions and objections to telework and to manage and supervise teleworkers to maximise their performance.
- *Report Writing Workshop* was held for middle managers and focused on different types of reports and what should be included, tips on writing better reports and reports that have impact.
- *Assignment Writing Skills Workshop* was held for those officers who applied to follow the Diploma in Public Management and its objective was to help participants develop the necessary skills to plan the stages necessary to produce and write a successful assignment.
- *Delegating Effectively*, a follow-up session, was held for those participants who had attended a *Delegating Effectively* workshop held in November 2010 during which participants had the opportunity to discuss actual case studies.
- *Change Management* was held for senior managers and tackled the change cycle, the human reaction to change, managing resistance and adapting to change.
- 3 *Professional Assertiveness workshops* were held for middle managers to help participants enhance their assertiveness skills and adopt better ways to interact with work colleagues at all levels within their organisation. Follow-up workshops were held during which participants could discuss how they applied the skills learnt at their workplace.
- The objective behind *Overcoming Negativity at the Workplace* is to help participants explore how to challenge individual negativity and to protect themselves from the negativity of others. This workshop introduces participants to behavioural models which they can use to coach themselves and others in how to build optimistic responses to any given situation. In all, four workshops were held, one of which was specifically organised for District Managers at the Department of Social Security following a request by the Department.
- *Negotiation and Problem Solving Skills* helps participants become more effective in negotiating to resolve conflicting situations. The different styles of negotiation, understanding and managing emotions in negotiation and skills for problem solving were tackled during the workshop. In all four workshops were held for middle and senior managers.

Action Learning Workshops – Professional Assertiveness

The topic selected for these workshops was *Professional Assertiveness* and participants were asked to prepare an actual case study to be discussed during the workshop. Follow-up workshops were held to give participants the opportunity to discuss any problems encountered when implementing the action plan.

Train the Trainer courses for Occasional Trainers

Following a number of officers who expressed an interest to deliver training at CDRT, a call for occasional trainers was posted on the CDRT website. Two *Train the Trainer* courses were organised and those who had applied as occasional trainers were invited to attend. Participants were required to prepare a presentation and deliver a session during the training following which they were required to assess their delivery and presentation and identify areas for improvement.

The course facilitator is also requested to provide a brief report on each participant.

Third Level Evaluation

A total of 174 questionnaires were sent to participants including 66 senior managers, while 79 questionnaires were sent to line managers.

A total of 119 (68%) participants responded, out of which 58 were senior managers while 44 (56%) responses were received from line managers.

From the responses received to the questionnaires, it seems that the most useful aspects of the training for participants are the opportunities to network, sharing experiences and group discussions. Participative training, such as role plays, is also considered to be an important aspect. A good number of participants seem to be putting their training into practice. However, some participants feel that they are sometimes restricted from doing this due to their position, lack of authority and lack of communication with their line managers. Although the response from line managers is not so high, it seems that those line managers who responded have discussed the training with the participants and have ensured that the participants put the skills acquired into practice.

Course Title	Participants	Courses
Coaching and Mentoring	59	5
Critical Thinking	52	3
Delivering Successful Presentations	39	3
Developing Personal Influence & Impact	37	3
Interviewing Skills	24	2
Managing with Leadership	117	7
Managing with Leadership - Follow up	50	4
Project Management	52	3
Stepping up to Senior Management	33	2
Stepping up to Senior Management - Follow Up	8	1
Train the Trainer for Occasional Trainers	22	2
Total	493	35
Blended Learning		
Managing and Improving Performance	19	1
Total	19	1
Workshop Title		
Action Learning - Professional Assertiveness	18	2
Action Learning - Professional Assertiveness follow-up	5	1
Assignment Writing Skills – DPM	38	3
Change Management	28	2
Delegating Effectively – follow-up	7	1
Managing Teleworkers	90	6
Negotiation and Problem Solving Skills	63	4
Overcoming Negativity in the Workplace	68	4
Professional Assertiveness	48	3
Professional Assertiveness – follow-up	15	1
Report Writing	67	4
Total	447	31
Team Building		
Working as a Team - Malta Philharmonic Orchestra	51	1
Working as a Team - MEEF (Senior Management)	11	1
Working as a Team - Paying Agency, MRRA	62	3
Working as a Team - Plant Health Department	32	1
Working as a Team - Restoration Unit, MRRA	143	1
Working as a Team - Social Welfare Standards	26	1
Total Team Building	325	8
Seminars & Launch		
Annual Seminar for Senior Managers	237	1
Business Needs Awareness Raising	36	1
Launch - Diploma in Public Management	59	1
Total Seminars & Launch	332	3
Total Yearly	1,616	78

Policy and Government

The Policy and Government Training section organised a total of 82 courses throughout this year. These tackled EU issues in their various dimensions, policy making, implementation and evaluation of policies, as well as training targeted at staff working closely with Ministers and their secretariats, among other programmes.

Training was based on recent government policies, directives and priorities. Among these were programmes in Freedom of Information Act, the Public Administration Act, Key Areas in the Maltese Public Administration Reform, and the Line Ministry's Role on Monitoring and Public Procurement. Other courses on the European Union and its functions were delivered. A chunk of training was dedicated to EU funding and projects with programmes such as Start-up Training for New Beneficiaries, SFD-IT, Cost Benefit Analysis of Structural and Cohesion Funds Projects, and others. Most of these courses were organised in collaboration with PPCD. Policy and Government also catered for specialised and modular courses in various skills, such as Public Relations, Effective Briefing and Corresponding, Speech Writing and Speech Making and others.

During 2011, the Policy & Government Section was also involved in the ESF 4.98 Launch Conference which was held on 1 April 2011. 150 participants attended this conference.

Courses organised by the Policy and Government Section

Course Title	Courses	Participants
Freedom of Information Act	8	131
Key Areas in the Maltese Public Reform	2	26
Public Administration Act	13	186
Public Relations	14	176
Effective Briefing and Corresponding	1	15
Europe on the Internet	1	7
Speech Writing and Speech Making	1	9
Europe 2020	2	24
FOI IT	26	203
PPCD courses	14	213
Total	82	990
ESF 4.98 Launch Conference		150

Languages Training

The Languages section sponsored a total of 18 persons to follow courses in French, Italian and Spanish at various levels.

Maltese Language courses

A number of courses in the Maltese Language were held, some of which of a specialised nature and tailor-made to the specific needs of different entities. The main objective of these courses is to provide a platform to brush up on the Maltese language as regards grammar and the proper use of the written language. However, in certain instances more focused courses given by experts in the field were organised. These tackled new rules and practices as well as delved into issues identified by participants.

In total, during 2011, approximately 200 participants attended these courses.

Continuous Development

The Continuous Development Section was responsible for organising, among other courses, Data Protection training, Pre-retirement courses, Registry Services and a number of soft-skills and specialised courses. As a new initiative for in-house trainers, selected candidates were offered the opportunity to submit a course proposal for new courses to be included in the Continuous Development Section training programmes.

Specialised training

As part of the section's information sessions, a course in collaboration with SEDQA Agency was coordinated. Substance Abuse Free Employees (S.A.F.E.) came about in response to the issue of drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace. This programme was targeted at middle managers as well as supervisors and explored the effects of alcohol and drugs misuse and stress management. Ways of approaching employees with problems were also explored. Maintaining the registry (Docreg) system training programme was introduced in this year's prospectus and two courses were held. This programme gave the participants hands-on training on how to use the system and helped them become more familiar with its various functions.

During the second quarter, a request from the Ministry of Education to coordinate training for cleaners in schools was made to this office by the Service Manager, Technical Services in Education. Discussions were held with ITS personnel who are considering giving their input to this project. Time frame of training and costs were forwarded to the Service Manager, Technical Services, Education for approval from the Head of Department. Furthermore, this section was contacted by the Assistant Director, Administration & Finance of the VAT Department to conduct training for its staff on Customer Care and Work Ethics. Training on customer care will be held once the ESF training programmes commence while training on work ethics is being discussed.

Courses organised by the Continuous Development Section

Course Title	Courses	Participants
Registry Services	2	29
Pre-retirement Programme	2	65
Performance Management Programme (PMP)	1	2
Data Protection Awareness Programme	5	115
Dynamic Communication	5	87
Dealing with Challenging co-workers	4	71
Supervisory Skills	5	81
Course for Local Councils Executive Secretaries: Module 5	1	29
Induction Course for Potential/Council Executive Secretaries	12	387
Maintaining the Docreg System	3	29
Telephone Call Handling Techniques	6	104
Enhancing your Personal Assistant Skills – Module 1	3	36
Enhancing your Personal Assistant Skills – Module 2	3	34
Writing Skills – The Basics	1	17
Writing Skills	2	30
Skills towards a work-life Balance	2	29
S.A.F.E. Programme	1	18
Total		1,163

Corporate Services Training

The Corporate Services Training Section has also sought to follow CDRT strategy to plan and coordinate training programmes/courses which include assessments of course participants' acquired knowledge.

Specialised training

Two new specialised training programmes were introduced, namely: Fundamentals of Risk Management for the Public Administration and Enhancing Management Control within the Public Administration. The section in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo coordinated a seminar about Public Procurement and Financial Regulations for management grades, and another training programme on 'Procurement by Contracting Authorities', for public officers working at the Ministry for Gozo, whose duties include the drawing up and/or evaluation of tenders below the amount of €120,000. Similarly, on a specific request by MITA, the Section coordinated two training events about Public Procurement Regulations for MITA employees.

Courses organised by the Corporate Services Training Section

The following list gives details of the course organised by this Section during the year, including courses newly introduced:

Course Title	Courses	Participants
Financial Management and Control	4	69
Public Procurement Regulations	5	99
Public Procurement Regulations (MITA employees)	4	104
Procurement by Contracting Authorities	7	173
Departmental Accounting System (DAS)	4	38
Enhancing Management Control within the Public Administration	3	59
Inventory Management and Control for Public Officers	4	70
Fundamentals of Risk Management for the Public Administration	2	33
Public Procurement and Financial Regulations (Gozo)	1	21
Induction Course for Clerks	2	61
Industrial Relations in the Public Service (New)	1	19
Code of Conduct and Behaviour for Public Officers (Fisheries Directorate MRRA) New	1	15
Total	38	761

Information and Communication Technology

ICT courses for this year were totally delivered by in-house trainers. Courses being offered in the Prospectus 2011 include:

- Basic ICT Skills
- Basic ICT Skills – Email and Internet
- Touch Typing
- Excel as a Database (E-Learning)
- Safety, Health & the Environment when using ICT
- Information Security Awareness
- Mail Merge using Word Processing
- Tables using Word Processing
- Excel Formulas
- Excel Charts
- Mastering Design in PowerPoint
- Flow Charts

A total of 93 courses with 889 participants were held during 2011.

Website

Since the launch of the new CDRT website, updating and maintenance is being done in-house. The website is used extensively to display the latest news and courses, as a reference point for policies, and procedures governing training and as a general source of information for personal and organisational development.

Coaching

Coaching was given to staff from OPM on the use of Office Applications and the use of Email. An ICT Training Facilitator went on site to coach two employees while another gave one to one training at CDRT premises.

At present, an assessment is being carried out to start one-to-one training with an employee with learning difficulties.

Excel as a Database (E-Learning)

During the first quarter of this year, the first course being offered in E-learning format was launched. The course, Excel as a Database, was developed by CDRT. Participants are being forwarded the course notes together with exercises to be worked out. Following successful completion of the study material and worksheets participants are then forwarded the next module. Each course should not take longer than two weeks. A total of 40 participants have successfully completed this training.

Touch Typing course (Blended Learning)

Although this course was offered last year as classroom-based training, the course is now being offered in a blended-learning format. Participants come for classroom-based training for three half days where they learn how to use the keyboard efficiently, following which they are given exercises to be used as practice to be worked out alone. The participants will then return for a last session to evaluate the progress and to trash out any queries or difficulties. 12 participants attended this course.

Specialised training

- *Information Security Awareness*: Sessions on Information Security kicked off in July. Five sessions were held with a total of 89 participants.
- *Image editing course for DOI Personnel*: Following a request from the Department of Information, the ICT Section organised a series of ad hoc training sessions for DOI Personnel on Image Editing. A professional tutor conducted these training sessions. The training started in February and carried on till October. This was quite an intensive training where individual sessions were also held to tackle particular difficulties.
- *Others*:
 - The ICT section assisted MRRA to organise five information session on Agriculture EU Funds and the use of IACS.
 - Assistance was also given to MRRA to hold information sessions on the MRRA Training Control Campaign 2011.
 - The section has also assisted the Freedom of Information Unit, MJHA, to organise information sessions on the use of the FOI IT system. In all, 26 sessions were held.
 - Two training sessions for staff at Transport Malta were held on CMS Overview.
 - 10 sessions on the Customer Care IT System were held for Local Councils staff in collaboration with MEU.

- A specialised training course on the Bluefin Tuna Stereoscopic Camera was held in June for staff from MRRA. Lecturers from Australia came to deliver this course. 16 participants attended this highly specialised course.
- A session on E-Procurement was held in collaboration with the Contracts Department where prospective economic operators were able to familiarise themselves hands-on with the new electronic procurement procedures
- In collaboration with the Commerce Department, a series of Basic ICT courses for Crafts Persons were held after office hours. In-house trainers delivered this training. Also, support was given to the Commerce Department to organise training on Marketing for the Crafts Person.

Training Evaluation

As in previous years, CDRT is implementing stage 3 of the Kirkpatrick's evaluation model.

At the end of each training programme participants are asked to fill in an evaluation sheet regarding the organisation and content of the programme (stage 1 of the Kirkpatrick model). Also, all trainers are requested to submit a brief report highlighting the participants' involvement and concerns identified during the course.

At the learning (stage 2) level, participants are assessed on their knowledge acquired during the course. Assessments vary ranging from multiple choice questions to assignments and group work mostly involving case studies.

This evaluation is followed by a questionnaire which is sent to participants and their line managers 4-6 weeks after the end of a programme. In implementing the third stage, that of transfer of learning to the job, each section selects a random representative sample of employees who attended their courses and a questionnaire is sent to them and their line managers.

In-house Trainers

A call for in-house trainers which was uploaded on the CDRT website continued to attract a number of public officers. Officers who are deemed eligible are asked to attend a train the trainer course after which, if successful, they will be able to deliver training at CDRT.

At present there are some 50 in-house trainers in various fields including ICT, Management, Finance and Procurement, Registry Services and others.

ESF 4.100

2011 saw ESF 4.100 *Building Core Skills in the Public Service* progressing well. This project is a capacity-building project co-funded through EU funds with a total investment of €3.7 million.

Although a substantial number of employees are trained on a regular basis, this project offers the opportunity to carry out a scientific training needs assessment across the whole Public Service from which a structured training strategy is built. The project aims to address five different categories of employees through its training, imparting learning via various means including e-learning and coaching. The project also includes sponsorships to participate in international conferences and seminars dealing with good public administration and management, follow academic courses in various areas which are a priority to Government as well as identify a number of competent employees who could be trained to provide training in the years to come.

With a comprehensive programme of courses which reaches out across the various strata of the Public Service, this project complements the Government's efforts in the field of administrative reform including

the furthering of a number of initiatives and sustaining and further improving the role of the public administration in line with public expectations.

Deliverables:

- A TNA across the Public Service including a kit for CDRT to conduct future TNAs
- A new Training Management Software system
- 8,000 employees attending training over two years
- 300 academic sponsorships for certificates, diplomas, bachelor's and master's degrees
- 100 scholarships to attend seminars and conferences

The TNA was finalised in 2010 and its results started to be implemented later on that year. In 2011 a total of 10 tenders for training services were issued.

Two calls for Academic Sponsorships were also launched with the following results:

Call 1 - Academic Courses			
<i>Course</i>	<i>Applicants</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Amounts Paid 2011</i>
Certificates	4	3	-
Diploma	63	46	€50,691.59
Bachelors	17	11	€13,065.37
Masters	38	23	€31,114.18
Total	122	83	€94,871.14
Call launched through OPM Circular 01/2011 dd 04/01/2011 - Closed on 09/02/2011			
Call 2 - Academic Courses			
<i>Course</i>	<i>Applicants</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Amounts Paid</i>
Certificates	15	-	-
Diploma	50	-	-
Bachelors	15	-	-
Masters	82	-	-
Total	162	-	-
Call launched through OPM Circular 14/2011 dd 04/08/2011 - Closed on 09/09/2011			

Out of 100 places for international workshops and seminars, by the end of 2011, 26 officers had applied and their participation sponsored.

ESF 4.98 Strengthening IMUs and other related functions through special training

Total project value - €1,904,500 including VAT and other taxes, of which €1,371,885.55 are ESF funds.

The project is intended to strengthen the public administration in the field of specialist ICT training through the development of the human resource capacity of its ICT units. The increase in ICT competences will positively affect the level of ICT support in the Public Service. The training shall span over a number of years allowing for the continuous professional development of ICT personnel. The project also aims at providing a resourceful knowledge sharing set-up allowing for cross-ministry research, interaction and joint project undertaking.

The two main targeted activities emanating from the project include:

- expert training aimed at improving the ICT skills set of employees working in Information Management Units
- the development of an information system to promote knowledge sharing and research in the fields of ICT across Government.

During October, CDRT in collaboration with the Management Company finalised the project plan, which incorporated within it an itemised breakdown of the project milestones and the disbursement of funds related to each milestone during the life-span of the project.

Organisation of Participation in International Conference

A number of meetings were held with Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and DG Support Services in his capacity as acting CIO, OPM for the approval of travel procedures for participants in international conferences and the payment of insurance cover from Ministry allocations. Preparations were also undertaken for the participation in two conferences in November by CIOs and officers within Information Management Units (IMUs) and the retrieval of documents to close off these conferences. The conferences were held in Spain and the Czech Republic and dealt with information security and risk management and security solutions in Europe respectively. Sixteen participants took part in both conferences from six different ministries.

Research

The coordination and drafting of the Research Report on 'Innovative Technologies and IT Strategies in the Public Administration' continued to be drafted during this period, as well as the Skills Profiling exercise on participants to identify the existing skills gaps and needs for training.

Contracts

Between November and December, discussions were also held with the Training Providers and the Management Company to amend the contracts as a number of discrepancies were observed. A Memorandum of Understanding was drafted and agreed upon by all providers and the Department of Contracts. This Memorandum of Understanding will form an integral part of the Contract once it is signed.

Training Needs Analysis and Course Rankings

During year-end, CIOs were given the rankings of officers within their office according to the findings of the TNA. CIOs were asked to give their personal ranking for courses identified through the TNA for each official within his/her office to ensure that the training recommended through the TNA was in line with CIOs expectations and also in line with the duties of each officer.

Manual on Staff Development in Public Administration

Revised training guidelines for Public Administration were published and came into effect as at 1 February 2011.

Academic Programmes

Diploma in Public Management

All applicants for the Diploma in Public Management were required to attend an Assignment Writing Skills workshop and submit an assignment. Following the successful completion of the Assignment Writing Skills workshop, all applicants had to sit for an interview. The Management Development Section was responsible for coordinating the interviews of all the applicants for the Diploma in Public Management. The interviews were held in February and March 2011.

In May 2011, an event was held to launch the Diploma and all applicants were invited. The event was presided over by the Principal Permanent Secretary. During the launch information on the Diploma was presented to the participants.

Diploma in Public Administration

During the year, 18 public officers resumed their studies for the Diploma in Public Administration, a two-year course held at the University of Malta.

Diploma in Accounting and Finance

Thirty-one participants are attending this course which is held at the University of Malta. Officers reading for this diploma have been deployed in various accounts sections to gain experience and be able to apply what they learn to their workplace. This would further enable them to assume new responsibilities and roles once they complete their studies successfully.

International Programmes

Hungarian Agreement

During October, a meeting was organised between the Desk Officer for Malta, Hungarian Embassy in Rome and the four interns who were placed at DOI, Restoration and MRA.

In December, reports were requested from the hosts and they all reported favourably on the respective interns. Four interns were hosted for a period of four months each.

Request for training by Estonia

CDRT will be hosting a group of 15 students from Tallinn University of Technology in Estonia between 5 and 10 March. Information sessions will be organised together with visits to the House of Representatives, Law Courts, OPM, University of Malta and some local councils. All the mentioned departments have confirmed their availability to host.

Professional Training for National Experts

During 2011 one officer was nominated to attend the NEPT Programme between March and June 2012.

ERASMUS

Malta was represented in each one of the four sessions held during 2011.

Commonwealth 3rd Country Programme

Following the agreement with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Commonwealth Secretariat to hold a Commonwealth Programme in Malta between 7 and 11 May 2012 regarding *Enhancing Performance in the Public Administration*, a draft programme was presented to COMSEC and discussed. This programme is open to all Commonwealth countries.

Sponsorships offered by the Chinese government

A meeting was held with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to explore an interest shown by the Chinese Government to offer a number of sponsorships through MFA and CDRT to public officers. These sponsorships will be offered in various areas and are pegged at different academic levels and expertise.

Commonwealth Sponsorships

One officer, who in August was nominated to attend a Commonwealth Programme, proceeded to the UK and participated in the 'Women Leaders for Development' course in November.

In total we received six invitations during 2011 and had three nominations.

Singapore Sponsorships

Five officers who were nominated attended respective courses in Singapore during October and November 2011.

JOANNA GENOVESE

Director (Training and Development)

Management Efficiency Unit

BACKGROUND

The Management Efficiency Unit (MEU) sits at the centre of Government, with the overarching purpose of making government services work better, whilst putting businesses and citizens at the centre of Government, in line with government direction.

Through its advisory services, the Unit improves the business environment through the reduction of administrative burdens and irritants so as to support economic growth and competitiveness. This change is not limited to businesses, indeed MEU changes the way Public Administration interacts with citizens as well. In order to achieve the above, the following areas of work are carried out, ongoing, but using a project-based approach:

- Implementing better regulation principles – addressing simplification, better policy making, supporting capacity building in the public administration to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy
- Citizen satisfaction – addressing customer service oversight, customer care/complaints oversight and top management performance oversight
- Advisory role – management consultancy interventions in response to line ministry requests

TARGETS DERIVED FROM THE OPM PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

Better Regulation

Government is committed to reduce administrative burden on businesses by 15% by 2012 as measured by the Standard Cost Model. MEU's role is to assist ministries, departments and entities to achieve this target. Specifically by 2012, MEU will:

- Facilitate and assist government organisations in simplification
- Train 350 public officers by 2012 in the Standard Cost Model and better regulation
- Introduce a Code of Practice for Regulatory Institutions

These targets are espoused in Malta's National Reform Programme 2011 and the Euro Plus Pact.

Facilitating Simplification to achieve the 15% burden reduction target by 2012

MEU completed measurement of administrative burdens in ten priority areas¹. The administrative burden is calculated to be around €116 million p.a. During 2011, MEU looked into 389 Primary Laws and 2,428 Legal Notices, of which 996 are business-related and generate 5,081 information obligations (on businesses). 47% (2,391) of total information obligations identified originate from domestic legislation and can be candidates for simplification. Another 13% (664) of information obligations can qualify for limited simplification. 40% of information obligations originate from EU or international legislation.

So far, €7 million p.a. savings were implemented, equivalent to 6% reduction in administrative burden target. These liberated some 207,000 man-hours per annum for productive work in businesses.

¹ These are: Company Law, Taxation, Public Procurement, Working Environment/Employment Relations, Environment, Statistics, Fisheries, Food Safety, Financial Services, and Pharmaceuticals.

There is a potential of a further €24 million p.a. reduction in administrative burden equivalent to 21%. These would release some one million man-hours per annum to productive activity which will consequently increase the gross operating surplus of the country.

The timely and responsive approach from departments, entities and ministries remains of crucial importance.

Training

The training element is an integral part of this change management process within the Public Administration. As at end 2011, training to around 388 public officials in better regulation and the Standard Cost Model had been carried out.

Code of Practice for Regulatory Institutions

The Code of Practice for Regulatory Institutions will be a key tool for the general improvement of the regulatory regime in Malta to ensure that consumers are protected better through fair competition, improved service delivery and risk management, whilst controlling administrative burden being introduced in new regulation. A first draft of the Code was circulated to a number of internal stakeholders for consultation. The feedback received is being analysed with a view to finalising the Code.

Other

Nine meetings with constituted bodies on Better Regulation were held, including meetings with MCESD.

Training in the Legal Notice Checklist was imparted to both Ministry Secretariats and public officers involved in policy and regulatory development.

MEU sustained its role as the competent authority on Better Regulation and supported line ministries in preparing positions related to Better Regulation agenda. MEU also continued participating in the Directors/Experts of Better Regulation, Single Points of Contact, SCM Network fora under the aegis of the Secretariat General of the EU Commission.

An independent foreign institution like the Council of Europe recognised the excellent quality work being done in this field by the Unit

‘On this specific point, the Government’s Better Regulation Unit (BRU), has already prepared a detailed training plan as part of their better regulation strategy. Overall, the BRU activities seemed to be the area with the clearest strategy and commitment to follow-through with actions.’²

eForms Migration

- Carried out an inventory of forms in use by ministries, departments and entities. Some 1,600 forms were identified and classified.
- Prepared a change management framework so that public organisations can maximise the transition to eForms.
- Trained staff of the 14 ICT contractors in this change management framework.
- Supported MITC ministry in migrating all of its eForms online (work in progress).

² Source: SEC(2011) 1187 ‘Commission Staff Working Paper: Member States Competitiveness Performance and Policies (2011 report) accompanying the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Industrial Policy: reinforcing competitiveness’, p. 145

TARGETS DERIVING FROM CORE GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES

MEU has a critical role in supporting horizontal initiatives (cutting across all ministries) to support the achievement of core Government objectives. These principally relate to:

Acquisition and Absorption of EU Funds

MEU is the beneficiary of an ESF co-financed project, entitled *Developing the capacity of the Maltese Public Administration to implement Better Regulation* (€1.4 million).

Moreover, a new project entitled *Developing quality management in the Public Administration through Common Assessment Framework* (€325,000) was awarded to MEU in 2011.

Ensuring compliance to Directives issued under the Public Administration Act

MEU's outputs here include reports Customer Service performance as defined by Directive 4 issued under the PAA through mystery shopping.

Furthermore, quarterly reporting on Customer complaints responsiveness, their resolution and validation of closed complaints arising from www.servizz.gov.mt is done. The latter process was an innovation introduced in 2011.

During 2011, MEU developed a data warehouse system to extract data from the Customer Care System. This software was developed in-house, free of charge. Training to local councils and new public officers was also imparted.

Embarking towards achieving CAF status and further modernising the Maltese Public Administration

The Common Assessment Framework is a quality management system designed for Public Administrations with a high take-up in Europe.

In 2011, three pilot sites underwent CAF self-assessments with the facilitation of MEU. During 2012, MEU will be mobilising its efforts to develop capacity in the Public Administration on the use of this framework.

MEU is continuing its participation in the EUPAN CAF working group and providing strong input into the refinement of the methodology.

Providing management consultancy advice to Departments and Entities

Over and above the afore-mentioned projects, during 2011, MEU was asked to provide advice to the following clients:

Office of the Prime Minister:

- Manpower review of the MCCA (to be finalised February 2012)
- More open spaces
- Performance measurement framework for ESF 4.98 within CDRT
- Senior Executive Service 2010 Performance Report
- Supporting the implementation of Consultation Guidelines/Directive
- Supporting the implementation of Green Travel Plan expansion
- Designing and supporting the implementation of the Boards/Committees Electoral Programme Measure

Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment:

- Providing input into Malta's National Reform Programme 2010-2015 and Euro Plus Pact
- The Creative Economy– Governance and Capacity Building in the Public Sector

Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Communication:

- Supporting the evaluation process of the Enterprise Information Management System

Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family:

- Administrative burden reduction proposals to improve the Training Aid Framework scheme
- Delivering Social Services through Local Councils
- Manpower review of the Institute of Tourism Studies
- Operations review of the Kunsill Malti għall-iSport
- Training and development plan for the European Union Programmes Agency

Ministry of Resources and Rural Affairs:

- Assessing potential options for the provision of Project Design and Implementation services
- Operations Review of the Manufacturing and Services Department
- Supporting *Pitkalija* reform

Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care:

- Review of the corporate HRM/D structure of the Ministry

Some of the above projects have the potential of realising efficiency gains, estimated collectively, to be in the region of €15 million. Implementation dependson the respective line ministry, department or entity.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND OTHER OBJECTIVES**Governance**

The newly-established Policy Advisory Board (PAB) within the OPM was assigned oversight of the MEU in February 2011. Select Members of the PAB act as Members of the MEU Management Board under the Chairmanship of Mr John Bonello. The MEU Management Board brings together the Principal Permanent Secretary and members from the private sector and constituted bodies. Nine meetings of the MEU Management Board were held in 2011.

Human Resources Management and Development

The salient HRM/D actions in 2011 included: All members of MEU consultancy staff attended the Better Regulation and Standard Cost Model training course, a member of staff was supported in his overseas post-graduate studies, and two members of staff benefitted from family-friendly measures.

Premises

Whilst notice was given to the present premises owner, MEU secured new open plan premises in Santa Venera through an Expression of Interest process realising savings of the order of: 22% on the first 5-year term; 25% on 10 years and 28% on 15 years. MEU would therefore be registering minimum of 20% savings per annum from year 1, when compared to the present rent.

Financial

MEU saved €4,730 (equivalent to 1% savings) on its Budget Estimate. It is important to note that MEU has presently secured three times its operational budget in EU-funded projects (c. €1.8 million), without additional supporting resources/financing. MEU has registered 17% operational savings to the tune of €1,204,035 through cost cutting measures, reprioritisation of work, and delaying expenditure between 2004 and 2011. A Business Plan for 2012 was presented to the MEU Management Board.

OUTLOOK FOR 2012

MEU will support the Prime Minister, the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Principal Permanent Secretary in helping to ensure effective delivery of the programme of Government of the day. Through its advisory services, MEU will be at the centre of efforts to improve the business environment through the reduction of administrative burdens and irritants so as to support economic growth and competitiveness.

This transformation is not limited to businesses; indeed, MEU will continue to transform the way in how the Public Administration interacts with citizens, by monitoring service delivery, customer care systems; reviewing internal operations of departments and entities, and assisting in change management, particularly during the introduction of efficient and effective web-based solutions. MEU will also support departments and entities as necessary in implementation of government policies and programmes and in the effective design and implementation of such policies and programmes through independent and high-quality advice.

MEU will be doing this by providing independent and high-quality advice to line ministries, departments and entities to address management issues, and supporting them in the effective design, development and implementation of policies and programmes as required.

JOHN AQUILINA
Chief Executive Officer

Defence Matters Directorate

The Defence Matters Directorate was set up in May 2003 to upgrade, consolidate and formalise the defence function of the OPM, a function which has been in existence almost continuously since 1964. The main responsibilities of the Directorate are:

- to formulate defence policy and provide objective technical and policy advice as well as timely analysis on all aspects of military matters affecting the Government's defence policy;
- to monitor and analyse the implementation of Cabinet decision and government policies on defence and military matters and to report on the extent to which policy and performing targets are met;
- the democratic control of the armed forces which includes the development of new policy initiatives and concepts on all AFM matters with a view to improving the operational, logistic and administrative effectiveness of the AFM;
- in coordination with other stakeholders within OPM, and in liaison with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries and government entities, conduct defence diplomacy, to manage bilateral as well as multilateral defence relations with other countries and international organisations;
- to represent Malta in all national and international defence meetings, fora and conferences.

Libya Crisis

The Defence Matters Directorate set up the Government Contingency Centre at the onset of the Libya Crisis on 21 February 2011, which was hosted at OPM. It served as the main policy making body of the Government throughout the first phase of the Libya crisis and dealt mainly with evacuations of foreign national from Libya and their onward repatriation to their country of residence, as well as various other decisions that needed to be tackled daily. Both Director Defence and the Assistant Director were part of the core team during this crisis. As from 11 March 2011, the GCC began meeting at a technical level and chaired by the Director Defence. Meetings were still held daily in the board room which eventually moved to the Defence Directorate offices.

The GCC worked on the following policy documents/standard operating procedures amongst others:

- Visa policy
- Identification of an Ordinance Jettison Area
- Procedures for the Emergency Landing of Military Aircraft
- Noise pollution levels of Military Aircraft
- Coordinated the request from NATO for allocation of frequencies
- Coordination of humanitarian aid passed from Malta to Libya
- Creation of the Humanitarian Hub
- Coordination with NGOs (both local and foreign) working in Malta to provide humanitarian assistance to Libya
- Participation in the Sanctions Monitoring Board and ensuring that all exports to Libya conform with UNSC resolutions
- Red Cross proposal for a Field Hospital
- SOP on ship boarding
- SOP on over flights
- Coordinated assistance to MATS on NFZ and Libyan Airspace management

The Defence Directorate worked on the coordination of the above, as well as on issues relating to diplomatic clearances for over flights and vessels entering and leaving port, as well as with the monitoring and reporting to NATO of vessels in and out of Libya.

Treating Libya Patients in Malta

During the outbreak of the Libya crisis, Malta took the initiative to develop a humanitarian hub for the safe transit of aid into and out of Libya. Malta was assisted and supported by the Government of the State of Qatar. Qatar committed itself by sending a team of military officers to Malta, who together with the Defence Directorate, liaised and worked on the safe evacuation of the injured, on their health care needs and on the settling-in of patients and their relatives in accommodations close to our hospitals. To date, Malta has provided for the healthcare needs of 101 patients.

Qatar - Malta - Libya Programme for children

On 14 December 14, the Defence Directorate proposed a Qatar-Malta-Libya agreement for the care of Libyan Children in Malta. The proposal was well accepted by Qatar COS and by Libyan Health Minister HE Dr F Hamroush. The aim of the programme is to provide care for 100 Libyan children across Libya, in need of urgent treatment. Children will travel from Libya by commercial flights and be accommodated in apartments close to Mater Dei Hospital. Qatar will be providing accommodation and a per diem allowance. The idea is to address the needs of children during such a difficult time.

AFM POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- *AFM Recruitment:* During 2011, there were two recruitment processes for Gunner recruits and another for female recruits. The recruitment process was concluded and a passing-out parade was held at Luqa Barracks on 17 June 2011. A total of 48 recruits were confirmed in the rank of gunner. The Prime Minister was the guest of honour in this parade, during which he conveyed a message of appreciation to the AFM and congratulated the newly appointed Gunners on the successful completion of their course. This Office was involved in drafting the Prime Minister's speech.
- *AFM Travel:* The Directorate continued to monitor and approve as necessary all requests for AFM travel overseas.
- *AFM Tenders:* The Directorate continued to monitor and approve as necessary all requests for the issue and/or awarding of AFM tenders.
- *Parliamentary Questions:* During the period under review, this Office in liaison with HQ AFM processed 69 parliamentary questions pertaining to AFM matters and forwarded draft replies to Principal Permanent Secretary for necessary approval.
- *Malta Air Show 2011:* The Directorate assisted the organisers of the annual Malta Air Show to contact participants from the 5+5 area to participate in the 2011 Air Show.
- *Board of Survey to dispose of AFM assets:* Following a request from the AFM, the Directorate made the necessary arrangements with OPM DCS for the appointment of a board of survey for the disposal of Maritime Unserviceable and obsolete items. Following an on-site inspection, the board, chaired by a Directorate official, submitted its recommendations on the disposal of such unserviceable items which were eventually approved by this Directorate.

EU COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Monitoring of development in the CSDP and ensuring that Malta's rights are safeguarded

The Directorate continuously monitored developments in the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) formerly ESDP. A number of exchanges were held with other governmental stakeholders, in

particular Malta's Permanent Representation in Brussels, in relation to the position to be adopted by Malta on various formal EU documents. Major exchanges concerned:

- Operation ATALANTA off the Coast of Somalia;
- Commission and EDA initiatives;
- Issues relevant to European Common Defence and Security and the impact on Maltese neutrality;
- EU Battle groups;
- EUTM Uganda.

The Directorate ensured that Malta's interests as an EU Member State were properly safeguarded, particularly by ensuring appropriate wording in texts defining the relationship between the EU and NATO in ESDP matters.

EU Operations

Malta continued its participation with two personnel from the AFM in the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia) and one officer in the UK Headquarters of the EU mission combating piracy off the coast of Somalia (EUNAVFOR ATALANTA).

In connection with these missions, this Directorate has monitored closely the situation in both countries through the various periodical reports from both missions and a continuous monitoring of international news as well as the proceedings within the different council bodies.

Also, to support the EU Mission Atalanta, Malta, through the AFM, deployed a second Vessel Protection Detachment (VPD) consisting of 12 AFM personnel, who participated on a voluntary basis. The VPD left Malta on 25 October 2011 and were back on 3 December 2011. There have been three deployments since 2010. The Defence Matters Directorate has also closely followed and actively contributed to the discussion on this mission to view possible participation.

Following the Libya crisis, an EU mission EUFOR Libya was set up. Malta participated in this mission by sending an AFM officer to the mission's HQ in Rome. In early December, the same mission was closed down since states agreed that from a military perspective, a military intervention in Libya was no longer deemed to be a viable option.

Participation in EU Defence Fora

Director Defence Matters accompanied ministerial delegations and/or herself, or her representative, represented Malta at the various meetings with a bearing on defence and security. Items discussed in such meetings included the current operations and missions, the development of capability, the European Security Strategy, and EU's cooperation with partners such as NATO, AU and UN and the integrated maritime policy amongst other things.

Such meetings included:

- FAC meetings in Ministers of Defence Format
- Informal EU Defence Ministers' Meetings
- EU Informal Defence Policy Directors Meetings
- EU Defence Policy Directors Meetings
- EDA Steering Boards (SB) and Preparatory Committee Meetings in advance of the SBs
- NATO – Individual Partnership Programme Bilateral Meeting

In preparation for such meetings, the Directorate compiled appropriate briefs and speaking notes accordingly.

In January 2011, the Director also attended a Senior Executive Seminar on Countering Narcotics Trafficking in Garmish (Germany).

Contributions to EU Agencies and CSDP related expenses

In 2011 Malta paid its share of common costs of EU institutions as follows:

- EU Satellite Centre Operational Budget - €5,699.06+ Pensions Budget - €404.61
- EDA Budget - €13,615.12 (paid by AFM)
- Common costs for ESDP Operations (Athena) €10,324.8 + EUTM Somalia €25,927.66
- EUFOR Libya - €1,112.27 but refunded €1,059.27

MALTA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE 5+5 DEFENCE INITIATIVE

Maltese Presidency of the 5+5 Defence Initiative

The Defence Matters Directorate liaised with the AFM's CSDP and International Relations Branch and 5+5 Defence Point of Contacts (PoCs) to ensure the best participation by Malta in the 5+5 Defence Initiative. During 2011, Malta participated in a number of activities including the CEMRES Piloting Committee held in Tunisia in October 2011.

In October 2011, the Defence Matters Directorate, together with AFM, organised the 5+5 Chiefs of Air meeting. Participants from most 5+5 countries participated in this meeting, the main theme being 'The contribution of National Air Forces to the provision of a National Search and Rescue Service'.

Between 22 and 24 November 2011, once again the Defence Matters Directorate, together with AFM, organised the 5+5 Senior Defence College Module. This module dealt with the topic 'The challenges faced by the Armed Forces of the 5 + 5 Defence Initiative', and all lectures were delivered by senior AFM officers.

MALTA'S DEFENCE BILATERAL RELATIONS

Ministerial and Ambassadorial Meetings

A number of briefs were prepared in preparation for bilateral meetings which the President of Malta, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Permanent Representative to the EU and/or Maltese ambassadors to third countries had with their counterparts and which had a bearing on/relevance for defence and border control issues.

The Director also held several meetings with ambassadors, resident and visiting defence attachés to discuss bilateral defence matters and to enhance the AFM's international cooperation as well as to seek military assistance and training opportunities for the AFM.

Landing and Over flights of Foreign State Aircraft

Following the direction imparted in November 2005, this Directorate continued to make recommendations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about requests from foreign countries who ask for permission to use Maltese airspace for their aircraft, either for landing or over flights. Around 800 requests were processed by the Defence Directorate during 2011. Due to the Libya Crisis, the number of over flights/landing processed by the Directorate was double that processed during 2010.

OSCE

OSCE Communications Network

During the year, this Office ensured the effective monitoring of the OSCE Communications Network and the timely return of documents which member states are obliged to compile and submit to OSCE from time to time.

Participation in OSCE Mission

During 2011, the Directorate facilitated the participation AFM personnel in two OSCE missions: the Republic of Serbia in October and the Republic of Croatia in November.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

Bluemass-MED

In April 2009, Malta joined five other EU Mediterranean countries (France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece) in a pilot project on the integration of maritime surveillance in the Mediterranean Sea and its Atlantic approaches, codenamed Blue Maritime Surveillance System Mediterranean (BLUEMASS – MED or simply BMM). OPM, via the Defence Matters Directorate, is the Maltese partner in this project. In 2011 Director Defence Matters attended a number of meetings on this issue.

Single European Sky - Blue-MED

During 2011, the Office participated proactively in different work-strands led by the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications concerning the implementation of the Single European Sky and the Functional Air Space Blocks (FABs), in particular concerning the BlueMED FAB whereby Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Malta, Albania, Jordan, Egypt and Tunisia are seeking to implement the Single European Sky in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean.

This office helped identify potential sovereignty shortfalls and on a number of occasions it put forward recommendations to make sure that Malta's interests were properly safeguarded.

Sanctions Monitoring Board

During the year under review the Director sat on the Sanctions Monitoring Board which was very active due to UN and EU restrictive measures and sanctions on Iran and Iranian interests in particular, as well as on measures related to the Libya crisis and Syria.

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Training of Defence Matters Directorate Staff

During 2011, personnel from the Defence Matters Directorate attended a number of courses including an Information Seminar on the Employee Support Programme for Public Employees, training on the Freedom of Information IT System, First Aid and Safety at Work, and Risk Assessment. A senior official also represented Director Defence in a number of seminars organised by NCPE throughout the year.

Data Protection

The Data Protection Officer ensured that all personal data was protected against any breach and violation of privacy according the Data Protection Act. The Data Protection activities reports were also submitted

twice yearly. The Data Protection Officer and his alternate both attended regular meetings throughout the year on the subject.

Environmental Issues

Throughout 2011, this Directorate continued putting emphasis on the need to implement environment-related (as well as cost-saving) initiatives including waste (paper, plastic) separation at origin, re-use of paper and envelopes, the use of degradable bags for disposal of waste and using a freeware software ensuring that two pages fit on each folio, printing was done on both sides of the page with an effective saving on paper consumption of between 66% and 75%.

The Green Focal Point attended a number of meetings organised by OPM during 2011, whilst briefing all office personnel on the outcome.

VANESSA FRAZIER
Director (Defence Matters)

Planning & Priorities Coordination Division

INTRODUCTION

In 2011, the remit of the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division (PPCD) remit was revised in line with the mandate of the new structure set up within OPM to manage EU Funds. Part of the function of PPCD prior to 30 June 2011 (mainly that relating to European Territorial Cooperation Programmes and bilateral funding instruments as well as the residual functions relating to the Pre-Accession and Transition Facility function) moved to the newly created Funds and Programmes Division (FPD) and are being reported upon in the annual report for the same Division.

The main functions in 2011 of the (revised) Planning Priorities Coordination Division were to:

- act as Managing Authority for the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund 2004-2006;
- act as Managing Authority for the Community Initiative EQUAL;
- act as Managing Authority for the Cohesion Policy Funds 2007-2013;
- coordinate national positions on Cohesion Policy (current and future) and provide input to the national position on other sectors where EU funding is proposed;
- steer the project selection process for Operational Programmes I and II (2007-2013);
- strengthen the Division's administrative capacity in view of the stage of implementation of the 2007-2013 Cohesion Policy Programmes which are expected to peak in 2011, 2012 and 2013; and
- coordinate EU Affairs activities falling under the mandate of PPCD.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund 2004 - 2006

Single Programming Document and EQUAL

During the period under review, the main events under this Programme consisted of the approval of the Final Report by the European Commission in April and the subsequent transmission of the remaining balances under the four Structural Funds (and EQUAL). The following is a summary of the final balances received under each Fund together with the overall amount received throughout the whole programming period and the corresponding national and private investment:

	Final balance EU share	Received	Total Funds received in the SPD04-06	National investment SPD04-06	Private investment SPD04-06
<i>Fund</i>	<i>€ EU share</i>		<i>€ EU share</i>	<i>€ MT share</i>	<i>€ Private</i>
ERDF	2,334,881.95	Jun-11	46,697,639.00	18,908,195.12	2,228,864.21
ESF	463,275.64	Nov-11	9,447,900.64	3,149,300.31	
EAGGF	210,000.00	Dec-11	4,200,000.00	1,806,309.22	6,006,309.80
FIFG	119,535.31	Mar-11	2,822,050.21	778,202.24	896,175.46
EQUAL	30,488.21	Jul-11	1,209,593.06	403,197.69	
Total	3,158,181.11		64,377,182.91	25,045,204.58	9,131,349.46

Cohesion Fund

All payments on the Transport and Technical Assistance Projects were concluded by the final eligibility date of 31 December 2010. During 2011, as part of the formal closure procedures and final claim, Malta declared to the European Commission a total of €577,463.35 (EU share) for reimbursement for the Transport Project, and a total of €79,917.16 (EU share) for the Technical Assistance Project. The Final Reports for both projects were compiled and submitted to the European Commission in July, and by December, the winding-up declarations recommending the release of the final 20% balances of €1,884,619 in respect of the Transport project, and €163,977 in respect of the Technical Assistance project, were submitted to the European Commission.

Following the approval by the European Commission (as per Commission Decision C (2011) 964) of the extension in the final eligibility date for expenditure until 31 December 2011, the Upgrading of the Sant'Antnin Waste Treatment Plant reached its concluding phases. The Annual Implementation Report for the project was submitted to the European Commission in May 2011 and all payments were executed by the final eligibility date. A final claim for reimbursement to the European Commission will be made in 2012.

Monitoring Committee meetings for the Cohesion Fund were held in April and November 2011 and an on-site visit by the European Commission to the Sant'Antnin Waste Treatment Plant was organised in October. During 2011, ten on-the-spot checks and follow-ups covering all three Cohesion Fund projects were carried out by the Managing Authority.

EU Cohesion Policy 2007-13

In 2011, the main activities in this area were project selection and the signing of Grant Agreements, the simplification and strengthening of the implementation system (including implementing procedures for projects and Aid Schemes, updating of the Manual of Procedures and the continued development of the electronic database system), management verification checks (documentary and on-the-spot), the monitoring of ongoing projects and the supervision of the management of aid schemes, organising and steering Monitoring Committee meetings, capacity building, and the finalisation of the mid-term evaluation. The majority of projects were in implementation phase with a number of projects implementing all activities and closing in 2011.

Operational Programme I

In terms of Operational Programme I (OP I), the Managing Authority continued with the evaluation of submissions received following calls for proposals during the year. In 2011, five new calls were issued – four under ERDF and one under the Cohesion Fund, as outlined in the table below.

Call	Priority Axis	Indicative Call Budget	Proposals Submitted
ERDF Call 10	PA 2 – Promoting Sustainable Tourism	€2,000,000	12
ERDF Call 11	PA 6 - Urban Regeneration and Improving the Quality of Life	€10,000,000	4
ERDF Call 12	PA 4 - Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change	€10,000,000	5
ERDF Call 13	PA 4 - Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change	€5,000,000	19
CF Non-Major Call 3	PA 3 – Developing the Trans-European Network for Transport and PA 5- Safeguarding the Environment	Not applicable	2

During 2011, a total of eleven new projects were approved. The outcome of Call 10, 12 and 13 is expected to be communicated in Quarter 1 2012. Up to 31 December 2011, an overall total of 78 projects had been selected under OP I, for a total commitment value of €541,267,818. In addition, the Intermediate Bodies

continued with the implementation of the nine aid schemes which together amount to a committed value of €51,445,208. Together with the commitment under Priority Axis 7 (Technical Assistance), the total commitment under OP I up to December 2011 was of €65,040,121 representing 71% of the OP's budget. Furthermore, a total of 12 projects were completed during the year under review.

In April 2011, an agreement between the European Investment Fund (the holding fund manager) and Bank of Valletta in relation to the JEREMIE (Joint European Resources for Micro and Medium Enterprises) offering a First Loss Portfolio Guarantee Fund was signed. The response from SMEs to this initiative was encouraging and exceeded the expectations of the EIF. During the course of 2011, JASPERS (Joint Assistance in Supporting Projects in European Regions) continued providing its assistance in relation to projects in the fields of environment, energy, health, transport as well as in preparation for the next programming period

In terms of participation at international fora, the Managing Authority participated in the Coordination Committee of the Funds (COCOF) meetings, the European Network of Environmental and Managing Authorities (ENEA) Working Groups, the JEREMIE network meeting and the JASPERS Stakeholder's Meeting.

Operational Programme II

In 2011, the Managing Authority completed the evaluation of project proposals received following the calls launched in the previous year under Operational Programme II (OP II). Approvals were given to 13 new projects submitted in response to the sixth call and to seven new projects submitted in response to the seventh call. Up to end 2011, a total of 61 projects were being implemented under OP II, having a combined value of €86,354,328. In 2011, the Managing Authority was also involved with the Intermediary Body as well as other stakeholders, including the private sector representatives, with a view to continue strengthening the process of simplification. This process resulted in the adoption of concrete measures, such as changes to the eligibility criteria, simplified application forms as well as revised implementation and guidance notes. Such simplification exercises have contributed to a gradual, albeit modest, increase in the processing of payments.

Together with the two schemes³ being supported by the ESF and the commitment under Priority Axis 5 – Technical Assistance, the total allocation committed under OPII (as at end 2011) stood at €108,855,185.71, representing 82.6% of the total OP budget. In 2011, the Managing Authority issued a pre-announcement with regard to further calls expected to be launched during the first quarter of 2012.

Monitoring

Monitoring was a priority during 2011 for both Operational Programmes. A substantial number of meetings were held between the Managing Authority and the respective beneficiaries and the Intermediate Body. Given that a substantial number of projects were well into implementation stage with a significant increase in the disbursements, the activity related to monitoring and first level control remained a priority during 2011. Project Progress Reports submitted in January 2011 (covering the period Sept–Dec 2010) and July 2011 (covering period January–June 2011) were complemented by monthly bilateral monitoring meetings chaired by the Principal Permanent Secretary to discuss issues which may have been hindering the projects' progress. Bilateral monitoring meetings were also held with civil society and local councils benefitting from Cohesion Policy Funds.

For each Operational Programme, two Monitoring Committee meetings were held. In the case of OP I, the Monitoring Committee meetings were held in April and November respectively whereas for OP II,

³ Two covenants were signed in 2009 with Employment and Training Corporation having a total value of €17,051,620.

Monitoring Committee meetings were held in May and October. The Annual Implementation Reports for 2010 were accepted by the European Commission in July 2011 (OP I) and September 2011 (OP II).

Apart from the Monitoring Committee, the OPs foresee the establishment of a number of structures aimed at ensuring coordination and/or monitoring of different aspects of the programme. These include IB Network meetings, Inter-ministerial Coordination Meetings, Ministerial Steering Committees and the Environment Committee⁴.

Following 95 spot checks, seven requests for reimbursement of eligible expenditure under OP I and four requests under OP II were sent to the European Commission during 2011. The following table indicates the total public share (EU + Malta) that was verified by the Managing Authority and the amount received from the EC during the year:

	Verified by MA in 2011 (public share)	Received from EC in 2011 (EU share)
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	€73,050,902	€44,371,149
Cohesion Fund	€14,123,130	€27,096,878
European Social Fund (ESF)	€12,136,464	€10,316,697
Total	€99,310,495	€81,784,724

Evaluation

The outcome of the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) was presented during the second quarter of 2011 to the Monitoring Committee and the Evaluation Steering Group. A number of suggestions and recommendations were further investigated and incorporated into a revised report which was submitted in August 2011.

During 2011, the Managing Authority also participated in a number of other evaluations commissioned by various European institutions. These included studies for the Regional Policy Directorate General and the Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion Directorate General and concerned, *inter alia*, ERDF innovation supported evaluation, more effective and concentrated Cohesion Policy in the context of EU 2020 objectives, performance audit concerning the use of Structural Funds for energy efficiency, evaluation on structural funds simplification measures, measuring the impact of changing regulatory requirements on administrative cost and administrative burden of the European Social Fund and mid-term evaluation on the European Globalisation Fund. During 2011, the Managing Authority also concluded preparations for the launch of the thematic evaluations under both OPs as well as the tracer study which aims to measure the professional or educational destination of those benefitting from the European Social Fund (ESF).

Communication, Evaluation and Training Unit

PPCD's website continued to be updated on a regular basis with all the latest information related to the calls for project proposals, events and other important documents. A number of new pages were also added, providing information on the programmes managed by the Funds and Programmes Division, thus consolidating the two Divisions under one online information hub.

Rotta EU: 07 -13 was the title of the 2011 Annual Event on Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 and consisted of six bus tours visiting various projects around Malta and Gozo. The tours were held on 26 and 27 November. Participants were given the opportunity to get a first-hand experience of projects that are currently being funded through ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund through site walkabouts as well as presentations by the respective Project Leaders. A documentary featuring testimonials of persons and

⁴ During 2011 - 2 IB Network Meetings, 2 Inter-ministerial Coordination Meetings, 28 Ministerial Committee meetings and 3 Environment Committee meetings

beneficiaries currently benefitting through ESF funded projects was produced as part of the event and shown during the tours. A total of 53 projects, amounting to approximately €412 million in value, featured during the event.

New Regulations Package 2014-2020

During the year, the EC published the new proposed drafts in relation to the next programming period 2014-2020. In this regard, a thorough assessment of the said regulations was undertaken by the Policy Unit of the Division. Furthermore, the Division also proceeded to consult all relevant stakeholders with a view to obtain a consolidated Malta position. A series of meetings on specific sections of the legislation were also held with line ministries with a view to discuss in more detail the proposed regulations. The Division has also prepared a series of instruction notes based on this consultative process. During the course of 2012, the discussions both at a European level and national level are expected to continue.

Administrative Capacity

Despite a capacity building exercise undertaken in 2011, a number of positions remained unfilled by the end of the year. These vacancies arose mainly due to staff turnover and staff progression. In view of the number of new projects being approved and the exponential increase in controls as a result of the implementation status of the Programmes, the workload has increased dramatically and is expected to continue to peak in 2012 and 2013 when the Programmes are expected to reach full commitment and the bulk of the expenditure has to be certified to the EC. In this regard, capacity building is envisaged to continue in 2012. Furthermore, a total of 247 officials received training in the implementation of the projects financed under the two Operational Programmes over the year (2011). Participants came from beneficiaries, including NGOs, as well as officials involved in the management and implementation of the Cohesion Policy funds from both the Public Service and the wider Public Sector.

In 2012, it is expected that this Division together with the Funds and Programmes Division will be relocated to a new premises.

JONATHAN VASSALLO

Director General (Planning & Priorities Coordination)

Funds and Programmes Division

INTRODUCTION

June 2011 saw the setting up of the Funds and Programmes Division (FPD) under the Permanent Secretary (EU Funds). The Funds and Programmes Division was established with the remit to handle the management of EU and other Funds (with the exception of Cohesion Policy Funds) allocated to Malta and to provide guidance to the focal points of the EU and other Programmes that are managed by the Commission/other institutions.

The Funds and Programmes Division comprises two Directors who report to the Director General (Funds and Programmes), namely Director (Programmes and Projects) and Director (Funds). The Director (Programmes and Projects) previously reporting to DG PPCD has in the main retained the same responsibilities and is now also responsible for coordinating the focal points of the various EU and other Funds and programmes. The Director (Funds) is a newly established post mainly taking over responsibilities which previously resided within other ministries.

The main functions of the Funds and Programmes Division are the:

- National Coordination Authority for INTERREG 2004-06 (MEDOCC, ARCHIMED, INTERACT, IIIC);
- National Coordination Authority for the Territorial Cooperation 2007 – 13 (IT-MT, MED, IVC, ENPI, INTERACT II);
- National Focal Point for the EEA and the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms;
- National Coordination Unit for the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme;
- National Contact Point for EU Globalisation Adjustment Fund;
- National Contact Point for NER300;
- National Contact Point for EU Twinning and TAIEX;
- Coordinator of the EU centralised Funds and Programmes within the government structure;
- Responsible Authority for the four Funds under the General Programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows, namely the European Refugee Fund, the European Return Fund and the European Borders Fund which previously resided at MJHA, and the European Integration Fund for Third Country Nationals previously under the responsibility of MEEF;
- National Authority for the EU education programmes, mainly the Lifelong Learning and the Youth in Action Programme;
- Managing Authority for the European Fisheries Fund; and
- Competent Authority for the EAGF and EAFRD (Rural and Agricultural Funds).

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Territorial Cooperation

Interreg III 2004 – 2006

The FPD was involved in the closure of the 2004-2006 INTERREG programmes in which Malta participated, i.e. the Italia-Malta programme, the Medoc programme, the Archimed programme and the INTERREG IIIC. The total amount verified in connection with the four programmes amounts to €4.2

million⁵. As a follow-up of pending issues in connection with operations co-financed under the Medocc Programme, an audit was held on the Medins project, which was concluded positively.

Territorial Cooperation Programmes 2007 – 2013

The FPD monitored the projects which were selected for funding under the Italia-Malta 2007-2013 Programme (17 projects), the Med programme (22 projects), the IVC programme (8 projects) and the ENPI CBC MED Programme (4 projects). The Division is the entity responsible for first level control checks of such programmes and in 2011 verified a total of €626,857 (EU share) in connection with expenditure incurred under some of the above-mentioned projects. Furthermore, five on-the-spot checks were carried out on ongoing projects during the same year.

In 2011, a number of calls in connection with the Territorial Cooperation Programmes were launched and coordinated by the FPD insofar as Malta's participation is concerned. With specific reference to the Italia-Malta Programme, a call for strategic project proposals was launched in June 2011. 31 project proposals were submitted under this call, 25 of which were admitted to the subsequent phase of the application process, which was still open as at 31 December 2011.

With regard to the Med Programme, the evaluation of the project proposals submitted under the call for strategic projects in the energy efficiency and renewable energy category was concluded and three projects were selected for funding under this call. Three Maltese entities are partners in two of these projects and their total ERDF budgetary allocation is €680,272. In addition to this call, the call for strategic project proposals in the maritime safety category was re-launched. Two Maltese entities are participating in the project that has been selected under this call (EU allocation approx. € 450,000). The evaluation of another call launched under the Med Programme, targeting the improvement of maritime accessibility and transit capacities and also the use of information technology vis-à-vis accessibility, was still ongoing at the end of 2011. 19 Maltese partners joined projects submitted in the first phase of this call.

The first call for strategic projects under the ENPI CBC Med Programme, which at 31 December 2011 was in the second phase of the application process, was also launched during the year. 59 Maltese partners joined projects that were submitted under the first phase of the said call, out of which ten partners and one lead partner are participating in projects that have been short listed to submit the Full Application Form. The FPD was engaged in the coordination of the ENPI CBC MED Second Call for standard projects, which was launched in December 2011. This call focused on the Programme's four priorities and ten measures; an information event in connection with this call was to be held in Malta in January 2012.

The FPD was also involved in the coordination of the fourth call for Regional Initiative Projects under the INTERREG IVC Programme. 56 Maltese entities participated in projects submitted under this call, 44 of which were admitted to the second phase of the application process. In December 2011, an additional 16 projects (EU share: €1,672,477) which include Maltese partners were selected for funding.

Several information seminars, as well as bilateral meetings with various Maltese entities, were held so as to encourage Malta's participation in the Territorial Cooperation Programmes. Furthermore in 2011, the FPD hosted two important meetings in Malta, namely the Executive Committee Meeting of the Italia-Malta Programme, as well as the Joint Monitoring Committee of the ENPI CBC MED Programme.

Information was disseminated about new calls for project proposals under the ESPON 2013 programme. Malta also participated in four Monitoring Committee meetings and provided feedback to several written procedures and ESPON studies. In 2011, €21,948.99 (EU share) worth of claims was verified by the Division.

⁵ Malta's contribution to such Programmes amounted to €2.2 million.

The FPD also provided feedback with regard to the proposed regulatory framework pertaining to the 2014-2020 programming period.

Bilateral Assistance

European Economic Area (EEA) and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms

In 2011, project MT0011 *Xrobb l-Għagin Nature Park and Sustainable Development Centre* was concluded, bringing the total number of completed projects to six. The remaining project, MT0014 *Conservation of Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum World Heritage Site*, whose implementation period was granted a 12-month extension by the Donor States, is scheduled to be completed by April 2012.

In 2011, around €0.89 million were disbursed by the Project Promoters, the EEA/Norway share of which amounted to €0.71 million. As at end year, €0.61 million had already been reimbursed by the Donors, while a further €0.02 million was still being verified and certified prior to claiming reimbursement. The remaining €0.08 million would be verified, certified and claimed in 2012. In view of the control actions required for these financial mechanisms, 17 on-the-spot checks and follow-up checks were carried out by the Funds and Programmes Division.

An information and publicity campaign was mounted between January and April 2011, which saw the coordination of project visits for six participating secondary schools in Malta and Gozo, the organisation of a painting competition and of a public exhibition for the best twelve drawings, and the production of a 2012 calendar showcasing the twelve winning entries and the setting-up of billboards publicising the Financial Mechanisms.

Following negotiations between Malta and the Donor States, the Memoranda of Understanding on the implementation of the new Financial Mechanisms for the period 2009-2014 were signed on 27 September in Malta and work started on the programme proposals that have to be submitted to the Donor States for approval in 2012. The Agreement on the Technical Assistance Fund was signed in November 2011, covering costs incurred by Malta in relation to the implementation of these mechanisms, including management costs, information and publicity material, activities, meetings, travel and evaluations, and the fund for bilateral relations at national level.

At the request of the Donor States, the last Monitoring Committee and the last 2004-2009 Annual Meeting, which had to be held in 2011, were postponed to 2012.

Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme

The overall allocation for Malta under the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme amounts to SFr 4.994 million⁶. The funds are being utilised to implement two projects, namely *Establishing Positron Emission Tomography/Computed Tomography (PET/CT) scanning in the Maltese Islands* and *Support to the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC)*. In 2011, *Establishing Positron Emission Tomography/Computed Tomography (PET/CT) scanning in the Maltese Islands* was still at tendering stage. The project *Support to the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC)* successfully completed its first academic year of implementation in June 2011. In October, the second academic year commenced and the project remained on schedule to run for four academic years until June 2014. The third annual meeting of the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme took place in Malta in June 2011.

⁶ Up to SFr 0.25 million is being retained by Switzerland to cover its administration costs of the Programme. The remaining SFr 0.05 million have been allocated to technical assistance and administration of the Programme on the Maltese side.

Coordination of the EU centralised funds and programmes within the government structure

A new sub-unit was established in October 2011 within FPD to coordinate Malta's participation in and promote centralised EU funds and programmes particularly within the public sector. The objective of this new set-up is to build up capacity by gaining an overview of the various conditions which need to be fulfilled to participate successfully in EU programmes. The first task undertaken by this sub-unit was the creation of a database containing information on the EU centralised funds and programmes. Another task carried out by the Coordination Point is the on-the-spot checks which are being carried out on all recently approved projects. This will ensure that the approved projects receive the necessary support in order to maximise the absorption of funds in respect to the implementation of projects. Collaboration with key stakeholders like MEUSAC, European Commission Representation and all the Director Programme Implementation of all line ministries has been established and this shall be followed by further strengthening of the network of national contact/focal points in the line ministries in Q1 2012.

Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows

The duties of the Responsible Authority (RA) for the European Refugee Fund, the European Borders Fund and the European Return which were previously managed by the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs; and the duties of the Responsible Authority (RA) for the European Integration Fund which were previously managed by the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family, were officially transferred to the Office of the Prime Minister as of 31 October 2011.

During the period under review, the RA has taken ownership of the 25 projects under implementation under the 2010 and 2011 Programmes of the Four Funds; is conducting closure (payments and spot checks) of a further 25 projects under the four 2009 Programmes and has submitted four new Programmes (one for each Fund) to the EC for consideration under the 2012 cycle⁷. Moreover, following a thorough assessment of the implementation status of the 2010 and 2011 Programmes, it transpired that not all funds committed were going to be absorbed and so the FPD submitted revised Programmes to the EC in order to absorb savings on these programmes and to allocate (new) funds made available to Malta in 2011 under the Emergency Measures (the latter with an additional total budget of €1,201,000). There were new calls under the 2010 and 2011 Programmes⁸ (Integration Fund and Refugee Fund) in December 2011, which will close in January 2012.

As part of the change to the new structure and also in an effort to harmonise and consolidate procedures across all the four Funds, the FPD undertook a review of the Management and Control System which was completed by end of year, following discussions with the relevant stakeholders. The changes in the Management and Control System are reflected into revised operational instructions in the Manual of Procedures which have also been updated throughout the last quarter of 2011. A Project Selection Committee and a Project Selection Appeals Board (PSAB) were also set up as part of the new system. Upon taking over from the previous RA, the FPD embarked on an enhanced monitoring exercise and organised formal monthly bilateral meetings with the beneficiaries, as well as facilitated other informal meetings between the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Furthermore, the new RA also embarked on an initiative to adopt an IT management information system for the management of the Funds as well as actively contributed to the discussion on the Commission's proposed regulatory framework for the programming period 2014-2020.

⁷ The funds allocated for 2012 include €560,500 under the Integration Fund, €1,272,688 under the European Refugee Fund; €834,717 under the Return Fund and €14,931,533 under the External Borders Fund.

⁸ The EC has already signalled approval for the changes proposed under the 2011 Programme.

National Authority for the EU Education Programmes

In preparation for the taking over of the role of the National Authority for the EU Education Programmes, the FPD was in constant contact and coordination with the structures within the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family to ensure a smooth transition process. During the period under review, the Division was effectively acting as the National Authority and focused on addressing and reporting to the Commission on the final observations and recommendations which led to the lifting of the suspension by the European Commission on 17 November 2011.

In addition, preparations (involving the relevant stakeholder) were also initiated for the process leading to the Declarations of Assurance for Life Long Learning Programme and Youth in Action for 2011. The FPD also contributed actively towards the discussion process on the Commission's proposals for the new EU regulatory package (education programmes) for the new programming period 2014-2020.

European Fisheries Fund

The FPD officially assumes the responsibility of Managing Authority (MA) for the European Fisheries Fund Programme (EFF) as from 1 January 2012. In the last two quarters of 2011, the Division worked closely with the EU Affairs Directorate within MRRA (the EFF MA at the time) so as to ensure a smooth transition of the dossier. FPD assisted MRRA in the implementation of the Programme in various ways including the revision of the Operational Programme. Meanwhile, in preparation for the takeover in 2012, the FPD undertook a revision of the management and control system as well as the Manual of Procedures, including monitoring and control templates which will be used in the implementation of the Operational Programme as from January 2012. Furthermore, FPD officers accompanied MRRA during meetings with the European Commission, participated in both Monitoring Committees held in 2011, assisted MRRA with updating the IT management information system and provided MRRA with assistance on the general and specific management of the Fund. During 2011, FPD also followed up closely the implementation of the external auditor's recommendations on the functioning of the management and control systems of the Programme which were detailed in the 2011 Annual Control Report.

The Funds and Programmes Division took a number of other steps so as to ensure that it will hit the ground running in January 2012, including sourcing capacity and further discussions with MITA to ensure effective use of the IT management information system. The Funds and Programmes Division was also involved in the provision of feedback with regard to the regulatory framework pertaining to the proposed European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (the future EMFF Programme) as well as the Fisheries National Strategic Plan formulated by the current MA.

Competent Authority for the EAGF and EAFRD

Preparations for the taking over of responsibilities as the Competent Authority for the EAGF and EAFRD (Rural and Agricultural Funds) are also underway. Discussions with the present Competent Authority within MRRA were held, together with discussions with the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency also at MRRA. The taking over of the Competent Authority by OPM will contribute towards the enhancement of governance structures for the EAGF and the EAFRD, separating the supervision and management of the two Funds. The takeover is planned for February 2012 with a view to allow the present structures to finalise the reporting obligations to the Commission for 2011.

Administrative Capacity

The restructuring process undertaken during 2011 has led to the setting up of the Funds and Programmes Division within the Office of the Permanent Secretary EU Funds. Despite the recruiting process in 2011, a number of positions remained unfilled by the end of the year. These vacancies arose mainly due to the restructuring of the division, staff progression, as well as staff turnover. In view of the number of new

programmes managed, the new projects approved and the exponential increase in controls that are a result of the implementation status of the programmes, an increase in workload is envisaged. In this regard, capacity building and training will continue in 2012.

In 2012, it is expected that the Funds and Programmes Division will be relocated to a new premises.

RAPHAEL SCERRI

Director General (Funds and Programmes)

Corporate Services Directorate

INTRODUCTION

One of the main roles of the Corporate Services Directorate is to provide support services to the secretariats, divisions, departments and entities at the Office of the Prime Minister and at the office of the Permanent Secretary, Tourism, Environment and Culture. Furthermore, the Directorate also provides a service on a corporate level in areas related to finance and human resources to departments, directorates and entities forming part of the Ministry.

The services provided by the Directorate are in areas of finance, office management, human resources and tendering procedures. In view of the added responsibilities and in order to provide a more efficient service, the Directorate was organised into the following five branches:

- Finance and Administration – Office of the Prime Minister
- Finance and Administration – Tourism and Culture
- Office Management
- Human Resources
- Operations

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

The Finance and Administration Branch continued to provide financial and administrative services to the OPM departments and directorates, including MEU and MEUSAC, during 2011.

The Branch was responsible for the administration of funds provided under the Revenue, Recurrent and Capital Votes of the Office of the Prime Minister. The role of the Branch included the procurement of office stationery and services, the management of funds on a daily basis, the raising of the monthly revised estimates and coordination of funds allocated under the 11 Cost Centres of Vote 5, OPM, and all the other Votes of the departments under the Ministry. Another important role was the drafting of the Ministry's Business and Financial Plan for 2012 which also led to the 2012 Annual Budgetary Estimates. The Branch also closely worked with the Information Management Unit as regards the financing of enhancements of the IT projects in the Ministry.

The work related to overseas travel by government officials is an important area of the Branch's responsibilities. A total number of 425 Advances were issued to officers at OPM, an increase of 64 advances over 2010.

The Branch continued to raise commitments for the supply of goods and services not later than one day from receipt of such requests. Invoices were then settled within one month of being received. The total number of transactions effected on the OPM Departmental Accounting System was 14,285, an increase of 1,038 (approx 7%) over the previous year's total of 13,247.

The Branch also drafted replies to 36 Parliamentary Questions during 2011.

Other duties carried out by the Branch during 2011 entailed the following:

- raising of Accrual Accounting templates on a quarterly basis

- raising of claims for reimbursements of EU funded projects;
- raising of requests for refund of travel of Council and Commission meetings;
- raising of requests for reimbursement of salaries of officials whose emoluments are eligible for refund from Technical Assistance;
- raising of structural funds purchase orders on the DAS;
- raising of financial returns as requested by the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment and the Treasury;
- submitting a list of suppliers to the VAT Department who do not provide the Directorate with a fiscal receipt;
- The recording of newly acquired moveable and immoveable assets and informing departments to update the respective asset inventory records.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – TOURISM AND CULTURE

In view of added responsibilities, it was important that a new Branch be set up to take up the financial responsibilities of the Tourism and Culture Vote. This Vote included not just two departments/directorates but also a number of cultural entities. The Branch was set up mainly from staff who were attached with the Finance and Administration Branch of the Office of the Prime Minister and headed by a newly appointed Assistant Director.

The main responsibilities of the Branch included the drafting of the 2012 Estimates and the administration of Vote 8 Tourism and Culture. Other areas of responsibility included the following:

- raising of local purchase orders, payment vouchers, schedules, transfer vouchers and debit advices. Payments are made to individuals and tourism and cultural entities. In total, nearly 2,000 financial transactions were raised during the year;
- implementation of financial information related to Government Accrual Accounting;
- raising of documentation and verifying inventory control including the inventory of moveable property;
- verification of stock control;
- raising and submission of the financial data to Treasury, MFEI and NSO;
- preparation of Advances and work on the booking of air travel tickets related to official visits abroad. During the year, a total number of 48 travel advances were issued by the Branch;
- submission of monthly Revised Estimates;
- transport related duties including the operation of the Fleet Management System for the issue of fuel requisitions on official vehicles under the tourism and culture sector. Work also included the obtaining of quotations and approvals for repairs on vehicles, acquisition of quotations and necessary approvals for various vehicle repairs;
- Replies to parliamentary questions related to tourism and culture. During the year the Branch provided information on 36 parliamentary questions.

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

The Office Management Branch continued with its ongoing programme regarding the maintenance of premises housing the secretariats, divisions, departments and directorates forming part of the Office of the Prime Minister. Furthermore, the Branch also provided support for the maintenance at Girgenti Palace, Villa Francia, MEUSAC, Management Efficiency Unit and the Employment Commission.

During the year the Office Management industrial personnel provided assistance in the refurbishment of offices at the 1st and 2nd floors at Auberge de Castille. The works on the first floor were finalised during the year whilst the refurbishing on the second floor will come to an end during the first months of 2012.

The Branch also had an important role during the Libya crisis. The main conference room at the Auberge de Castille was transformed into a Crisis Centre. This Branch was entrusted in providing the necessary logistics and support in its setting up and provided assistance on a daily basis.

The Maintenance Agreements of essential services were also reviewed and renewed.

The Branch assisted in the organisation of the relocation of part of PAHRO to 3 Castille Place and to Transcontinental House in South Street. The Operations and Programme Implementation Directorate was also relocated to Transcontinental House. The refurbishment of the premises at 3 Castille Place was carried out by the Branch's industrial personnel.

The Branch provided support in the replacing of the two lifts at the Merchants Street side of Auberge de Castille, the refurbishment of two lifts at 3 Castille Place and the accessibility of the lift at the third floor at 18/3 South Street.

An annual Board of Survey was also appointed. Disposal of unserviceable items by various sections/ departments falling under OPM was carried out.

The Reception at Auberge de Castille was also administered by this Office Management Branch.

The Branch provided assistance and support during the Prime Minister's press conferences and other activities hosted by the Prime Minister including providing support during the annual Notte Bianca event.

The Branch also administers the transport at this Office. An important function carried out was in relation to the support to the Green Travel initiative. Other related functions carried out by the Branch included the maintenance of official vehicles under the Office of the Prime Minister.

Other work carried out by the Branch included:

- provision of support in work related to tenders;
- obtaining quotes for the procurement of furniture items;
- ensuring the continuation of installation of energy saving equipment.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Throughout the period under review, the Human Resources Branch continued to provide the various offices within the Office of the Prime Minister and the Tourism and Culture offices, and their respective employees, with a wide range of HR services, which included, amongst other responsibilities, the drafting of employment contracts, the day-to-day administration of the OPM payroll and the provision of advice with regard to employment conditions.

In addition, based on the submissions of the various departments, divisions, directorates and entities within OPM, the HR Branch consolidated a capacity building exercise for the entire Ministry and subsequently it also provided assistance with regard to the issue of a number of calls for applications. Three of these calls for applications concerned a total of fifteen positions of Assistant Director within OPM.

The HR Branch also contributed towards the preparation of the OPM annual budgetary estimates, specifically where personal emoluments are concerned and it has also collaborated closely with the Finance and Administration Branch, and the Office of the Permanent Secretary EU Funds in order to raise claims for the reimbursement of co-financed salaries.

Other duties carried out by the HR Branch included:

- providing advice and maintaining records regarding family-friendly measures;
- maintaining and monitoring leave and attendance records;
- maintaining records related to the Performance Management Programme;
- updating the Ministry's staff list;
- processing of promotion/progression of staff at ministry level

OPERATIONS

The Operations Branch was set up during 2011 and is headed by an Assistant Director. Apart from the responsibilities regarding tendering, the Branch now also administers the OPM Registry.

The Branch is responsible for matters regarding tendering procedures, the coordination of the process of the drafting of replies to parliamentary questions and the Registry. Other work carried out by the Branch included matters relating to occupational health and safety.

During the year, nine departmental tenders and 13 calls for quotations were issued by the Branch. The service provided included the drafting of the tender and call for quotations documents, the issuing of these tenders and quotations and in the adjudicating reports. During 2011, 24 departmental tenders were issued by the Directorate.

During 2011, the Departmental Contracts Committee (DCC) held 49 sittings during which a number of issues were considered such as approval of clarification to tenderers, cancellation of tenders and fresh tenders. During the year, the DCC considered reports and recommendations for 119 tenders submitted by 22 different contracting authorities.

The Registry section continued to provide service to the secretariats and departments at this Office. During the year, the Registry handled the following:

Letters registered on DOCREG system	2,853
New OPM Confidential files	25
New OPM files	1,436
New PAHRO files	458
New Personal Files	882
New Parliamentary Questions Files	1,542
Distribution of OPM/PAHRO Circulars	113
Insertion of letters in various files	19,757

To increase the space for new files, the Registry transferred 5,200 dormant files to the National Archives. The number of files transferred during the previous year amounted to 5,700.

In April 2011, the Parliamentary Questions Unit was set up within the premises of the Registry. This unit was made up of three officers and coordinated the process relating to the preparation of draft replies to PQs. During the year, the PQ Unit dealt with 1,542 PQs addressed to the Prime Minister, 50 of which were directly related to this Directorate.

An occupational health and safety assessment of the premises housing the Directorate was carried out during the year so as to ensure proper adherence to the regulations and a safer environment for staff.

ALEXANDER MAGRO

Director General (Support Services)

Information Management Unit

INTRODUCTION

The Information Management Unit (IMU) is the central ICT Office within the Office of the Prime Minister. One of the roles of the Unit is to provide advice and support on IT related issues to departments, divisions, directorates, units and entities that form part of the Ministry.

Core functions carried out refer to: the drawing up of the Ministry ICT Plans including financial budgeting, with the assistance of the Corporate Services Directorate procurement of hardware and other services, management of ICT project design, the management of hardware inventories, provision of information services, liaising with the Malta Information Technology Agency, management of data centre facilities and providing ongoing support in ICT matters.

MAIN ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT DURING 2011

Data Centre Redesign Project

The following works were carried out as a result of the redesigning of the Data Centre:

- *New Electrical Installation:* The new electrical system provides both uninterrupted power supply and essential electrical power through overhead bus bars.
- *Installation of a new Closed Control Air Conditioner:* The installation of a closed control air-conditioning unit has been completed.
- *Safety/Security Features:* CCTV cameras in the data centre – two cameras were relocated and additional new cameras were installed to have a complete coverage of the data centre. The premises have been enhanced with a better fire system.
- *Data Backup Procedures:* The current backup procedure entails the usage of several backup tapes. Data on these tapes is not encrypted and most of the servers are inaccessible during the backup. A backup solution that takes a snapshot of the hard drive will be installed on two dedicated backup servers. The latter will be completely invisible to users and thus will not interfere with the daily business. Installation will be completed in 2012.
- *Procurement and Installation of New Servers:* A supply tender for six new servers was issued and awarded. The servers will replace the Cabinet Office and Secretariats' servers. Another group of two servers will be running a virtual environment on which OA services and other applications will be hosted. Installation is to be completed in 2012.
- *Installation of a new SFD Server:* A new SFD server has been installed. All applications related to the Structural Funds are now running on this host. The old server will be decommissioned during 2012.
- *EU Forum Servers:* A way forward regarding the utilisation of these servers was requested from the EU Secretariat. Discussions are underway with MITC for a new system that will replace this setup.

Set-up of the Government Contingency Centre during the Libyan Crisis

The Unit was asked to provide a number of services in the Government Contingency Centre set up to deal with the Libyan crisis. The services required consisted of the installing of dedicated telephone lines; setting up a LAN (wired and wireless) and the provision of IT hardware and IT support.

Migration of the Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) owned by MTA

This online digital media repository has been residing on a Ministry owned server for the past two years. Since MTA procured a new server, this application has been migrated onto it. The OPM server has been rejoined to the domain.

Preparation of the Ministry OPEX/CAPEX submission

The Unit requested OPM departments, directorates and entities to provide the IT requirements for 2012. After collating the data and evaluating the progress of projects and other commitments set for 2011, the 2012 OPEX/CAPEX submission was forwarded to MITA's budget office. This submission was followed by several clarification meetings with MITA. The budget provided for 2012 has been allocated to a prioritised list of projects.

AFM IT Strategy/Servers

Funds for a consultancy service for the drafting of this strategy have been requested. Initial studies are to commence in 2012. In the meantime the Unit provided assistance to the AFM in procuring a set of servers that will be replacing their current AFM obsolete servers; setting up of a new Data Centre at Luqa Barracks; setting up of an AFM Intranet; and LAN support

Updating the Microsoft Exchange Address Book

The IMU together with MITA Service Call Centre updated the Exchange Server Address Book user details. This exercise was carried out in two separate phases: Phase 1 - Review the Ministry organisation structure; and Phase 2 - Review the Exchange Mail Server address book user details.

Payroll System

The Unit is assisting PAHRO in the installation of the following new modules in the Payroll System: Skills Profiling; Qualifications Management; and Performance Management.

LAN, WAN and Telephone installations

The IMU assisted in the setting up of LAN, WAN and installation of telephone systems, as follows:

- *AFM Main Fibre Connection* – A new fibre WAN connection has been installed at Luqa Barracks and the old laser link decommissioned.
- *AFM LAN Extensions* – Several units within Luqa Barracks were linked to Magnet II via fibre optic backbones. About 1Km of multimode fibre optic cable has been laid and terminated.
- *Castille Network Redesign* – The new LAN in the 1st and 2nd floor was designed in accordance with the goals set for this redesign project. Consultancy and support were provided during the installation of these LANs. The works included the laying of a new CAT5e network, laying of several fibre optic backbones, the relocation of IT cabinets and new telephony infrastructure.
- *Department for Local Government/Operations and Programme Implementation/Public Administration HR Office/EU Affairs Directorate new premises* – the telephone and IT services of each new office site were reviewed. New remote shelves were installed and the necessary changes/enhancements to the IT infrastructure were completed. Necessary changes in user accounts were implemented.
- *Consultation for the new ECOC offices at the Chamber of Commerce* – Consultancy services provided during the set-up of these new offices.
- *Government Communication Centre - New fibre connection* – The ADSL connection at the GCC was replaced with a new dedicated fibre connection.

- *Installation of a 3rd party Wireless network* - An existing connection was extended to the Castille Vaults to be used during the Anne Frank exhibition. Another third party ADSL connection was installed in the Ambassadors' Hall which was also extended to the PM Communications board room.
- *Anne Frank Exhibition* – Setting up an internet café during the Anne Frank Exhibition.
- *MEU New Offices* – Since MEU will be moving to new offices, the IMU provided support and services for the installation of a new LAN, WAN and telephone service.

Visit Malta Portal

A steering committee was appointed in the second quarter of 2010 to define parameters for a new Visit Malta portal replacing the current one launched in January 2007 into a more contemporary one. The new portal will take full advantage of Web 2.0 capabilities whilst maintaining its stature as Malta's primary tourism portal, and keeping in line with the objectives emerging from the Malta Tourism Authority's Marketing Plan. The tender for this portal was awarded during 2011.

Medicine's Authority Corporate Website Tender

The authority needed to revamp their corporate website since it was not visually appealing and didn't have a content management system with the consequence that it was very cumbersome to update and manage. The IMU provided all the technical requirements for the Invitation to Tender to the Authority's IT manager and vetted the tender document prior to its publication.

Grant Scheme for Sustainable Tourism Projects by Enterprises – ERDF Scheme 135

IMU reviewed and evaluated the ICT aspect and the projects' ability to conform to ICT measures in line with the policy guidelines in the calls for proposals under the Scheme ERDF 135.

Training Management System

CDRT have selected DAKAR as the supplier for a new Training Management System. The application was installed at CDRT and UAT (user acceptance testing) is currently being carried out by a number of officers at CDRT. Following this phase, any bugs/updates will be identified and discussed with the supplier. Once all issues have been tackled, this module will be installed and hosted at MITA and integrated with the new payroll system.

Citizen's Toolkit Web Portal Tender

A tender for the development and hosting of a new web portal known as the *European Citizens' Toolkit* was issued. Its aim is to provide citizens with interactive sources of information, online quizzes and online publications which highlight EU citizens' rights and the EU's role in their everyday life. The portal would also address areas related to EU competences. IMU was involved in the drafting of the tender document and in the adjudication of the proposals received.

Employment Support Programme Database

A database was developed for an EU funded project within the ESP Unit to keep track of employees from the public sector and from authorities which require any counselling services related to work, family, illness etc. Various statistical reports are issued monthly.

Setup of Petitions Board Office in Gozo

A petition unit within the Local Government Department was based in Gozo towards the second quarter of 2011. IMU liaised with its counterpart in Gozo to carry out works related with the IT network infrastructure, leasing of PCs and linking the remote shelf for telephony with the OPM PABX.

Local Councils Mail Registry System & Magnet Connectivity

The mail registry system is a client server application being used in local councils to keep record of all correspondence received. In line with MITA's strategy, this application is being divested from MITA to 3rd party suppliers and a web based application will be developed to replace the current one. Once this application is divested, it is also being suggested that local councils get a 3rd party internet connection and remove the Magnet Connectivity as it would be financially more viable for the councils. Currently local councils require an internet connection through MITA since they are accessing a client server application.

Invitation to Tender – MCCA Corporate Website

IMU drafted the technical specifications for an Invitation to Tender to design a corporate website. Apart from general information on the authority, the new site will include an online payment system used for buying standards, password protected sections reserved for specified users, a blog area for restricted for members of the technical committee, an intranet for staff within the Authority, a booking system, contact/complaints forms and integration with online applications the Authority already has in place.

Local Council Agency (LAS) System

MITA subcontracted iLab Ltd to update the Local Council Agency System from a client server application to a web based system. IMU liaised with the supplier on the enhancements of the new system and following the development, User Acceptance Testing was carried out at St Paul Bay Local Council. Training sessions were then held at MITA to all local council officials.

Customer Complaints Handling System - MCCA

A new Complaints Handling System with harmonised EU categories in line with EU regulations on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws is being developed. This will replace a client server complaints system developed by MITA.

Internal Market Information System

IMI is an online application designed by the European Commission with the aim of assisting authorities and entities in EU member countries to easily cooperate and assist each other. One officer within the IMU is the DIMIC (departmental information market information coordinator) for OPM and manages and administers users on the system. Currently OPM has two authorities/departments using the IMI – the Malta Tourism Authority and the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations.

Access Control Management

Administering and maintaining users on the Auberge de Castille's Access Control system, issuing access control cards and managing Time and Attendance reports.

Logging and Approval of Electronic Requests for Service

ERFSes are logged in daily by officers within the IMU so that OPM users will be granted a range of IT services offered by MITA.

IT Training Programme ESF 4.98

Following meetings held with CDRT and the contractor, IMU staff members who will be attending the training under the ESF 4.98 project were identified.

153 System

The Department of Information currently services the general public with the 153 service. The application currently being used has been investigated and audited. The data in the system needs to be constantly up to date and from our investigation, it resulted that some data is inaccurate or missing. On a parallel project, the Customer Care Application has been rolled out. Considering the type of service these two applications offer to the general public, it was decided, after several discussions with the Department of Information, to embark the new 153 system onto the Customer Care Application, using the same repository of data, feeding both services.

Daily newspapers

The Department of Information outlined the need to reduce newspaper costs for government departments. The requirements were discussed with all stakeholders involved. The tool used was the Intranet for the Public Service and a shared area for these officers was created and appropriate access granted. DOI officers scan newspapers everyday and provide OPM senior management with information on relevant news items, thus reducing newspapers costs.

GPP MIS Ver 1.2

The Government Printing Press was using an unsupported system for job inputting records. Apart from that, the system was residing at GPP which is not according to government standards. Therefore the need for a Management Information System to automate various processes arose. The processes which are currently handled manually needed also to be included in the new system, ranging from procurement to sales orders. A tender was issued and awarded. The new system is very comprehensive, easy to use and to update. The hosting requirements have been discussed with MITA.

Wi-Fi Connectivity

The EU Secretariat required Wi-Fi within the premises. Together with MITA, the IMU provided advice in order for the facility to be made available.

AFM Intranet

The AFM requested the setting up of an intranet within the organisation. After meetings and discussions, an agreement was reached to have AFM intranet on Government Intranet (<http://intra.gov.mt>). Training was provided to AFM personnel and various parts of the intranet were built in order to exploit the full potential of the intranet according to AFM's requirements.

Intranet Firewalls

The new intranet for the Public Service is currently hosted at MITA. It is planned to shift the hosting of this application to OPM Data Centre, within Auberge de Castille in order to reduce costs, since the application will host large amounts of data. Hardware has been procured already but two firewalls needed to be researched, evaluated and procured.

Boards and Committees Online Form

Cabinet Office required an online form on the OPM website in order for the general public to apply for various boards and committees. MITA's e-form platform has been used together with a newly developed backend by MITA for result sorting and queering.

Other Ongoing Operational Tasks

- *Electronic request for service (ERFS)*: vetting, approving or rejecting the Ministry electronic requests for service raised through the MITA ERFS portal by various loggers around the Ministry. Some of the services provided through this system are:
 - Creation/deletion of email/internet/corporate accounts
 - Creation/deletion of shared folders
 - Provide/revoke access to shared folders
 - Creation of SFD accounts
 - Creation/deletion of generic e-mail accounts
 - Provision of fast remote connections
- *OA Servers' Cleanup*: The consolidated environment provides a shared working space for the Ministry. Cleanup exercises of the shared drives are completed regularly to make sure that no irrelevant data is kept on these shares and also reduce operational costs. Regular cleanups are also completed on the other OA servers hosted at the Castille Data Centre.
- *VIP User Support*: supporting VIPs with IT related issues.
- *Scheduling Data Centre Downtime*: Scheduling Data Centre shutdown and supporting MITA and 3rd party suppliers when maintenance at the data centre is required.
- *Network Support*: supporting MITA during network downtime which occurred mainly due to faulty active equipment, damaged infrastructure or wrongly configured networking hardware. In another exercise, all the network hubs were removed and replaced with network switches.
- *Procurement of Multifunction copiers*: Provided technical assistance to various sections during the procurement/leasing of Multifunction Copiers.
- *MITA Change management approvals*: Approving MITA's change requests after informing all stakeholders.

ALEXANDER MAGRO
A/Chief Information Officer

Operations and Programme Implementation Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The principal role of the Operations and Programme Implementation Directorate (OPI) is the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of ministry projects as well as the management of certain corporate initiatives, primarily focusing on ensuring compliance by government departments with the Data Protection Act. A major part of OPI's ministry responsibilities is the line ministry function in relation to EU-funded projects undertaken within OPM during the 2007-2013 programming period. The Directorate also monitors and facilitates the implementation of OPM's change management programmes and activities, including customer care and green initiatives.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Annual Reports of Government Departments

Early in 2011, the OPI again undertook the task of compiling, vetting and editing of reports submitted by government departments concerning their activities in the previous year. The consolidated publication *2010 Annual Report of Government Departments* was published in CD format in July 2011 and posted on the Public Service Intranet. The Ministry's 2010 report was subsequently put online on the OPM website.

Boards and Committees

Up to September 2011, the OPI Directorate processed all appointments of constitutional bodies and ministry boards and committees that require the approval of the President of Malta and/or the Prime Minister. In addition, the office liaised continually with various other ministries and undertook regular monitoring of press releases and the Government Gazette in order to maintain updated its database of some 350 boards/committees that Government appoints or holds representation in. In September 2011, Government launched a public call for applications from persons wishing to register their interest in being considered for appointment on government boards and committees. As a result of this new policy, responsibility for the database subsequently passed over to the Cabinet Office, which is administering the new nominations procedure. This directorate retained responsibility for the processing of appointments on constitutional bodies and on OPM boards and committees, as well as the maintenance of the relative database. The composition of 27 boards/committees was processed during the year.

In the first half of the year, meetings continued to be held with the Public Administration HR Office with the aim of enhancing the retrieval and extraction features of the Boards and Committees Database. In addition, liaison meetings were held in preparation for the handing over to the Cabinet Office of the Boards and Committees Database and related processing. New guidelines regarding the handling of appointments to boards and committees were prepared in order to ensure efficient processing and to delineate the responsibilities of the various entities under OPM in connection with the approval and processing of appointments to boards and committees and constitutional bodies.

Broadcasting

The regulatory aspect of Broadcasting is one of the responsibilities of the Office of the Prime Minister. This involves liaising with the Broadcasting Authority on issues relating to legal and procedural matters,

which require reference to the Prime Minister in terms of the Constitution and the Broadcasting Act (Cap 350), particularly the publication of subsidiary broadcasting legislation.

Since 1991, Government annually offers a bursary with the aim of improving journalistic standards in the broadcasting field. The Harold Scorey Scholarship in Broadcast Journalism is open to journalists already working in the broadcasting media or aspiring journalists interested in developing their skills in broadcast journalism. The 2011 scholarship was awarded to Mr Jonathan Mercieca, who attended a two-part course *Television Technology 1* and *Television Technology 2*, at the BBC Academy between 15 and 26 August 2011.

DATA PROTECTION

Data Protection compliance in the Public Service remains the primary corporate initiative under the responsibility of the Directorate. By means of this project, the OPM Data Protection Team offers advice and assistance to ministries and departments in the field of data protection. 2011 has marked the complete takeover of the total responsibility of facilitating data protection compliance across the Public Service, following the divestment of data protection services from MITA.

In the course of the year, extensive assistance on a wide variety of issues was extended to line ministries and departments, offering best practice data protection advice. Data protection issues dealt with during last year were both of a corporate nature as well as sector specific. In fact, OPI continued to review the corporate retention policy for HR documents, and in this regard worked closely with the Public Administration HR Office (PAHRO), the Information and Data Protection Commissioner (IDPC), and the National Archives. OPI also continued to give advice to the Resourcing Directorate within PAHRO, together with Police and Education representatives, in the formulation of a procedure to address data protection implications regarding the disclosure of criminal records in connection with offences that may cause harm to children, whenever there are calls for applications for employment in the education sector.

The DP Team aided PAHRO officials in the drafting and reviewing of the Employee Support Programme giving advice on forms and procedures. PAHRO were also given advice on other employment issues which conflicted with data protection requirements. The team also provided support to Police authorities and the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications (MITC), to implement a module in the e-Forms project for the provision of conduct details by the Police to MITC in a seamless and transparent manner in line with the Conducts Certificate Ordinance, whenever conduct details are required in the delivery of an e-government service. A document was drafted by the Data Protection Unit in this regard. This document was forwarded to the IDPC with an application for a prior checking exercise in terms of the Data Protection Act, which was lodged by OPI on behalf of both the Police and MITC.

Furthermore, OPI was instrumental in giving advice and coordinating data protection matters between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the IDPC Office with regard to the Visa Information System (VIS) evaluation and the implementation of a pilot project for the processing of biometric data in Tunis and Cairo. Two EU Regulations with regard to the VIS and the Visa Code were analysed article by article, and whilst identifying the data protection implications arising out of each article, the action required to be taken was indicated to conform to DP requirements. Issues of collection, retention and accessibility of biometric data were tackled in a number of meetings and a prior checking exercise was also conducted by the IDPC. Inspections were carried out jointly with the MFA Data Protection Officer and the IDPC officials at the embassies of Moscow and Cairo as a post evaluation of VIS implementation and in preparation for the Schengen evaluation. Joint inspections with the IDPC were also carried out on the Immigration Authorities at the Malta International Airport in preparation for the forthcoming Schengen Evaluation. On-site inspections of air borders were made to ascertain that all processes were in accordance with the data protection requirements of the Schengen Convention and the VIS Regulations.

Apart from providing necessary guidance and direction to queries received from a number of ministries and departments, support was also afforded to ministries and departments in case of queries received from

the Information and Data Protection Commissioner (IDPC), where the OPI acted as intermediary between the IDPC and the relevant departments, to discuss and settle any data protection issue.

Data protection auditing continued throughout the year. These audits delve into all aspects of a department's data processing activities and conduct a review of the extent of compliance with the Data Protection Act. In the past year, eight data protection full audits were concluded in four different ministries (four at the Office of the Prime Minister; two at the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment; one at the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs and one at the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs).

The DP Team continued to facilitate data protection training aimed at improving data protection awareness in the Public Service. Six half-day sessions were organised in conjunction with CDRT, including a session within the Induction Course for Potential Executive Secretaries within the Local Government Department. A data protection module was planned with CDRT to include data protection in the Public Management Diploma.

During 2011, the Data Protection section of the Public Service Intranet was updated and uploaded with all relevant information.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of Eco-friendly Initiatives

Throughout the year, OPI continued to monitor the implementation of environment practices across the Office of the Prime Minister and to extend assistance and support to the Green Focal Points (GFPs) in OPM departments and entities. Seven new Green Focal Points were nominated and replaced this year.

The projects launched in the previous years to promote eco-friendly practices in the workplace were sustained and further extended in 2011 through the application of measures such as such as:

- compiling 'green' statistics, through the Green Focal Points, intended to monitor electricity and water consumption, the procurement of paper and envelopes, number of cartridges and toners procured and returned to suppliers and collection of waste separation;
- holding a meeting for all OPM GFPs in December 2011; statistics which were collected over the past three years were presented and analysed and a discussion was held to promote reduction of utilisation of resources, recycling and re-use of resources; the event was also used to promote the 34U and clean-up campaigns which are planned for 2012 and to encourage the proposal of green initiatives;
- reducing drastically the consumption of water heaters and hot water dispensers in departments. More than 200 water heaters were switched off. Three hundred and ten timers for water heaters and 141 timers for water dispensers were procured through MRRA. These timers are to be installed in 2012.
- facilitating and supporting the Mobiles Collection Campaign organised by the Jesuit Community in Malta, 'A New Life for your Old Mobile Phone' that involves the collection of old mobile phones in aid of Jesuit projects in Africa. OPM Green Focal Points promoted this OPM initiative within their organisation. More than 275 unwanted mobiles were collected for this purpose.
- Installing an additional photovoltaic panel at the Government Printing Press in addition to the ones already installed with funds from the Green Leaders' Environment Initiatives Fund.

Coordination of 2007-2013 Cohesion Funds

As one of its line ministry functions in relation to 2007-2013 EU projects, the Directorate provides ongoing support to project leaders implementing projects in departments/entities falling within the remit of the Office of the Prime Minister. Assistance is provided from the pre-application stage right through to project closure stage.

Daily searches are carried out on related websites for new calls, funding programmes, information sessions and conferences. Besides ensuring that timely information on issues related to EU funding was relayed to OPM departments and entities, the Directorate was also involved in the vetting and endorsement of project proposals. With the issue of the 10th call for project proposals under ERDF Priority Axes 2 -Tourism, which closed on Friday 6 May, one applications submitted by Heritage Malta was vetted prior to submission to the Managing Authority.

As at end year, OPI is consequently responsible for the overall monitoring of 18 ERDF and ESF projects and 3 EAFRD projects under the remit of OPM. These projects, bearing a total budget of € 54,282,150, are the following:

<i>Operational Programme I Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)</i>		
ERDF 32	Heritage Malta	<i>Archaeological Heritage Conservation Project:</i> Embellishment and conservation of Ġgantija and Tarxien Temples, both inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, as well as St Paul's Catacombs which are on the Tentative List for future inscription as a World Heritage Site. Total budget: €9,163,521
ERDF 33	Malta Tourism Authority	<i>Tourism Zone Upgrade with landscaped urban spaces and other facilities:</i> Provides landscaped urban space with seating and sea views in three tourism zones; Qawra, Pembroke and St Paul's Bay. Additional facilities include public aquarium (including marine visitor attraction, ancillary facilities such as restaurants, souvenir outlets and parking spaces), a diving institute and car parking facilities in the Qawra and a cycle track and Garigue Heritage Park in Pembroke. Total budget: €14,547,546
ERDF 83	Malta Council for Science and Technology	<i>Manufacturing Research Platform:</i> Establishes a research platform in the area of manufacturing to facilitate and accelerate the transformation of local industry to higher value added activity; also undertake three research projects in areas of general interest to a number of local enterprises to demonstrate the benefits of research and innovation, thus encouraging increased industry involvement in such activities. Total budget: €709,181
ERDF 87	Malta Standards Authority	<i>Developing National Metrology Capacity in Support of Industry:</i> Setting up of new national measurement standards in the areas of: pressure; electricity; time and frequency; as part of the national measurement system. These new metrology standards will satisfy a market gap in measurement capability currently afflicting Maltese SMEs. Total budget: €898,530
ERDF 135	Tourism & Sustainable Development Unit	<i>Grant Scheme for Sustainable Tourism Projects by Enterprise:</i> Provides financial aid towards Malta's tourism sector. Total budget: €10,000,000
ERDF 156	Malta Environment and Planning Authority	<i>Developing Environmental Monitoring:</i> Development of national environmental monitoring of Air, Water, Noise, Soil and radiation. Total budget: €4,657,760
<i>Operational Programme II Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 European Social Fund (ESF)</i>		
ESF 1.31	Heritage Malta	<i>Wood CPR: Education & Training in Wood Conservation Restoration (ICMCH):</i> Aims to improve education and skills in relation to cultural heritage in wood within the context of the European Qualifications Framework, through investing in Malta's education system, addressing skills mismatches in the wood sector, research and innovation in the same area. Total budget: €541,427
ESF 1.40	Malta Council for Science and Technology	<i>Science Popularisation Campaign:</i> Consists of a number of initiatives to encourage people to be more interested and knowledgeable about science. Total budget: €565,865
ESF 2.11	Malta Tourism Authority	<i>Developing Leaders for Change and Innovation in Tourism:</i> Designed to up-skill and certify owners, managers and supervisors as well as job-seekers and unemployed persons in the tourism sector. Total budget: €4,120,396
ESF 2.78	Malta Tourism Authority	<i>Retaining and Attracting People within Tourism through Diversity Management:</i> This research project is aimed at identifying recommendable actions/training to retain employees in the tourism industries and attract new ones. Total budget: €423,715

ESF 4.87	Management Efficiency Unit	<i>Developing the Maltese Public Sector's Capacity to Implement Better Regulation</i> : Focuses on Better Regulation in line with EU and national obligations and is intended to look at procedures/processes that are causing significant burdens on businesses and citizens. Total budget: €1,433,013
ESF 4.94	Malta Council for Economic and Social Development	<i>Closer to Europe</i> : Promotes an effective process for social and civil dialogue through the active participation of social and civil partners. The realisation of general and specialised publications, the development of a communication and awareness campaign and the support for networking will improve the beneficiaries' capacity on EU and local related matters, thus enhancing participation in the active social debate. Total budget: €467,323
ESF 4.97	Employee Relations Directorate, Public Admin HR Office	<i>Employee Support Programme (ESP) for Public Employees</i> : A workplace-focused programme which aims to assist in the identification and resolution of problems preventing public employees from rendering peak performance. This project offers information, consultation, assessment and short-term counselling to public officers experiencing psycho-social/disability problems with the aim of achieving a more productive and efficient workforce throughout the whole Public Administration, and a better work-life balance of public employees. Total budget: €598,215,
ESF 4.98	Centre for Development, Research and Training (CDRT)	<i>Strengthening IMUs and other related functions through Specialist Training Programmes</i> : Strengthening the public administration in the field of specialist ICT training through the development of the human resource capacity of its ICT units. The project also aims at providing a resourceful knowledge sharing setup allowing for cross-Ministry research, interaction and joint project undertaking. Total budget: €1,613,983
ESF 4.100	CDRT	<i>Developing Core Skills in the Public Service</i> : Strengthening the institutional and administrative capacity of the Public Service by identifying the needs of public officers as regards skills and competencies and addressing those needs via training. Total budget: €3,369,862
ESF 4.163	MCCAA	<i>Training of Consumer and Competition Officials and Awareness Campaign</i> Strengthening the administrative capacity of the public sector by identifying the needs of the public officers through a study relating to codes of conduct and an awareness campaign to inform people about the new authority and legislation. Total Budget: € 542,884
ESF 4.152	MCST	<i>Capacity Building for MCST</i> Improving current skills and competences as well as increasing the Knowledge base and expertise in a number of fields related to MCST Total Budget: € 291,480
ESF 4.159	MEU	<i>Developing Quality Management in the Public Administration through CAF</i> Developing Skills and competences of public officers in the application of the Common Assessment Framework and central competencies within MEU to lead CAF implementation in the Public Administration Total Budget: € 337,449

EAFRD 8/313	MTA	<i>Malta Goes Rural</i> Creation of a number of rural walks in Malta. Total Budget: € 3,256,183
EAFRD12/ 323	HM	<i>REBACA</i> Rehabilitation of <i>Għajn Tuffieha</i> Roman Baths and <i>Ta' Bistra</i> Catacombs
EAFRD 12/323	MEPA	<i>Natura 2000 Management Planning for Malta and Gozo</i> . The establishment of Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites in the Maltese Islands.

In addition, towards the latter part of the year, three new projects were approved for ESF funding:

ESF 4.163	MCCAA	<i>Training of Consumer and Competition Officials and Awareness Campaign</i> : Strengthening the administrative capacity of the public sector by identifying the needs of the public officers through a study relating to codes of conduct and an awareness campaign to inform people about the new authority and legislation.
ESF 4.152	MCST	<i>Capacity Building for MCST</i> : Improving current skills and competences as well as increasing the Knowledge base and expertise in a number of fields

		related to MCST.
ESF 4.159	MEU	<i>Developing Quality Management in the Public Administration through CAF</i> Developing Skills and competences of public officers in the application of the Common Assessment Framework and central competencies within MEU to lead CAF implementation in the Public Administration.

Heritage Malta are also benefitting from a project co-financed under the EEA/Norway Financial Mechanism with a budget of €450,987.

During this year, this directorate continued to enhance its human resources by another newly appointed EU Fund Manager. Meetings with entities whose projects have been selected for EU funding were held on a monthly basis with a view to monitor project progress, deal with emerging issues and facilitate programme management. The two MPSC committees, each overseeing a number of projects in distinct areas within OPM remit, between them held six MPSC meetings in the course of the year, involving the beneficiary organisations managing the projects.

Moreover, continuous liaison vis-à-vis project proposals, procedures and the structural funds database was maintained with a number of horizontal stakeholders namely the Treasury, PPCD, Department of Contracts, MEUSAC, various NGOs and local councils.

OPI also exercises a line ministry function in regard to the payment process relating to projects approved for implementation by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local councils. This function includes processing payments (Invoice Status Certificates) on the Structural Fund Database related to all approved ESF/ERDF projects implemented by OPM departments/entities, 32 projects implemented by NGOs and local councils, as well as the Technical Assistance programmes of the Managing Authority. The number of ISCs that OPI processed through the SDF system during 2011 reached a total of 1,275, a 27.88% increase over the previous year.

During 2011, the three EU Fund Managers and Assistant Director attended information sessions vis-à-vis the new versions of the ESF and ERDF Project Progress Reports, Pre-Announcement of ESF 8th call, IB Networking.

Customer Care Function

The OPI Directorate handles the Customer Care issues that fall under the remit of the Office of the Prime Minister. Complaints/requests are received both from the local general public as well as from abroad, mostly through the OPM website or by e-mail. During the year, 687 customer care requests were received through the OPM customer care website, 403 complaints were sent by locals and 284 complaints emanated from foreigners. 100 complaints were received through the customer care website, *servizz.gov* mainly about issues concerning MEPA. All were dealt with expeditiously and settled within 10 days or referred to the relevant ministry/department for appropriate action.

OPM Website

This Directorate is responsible for the content management of the 'Office of the Prime Minister' section of the website. The latter was reviewed on a regular basis, so as to ensure that website information was maintained accurate and up to date. The OPM organigram in particular was re-assessed and updated to reflect changes in the ministry structures.

MARIE-LOURDES GRECH

Director (Operations and Programme Implementation)

Department of Information

MEDIA RELATIONS

During 2011, a total of 2,530 Press Releases were issued on behalf of the various branches of the Government, in addition to a further 327 Press Notices. All of these were uploaded on the same day onto the Department's website. In June, Press Releases began to be issued in PDF format as a branding exercise and also as a security measure.

A total of 727 Press Cards were issued to local and foreign media.

During the year, the Department coordinated coverage by local media representatives assigned on overseas visits by the Maltese authorities on no less than thirteen occasions as follows:

- 3-5 February: Prime Minister at the European Council
- 8-9 February: Prime Minister's working visit to Libya
- 10-11 March: Prime Minister at the Extraordinary European Council
- 15-26 March: President's visit to Australia
- 24-25 March: Prime Minister at the European Council
- 5-7 April: Prime Minister's visit to Poland
- 9-11 May: Prime Minister's visit to the UK
- 12-14 May: President's visit to Bulgaria
- 22-25 June: Prime Minister at the European Council
- 22-24 October: Prime Minister at the European Council
- 9-12 November: Inauguration of Puttinu Cares apartments in Sutton
- 27-28 November: Prime Minister's visit to Libya
- 8-9 December: Prime Minister at the European Council

This coordination included coverage by a DOI photographer and/or videographer and distribution of photos and/or video footage to all local TV stations.

During 2011, the Department offered its assistance to numerous foreign journalists, photographers, and TV crews, mostly from European newspapers, news agencies and TV stations, which came over to Malta to cover the issue of illegal immigration. There were also a few foreign journalist who visited Malta to cover the National Referendum on Divorce Assistance and coordination was also extended to the UK Media House 'Global Business' in the compiling of a Malta Report to feature in the renowned 'Fortune EMEA' magazine.

The Department was also involved in local and foreign media coordination and logistics during the following state/official visits to Malta:

- January: The Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany
- January: The President of the European Parliament
- March: The Minister of National Defence of Canada
- April: The President of the European Council
- June: The Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia
- September: The Prime Minister of the (NTC) of Libya
- September: The President of the Slovak Republic

- October: The UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
- October: The US Secretary of State
- November: Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex
- Several EU Commissioners who visited Malta throughout the year

The Department was also involved in providing adequate media facilities to local and foreign journalists and TV stations during the National Referendum counting process held on 28 May at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Photography Section covered 2,540 events through its complement of eight photographers, besides providing additional stock photography as required by various departments and ministries such as identity photos of various departments, progress of works of various government projects and images which are regularly used for government publications. During 2011, the photographic section covered local and overseas official visits by Maltese and foreign dignitaries on 13 occasions.

The quality of the photographs processed by this section was enhanced during 2011 by acquiring three new top-of-the-range Nikon d3s camera bodies. DOI photos were often published on the pages of national newspapers, with a good number ending up on the front pages.

PHOTO LIBRARY

The Photo Library has, as in previous years, provided services to ministries, government departments and the general public. Scanning of negatives is also ongoing mainly according to requests. 8,135 photos were uploaded on the DOI website during 2011.

VIDEO PRODUCTION

On the occasion of the Malta George Cross Anniversary, the Video Section of the Department produced a mini documentary with original footage filmed in 1942. The original footage was cleaned, digitised and edited. A new soundtrack was also recorded in both languages - Maltese and English. This production was distributed to all the local television stations and was broadcast on 15 April. It was also featured during news bulletins and by the electronic media. A DVD of this mini documentary was made available to the public from the Sales Office of the Department.

In 2011, in order to commemorate the 50th Anniversary since the passing away and the 140th Anniversary of the birth of Malta's National Poet, Dun Karm, the Department produced a documentary, *Dun Karm – Il-Bniedem Wara Il-Poeta*. This production was screened to the public for the first time during Notte Bianca at the Old University Buildings in Valletta. The production was also made available to the public on DVD and sold from the DOI Sales Office. The documentary was also broadcast by four local television stations and also featured prominently on a number of TV programmes, newspapers and the electronic media. More than 200 DVD copies of the documentary were sold to the public.

PUBLICATIONS

During 2011, 155 editions of the Government Gazette were published, as well as 27 Acts, 30 Bills, 507 Legal Notices and 11 Bye-Laws. Two issues of the publication *Pajjiżna* were published, one regarding communications and the digital changeover. Another special edition of *Pajjiżna* was published concerning the 50th Anniversary of the Gozo Civic Council.

The Unit was also responsible for the publication of the official programmes and other printed material in connection with the official visit by the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany HE Dr Angela Merkel and another for the state visit by HE Mr Ivan Gasparovic, President of the Slovak Republic,

together with the publication of one Investiture (*Ġieħ ir-Repubblika*) programme, one Investiture (*Independence Day*) programme, a brochure for the MCCF Fine Arts Auction held in December 2011, reports of the government ministries (*Rapporti Sena ta' Hidma 2011*) and various invitation cards, menus and table plans of the OPM.

ONLINE MEDIA

The Department's website was kept updated regularly with all press releases and notices issued by the department, events, including amongst others, information regarding the situation in Libya, photos of events, employment opportunities, tenders, legal notices, acts and bills. Various banners were also posted on the website's home page, supporting various initiatives undertaken by different government departments and entities.

The Government's official portal (Gov.mt) was updated with latest ministerial information by providing updated links to ministerial and departmental websites.

Public officials were kept informed about various events, notices and news through the Intranet for the Public Service and Intranet dissemination on a daily basis. Further to that, six Intranet courses were organised for newly recruited Clerks and Principals.

As an active member of the Your Europe Board, Malta, represented by the Department of Information, continued working in providing the necessary national information to be published on this Portal.

The Communications Unit kept the newly-established DOI Facebook profile and Twitter account updated with information of public interest such as notices regarding food safety and blood donation. A new Twitter account for the Government Gazette was also launched, providing the public with references to items of interest published in the Government Gazette.

CUSTOMER CARE

During 2011, the Customer Care Section within the Unit answered a total of 2,041 queries received by e-mail and also assisted people who visited the Department personally, with queries on public administration. The section also received 500 new requests for the Direct Mailing Service.

MEDIA MONITORING AND ARCHIVING

In April 2011, the Media Monitoring Unit launched a newspaper monitoring service whereby public officers receive a daily report of the content of articles appearing in local newspapers concerning public administration issues. The aim of this exercise is to alert public officers about articles, editorials, commentaries and letters regarding subjects falling under their remit, urging them to take action and correcting any deficiencies and misconceptions that the general public may have.

During 2011, the Archiving Unit continued to update its library records and publications, which have been catalogued, and a basic database was created for easy reference. The Archiving Unit also provided assistance to public officers from various government departments who wished to consult documents which were not in their possession.

THE PRESS REGISTRY

The Department of Information houses the Press Registry where the register of newspapers, radio and television stations is kept and updated in terms of the Press Act. In 2011, new registrations with the Press Registry numbered eight and certificates requesting confirmation of editorships to be deposited as evidence in libel cases brought before the Courts of Law, totalled 16.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS

The Department participated in the 8th meeting of the European Forum of Official Gazettes (OPOCE) in Riga, Latvia. A short presentation was delivered about Gozo as the location for the forum's next meeting. In addition, the Department also participated in the Working Group: Access to Legislation organised by the same forum.

The Department also continued to participate in Club of Venice plenary meetings and seminars, such as the Working Party (Information) on social media, and also the 27-27-27 meeting, which brings together Heads of European Parliament, Heads of European Permanent Representations, and National Directors of Information.

OTHER INITIATIVES

The Department was yet again responsible for the Government's Pavilion at the Malta International Trade Fair. 'Public Health Services' was the main theme of the pavilion.

The Communications Unit hosted two Hungarian Interns for a period of four months, during which the interns followed the procedures involved in the dissemination of information to the media, assisted in compilation of statistical data and attended ministerial events.

DIANE OSWALD

Acting Director (Information)

Government Printing Press

During 2010, the Government Press continued to provide an efficient printing service to ministries, government departments and other agencies. All demands were met even though there were various instances where the GPP was given very short lead times.

PRINTING OF GOVERNMENT GAZETTE AND SUPPLEMENTS

	Issues	Pages
Government Gazette	155	14,042
Legal Notices	507	6,038
Bills	32	1,028
Acts	27	1,588
KLBL Bye Laws	11	88

All supplements are published together with the Government Gazette which is the GPP's main publication. Apart from the twice weekly (Tuesdays & Fridays) publications, other extraordinary editions of the Gazette are printed according to exigencies.

OTHER JOBS

Other jobs undertaken during the year included:

- electoral registers for General, Local Council and European Parliament Elections (April & October 2011)
- ballot papers and other related material for Referendum held in May;
- annual reports of various departments including Parliamentary Standing Committee, Ombudsman, House of Representative, Auditor General, etc;
- printing of mail shots for Ministry of Finance, Office of the Prime Minister and DOI (*Pajjižna*);
- NSO statistical publications and questionnaires;
- Education Department books for Primary and Secondary Schools;
- budget publications (Financial Estimates, Budget Speech, Economic Survey);
- Pre-Budget Document;
- All printing in connection with *Notte Bianca* and *L'Istrina* 2011.

REFERENDUM

The Referendum was held during the month of May. The Government Press undertook all the printing requirements connected with this Referendum. The preparations started early with the printing of all the stationery requested by Electoral Office and Counting Hall, followed by the printing, counting and sealing of the Ballot Papers. Voluminous extraordinary Government Gazettes were published regarding the Voting Document accounts. The Results were published in an extraordinary edition of the Government Gazette.

BUDGET 2011

The usual publications in connection with the presentation of the Budget, i.e. the Financial Estimates, Economic Survey and Budget Speech were delivered on time within a very tight schedule. The VAT

related publication (impact of Reduced VAT Rate) was printed and presented with the Budget. The Pre Budget Document (*Growth, Jobs and Social Cohesion*) was printed during August.

ADMINISTRATION

- A call for the recruitment of two printers was issued in November. Trade Tests were held during December and Printers are due to be appointed.
- Ongoing stock-taking exercises of existing paper in store to avoid unnecessary expenditure on idle and slow moving stock.
- General maintenance of the premises, including sub-station, water pumps, generator and re-sealing of metal roofs.
- During 2011, the Press successfully continued to reduce arrears of revenue due to the GPP by other government departments and entities.

ADDITIONAL MACHINERY

A new Guillotine was installed in the Finishing Section, an investment of €55,000. Training of staff was carried out at the Press.

ENVIRONMENT

- The ongoing promotion of the use of recycled/ecological paper to government departments and ministries. Since January 2009, the Government Gazette and Supplements are still being printed on recycled paper.
- Paper and plastic waste is being separated at the Press and sent for recycling.
- Used aluminium printing plates are being sold by tender to be recycled.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Complete maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment was carried out during 2011.
- Continued to increase the number of battery operated palletisers to minimise the risk of back injuries.
- All staff in the shop floor are kitted with safety shoes.
- In-house clinic at the premises is regularly maintained and kept fully functional to treat minor incidents.

STATISTICS

Tenders Awarded in 2011			
Reg. No	Description	Advert No	Supplier
GPP254/11	Tender for the supply of Offset Cartridge Paper 80gsm	1/2011	Kasco Trading Ltd
GPP237/08/04	Tender for the supply of Recycled Paper	2/2011	Fortuna Enterprise Ltd
GPP 168/99/8	Tender for the Cleaning Services	3/2011	Gafa Saveway Ltd
GPP30/96/5	Collection of Waste	4/2011	Green Skip Services
GPP255/11	Coloured Offset Cartridge Paper	5/2011	Fortuna Enterprise Ltd
GPP256/11	Coloured Bristol Board	6/2011	Arrowswift Fontacts Ltd
GPP 257/11	Matt White Art Paper & Art Board	7/2011	Papyrus Trading Ltd
GPP 258/11	Supply and installation of Waterproofing	8/2011	Mr Lee
GPP 258/11	Supply and installation of Waterproofing (2nd call)	11/2011	Kevin Grech Waterproofing

Production Report by Category - 2011					
Category	Jobs Delivered	Total (€)	Category	Jobs Delivered	Total (€)
Letterheads	68	16,737.29	Government Gazette	173	831,026.48
Complimentary Cards	34	2,635.97	Act	31	88,019.50
Visiting Cards	208	13,594.01	Legal Notices	475	405,547.01
File Covers	144	38,826.49	Bill	27	51,329.84
Forms	617	211,843.96	LCBL	16	6,541.81
Envelopes	49	7,160.18	Publications Extra	48	1,116.31
Invitations	110	7,839.35	Stock Items	34	2,660.66
Books (16pp +)	54	75,908.31	School Books	2	72.37
Booklets (-16pp)	128	122,879.37	Miscellaneous	177	93,155.62
Multiple Sets	62	69,369.51	Outwork	7	1,576.09
Magazines	5	27,091.71	Blank Paper	27	5,391.98
Leaflets/Brochures	51	46,429.19			
Posters	10	4,049.00			

Jobs listed above were ordered by 167 different departments, schools and other entities.

CARMELO SAMMUT
 Director (Government Printing Press)

Department for Local Government

ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

The Department for Local Government established a new organisational set up during 2011. The Director is responsible for the leadership of the Department with a management team that lead their respective units, composed of the Director, the Assistant Director (Planning and Policy), Assistant Director (Devolution), Head of Monitoring Unit and the Head of Training, Human Resources, Administration, EU and International Affairs.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

For 2011, local councils received a direct allocation (under the funding formula) of €30,010,000 from central government. In addition to this, another €1,000,000 was voted towards the introduction of Public Private Schemes in connection with the resurfacing of roads in the localities. During this year, local councils also continued to benefit from various financial schemes which amounted to around €985,000

Government also continued to assist councils through the secondment of government employees. Since the salaries and wages of these workers are borne by central government, this deployment of workers scheme effectively means that councils are making savings in wages. The Department for Local Government also provided financial assistance to the Local Councils Association (LCA) (€102,772.50) and to the Association of Local Council Executive Secretaries (ASKLM) (€ 9,318) as part of Government's commitment to assist both associations.

Local Councils Grant Schemes were introduced for the local councils' financial year 2009-10 for which €1.59 million was voted. These schemes were again introduced in 2010 and 2011.

Requests for Bank Loans

As part of its supporting role to local councils, the Department deals with requests by local councils for bank loans. This is quite a rigorous process since the Department has to ensure that the council would be able to sustain such a loan and it would not affect negatively its operations. Moreover, the approval for such bank loans is given after consultation with officials from the Ministry of Finance. In this regard, during the year under review, a series of meetings were held between the Department for Local Government officials and those from the Ministry of Finance wherein a new procedure for applications of bank loans was established and communicated to all local councils. During 2011, there were four such applications, three from the Local Councils of Marsa, I-Gharb and Pembroke and one from the Local Councils Association (overdraft). By year end, the application of the LCA had been approved and issued while those of Marsa and I-Gharb were also approved and are in the process of being issued. Pembroke's application is still being processed.

Other Financial Issues

The Department gives support to local councils on various financial matters. Besides taking care of the transfer of the quarterly financial allocation into the respective local councils' bank accounts, the

Department is also responsible for the vetting and processing of all claims in connection with the various local councils grants' schemes.

One other very important function of the Department is the continuous monitoring of local councils finances (see under separate heading). In this regard, the Department is in regular contact with the Auditor General in order to ensure that local councils retain a healthy financial position and are always operating within the law and regulations.

Grant Schemes

Since the inception of schemes from the financing of projects to cultural activities in 2009, the Department for Local Government has noted that the councils are embarking on even more ambitious projects, and actively participating in each scheme launched. Administrative committees and even regional committees are following suit. During 2011, 16 schemes were launched

The Department was involved in the preparation, adjudication (through an official on the Adjudication Board) and payment of these schemes to the successful councils. The schemes and the amounts allocated to each one are indicated in the table below:

Memo 1/2011 - Strengthening the Community - regeneration in government housing estates (Scheme under the responsibility of the Housing Authority)	€675,000
Memo 9/2011 - Scheme for Local Councils who have the responsibility of local libraries	€20,152
Memo 12/2011 - Contractual Agreement regarding maintenance works in government housing estates (Scheme under the responsibility of the Housing Authority)	€1,000,000
Memo 41/2011 -Training for Local Libraries Employees' (Withdrawn as only two persons applied)	
Memo 44/2011 - Scheme for the financing of Lifelong Learning courses	€20,000
Memo 55/2011 - Scheme for the financing of projects and initiatives by Administrative Committees	€320,000
Memo 58/2011 - Pilot Project -More employment in Local Councils for Disabled Persons (To be paid minimum pay from the social benefit for disability and the Department for Local Government)	
Memo 60/2011 - Scheme egov4u for Local Councils	€75,000
Memo 63/2011 - Scheme for the financing of special projects in small localities	
Memo 65/2011 - Scheme for Cultural Activities 2011/12	€335,900
Memo 66/2011 - Scheme for the financing of improvements in the existing playing fields	
Memo 71/2011 - Scheme for the financing of Regional Committees	€250,000
Memo 87/2011 - Scheme for the financing of special projects	
Memo 90/2011 - Scheme for the financing of Sport Initiatives	€60,000
Call for applications to provide surveillance in the morning and in the afternoon, before and after school hours in state schools	
Memo 120/2011 - Scheme for Local Councils who have the responsibility of local libraries *	€25,000
Memo 122/2011 - Scheme for the financing of restoration of small historical places*	€160,000

* Submission date of applications in 2012

Schemes Awarded in 2011

In 2011, the Department for Local Government, following the adjudication of the various schemes, each by their respective Adjudication Board, handed different financial schemes as follows:

	Applications received		Councils that applied		Adm Comm that applied		Regional Committees	Total grant for each scheme	Councils that benefitted		Adm Comm that benefitted		Regional Committees
	Malta	Gozo	Malta	Gozo	Malta	Gozo			Malta	Gozo	Malta	Gozo	
Memo 1/2011 - Strengthening the Community - regeneration in government housing estates								€675,000.00					
Memo 9/2011 - Scheme for Local Councils who have the responsibility of local libraries	51	41	10	0	0	0	0	€20,152.00	32	10	0	0	0
Memo 12/2011 - Contractual Agreement regarding maintenance works in government housing estates	31	30	1	0	0	0	0	€1,000,000.00			0	0	0
Memo 44/2011 - Scheme for the financing of Lifelong Learning courses	38	34	4	0	0	0	0	€15,366.28	25	0	0	0	0
Memo 55/2011 - Scheme for the financing of projects and initiatives by Administrative Committees	14	0	0	11	3	3	3	€279,752.30	0	0	11	3	3
Memo 58/2011 - Pilot Project -More employment in Local Councils for Disabled Persons	5	3	2	0	0	0	0		3	2	0	0	0
Memo 60/2011 - Scheme egov4u for Local Councils	13	13	0	0	0	0	0	€25,000.00	5	0	5	0	0
Memo 65/2011 - Scheme for Cultural Activities 2011/12	78	55	14	5	3	1	1	€335,900.00	50	14	5	3	1

Follow-ups in 2011

Since August, the Department has been following the local councils, administrative committees and regional committees in their progress, related to the schemes they have benefitted from. This has led to the schemes awarded in 2009, to be practically closed (just waiting to issue final payments in January 2012). Also schemes awarded in 2010 are nearly final completion. The follow-ups have resulted in a screening process of councils carrying out the execution of such works. It is noted that all necessary tenders or quotations issued are vetted and followed, to follow up each Council in the progress of such works.

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT (TRAINING AND HUMAN RESOURCES UNITS)

Training Unit

The Training Unit within the Department for Local Government was established in June 2011 to conduct training courses according to current and future local government needs. The Unit collaborates with other units within the Department such as the Human Resources and the EU and International Affairs with the main aim of coordinating and maximising the use of its own resources in developing a training programme for both the elected and the executive arms of local government. Furthermore, the main goal of the unit is to establish a national training strategy.

The Unit organised a Certificate Course for Potential Executive Secretaries between August and November 2011 with the collaboration of CDRT. This course consisted of 48 hours and served as an induction course to approved public officers who are to perform duties as Executive Secretaries. The topics covered a wide range of subjects.

A pilot training prospectus commenced in November with a projected 159 hours of training for Executive Secretaries and local councils staff and 59 hours dedicated towards Mayors, Councillors and Administrative Committee Members. During February 2012, a concluding session under the theme 'Teambuilding for better Local Government Services' shall include all participants and close the training pilot project.

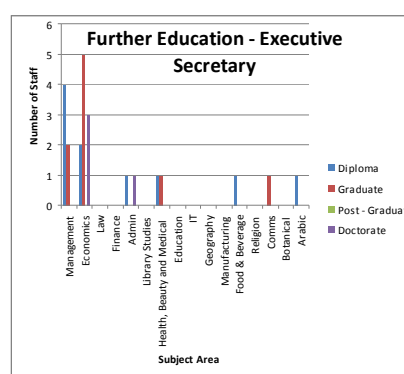
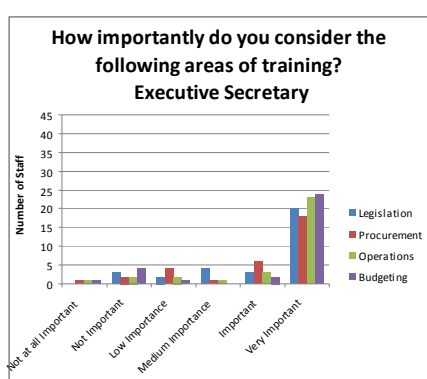
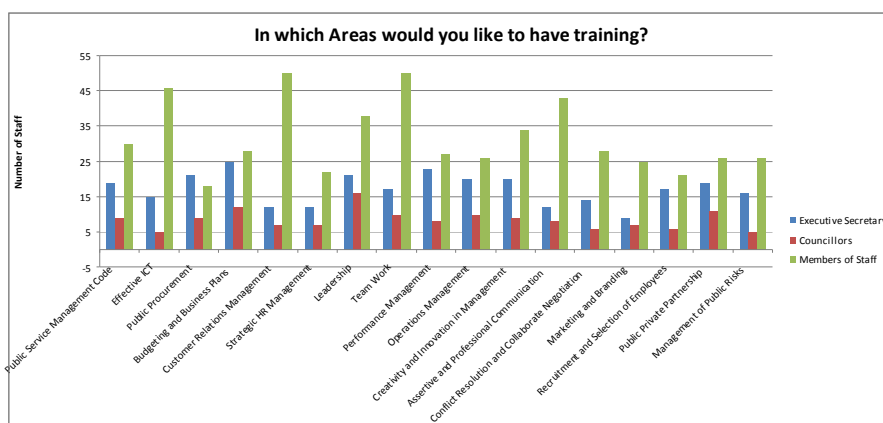
The Department also conducted an in-house training programme in December as part of the employee's development in a team building exercise towards furthering the delivery of better public services to local

councils and the public in general. Other training sessions were organised for those interested in EU funding to include creativity and innovation in their applications.

Research and Development

June, July and August saw the first R&D in establishing a preliminary training needs analysis in Maltese local government. The research conducted by the Unit established important milestones to develop the national training strategy whilst the first scheduled training for local government in Malta (conducted between November 2011 and February 2012). It has also managed to acquire foreign partners to identify training needs in Malta and the Unit started collaborating with the Centre of Expertise for Democratic Reform within the Council of Europe.

Locally the main partners are the Centre for Development, Training and Research within OPM. During October a questionnaire was distributed to all local government employees and elected councillors and administrative committee members to establish their point of view regarding training needs as a part of a consultation process to establish a national training strategy. Response was encouraging and more than 150 participated. Furthermore, two experts from the Council of Europe and the Unit conducted a two-day consultation process with Mayors and Executive Secretaries in order to complete the R&D by the Department and prepare the first pilot scheduled training. Some of the results are reproduced hereunder:



Further research was conducted in the formulation of a Detailed Project Proposal under the Norway Grants funding resulting in the first concrete project awarded to the Department for training. The project 'A Partnership for Creative Governance' consists of a comprehensive training needs analysis (TNA) which will kick-start with the setting up of a national Steering Group representative of key stakeholders, the preparation and launch of a National Training Strategy (NTS), a key factor for change in the economic and social situation in local communities, a management programme consisting of the identification of key performance indicators in priority services, the setting of standards based on research, the establishment of

performance management systems in selected local authorities within a national framework, performance reporting mechanisms, training and consultancy support, the development of a Leadership Academy Programme (LAP) for local leaders (both elected and executive) to provide a series of national (and, if resources are available, international) activities for senior elected representatives and officials to develop their leadership capabilities and to take leadership initiatives in their own authorities; a Strategy on innovation and good governance and finally a European Label of excellence, the Label is awarded nationally to local authorities which have achieved a high overall level of governance, as measured against the twelve European principles of Good Democratic Governance. The total funding guaranteed for this project is of €371,461 and it will be implemented between 2012 and 2014.

HUMAN RESOURCES UNIT

The Human Resources Unit is responsible for 1,062 personnel within local government bodies constituted as follows: 44 public officers at the Department for Local Government offices in Malta and Gozo; 74 public officers serving as Executive Secretaries at the Local Councils Association, regional committees and local councils; and 141 public sector employees in various local councils.

The Unit has also the responsibility of the 206 clerical employees in the 68 local councils, 33 public officers serving in the Pool of Potential Executive Secretaries, 444 Mayors and Councillors and 80 Administrative Committee Members. This renders the total human resource dedicated to local government in Malta and Gozo totals to 1,022.

In 2011, 13 Executive Secretaries, nine Acting Executive Secretaries and two Deputy Executive Secretaries were appointed according to the Local Councils Act. The Department had a net increase of six public officers and established an office in Gozo. One of the major projects undertaken by the section was the construction of a HR database as from the inception of local councils in 1993. This has enabled the Department to have an efficient system of data retrieving and communication method. The Department has also received a draft collective agreement for Executive Secretaries by their union, UHM and it is still under reconsideration stage. The Unit has also produced the 'The appointment procedures for Executive Secretaries' and drafted the update of the 'Local Councils Regulations (Human Resources)'.

EU AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS UNIT

The Department embarked on various initiatives during the year related to better its communication with the European Union and the Council of Europe. Whilst the main aim of this important role for the Department remains the enhancement of its international network, the investment made successful bids in the professional training and personal development for local government in Malta. The Department contributed to the Committee for Local and Regional Democracy of the Council of Europe by attending its meetings in Strasbourg and also for the Conference for Ministers Responsible for Local Government in Europe held in Kiev.

The Department is also the National Contact Point of the two EU programmes, namely 'Europe for Citizens' and 'URBACT'. In relation to the latter, the Department attended to the European Conference in Europe debating the URBACT III Programme for the years 2014 – 2020.

Opinions from the EU Commission, the Committee of Regions, the Council of Europe and other institutions have been vetted by the Department and wherever necessary proposed amendments and/or forward comments to facilitate participation of Maltese Local Government wherever possible.

CUSTOMER CARE, ADMINISTRATION AND REGISTRY UNITS

The Customer Care Unit registered 325 new cases apart from the hundreds of e-mails that have been handled with satisfaction to the public.

The Department has invested in its premises to provide a better service to the public, the local councils and its employees. Initiatives were taken to promote further the concepts of paperless office and made better use of its limited space.

One of the projects for the year saw the reorganisation of the Registry Unit with additional shelving so as to enable the requested space to handle the filing system of the Department.

During this period, the Unit also converted unused space in the Department for Local Government's Annexe into a small training centre. This project made it possible for the delivery of all the in-house training.

DEVOLUTION

During 2011, DLG received 22 new devolution applications. During the same period, seven sites have been devolved to local councils and the DLG concluded another five devolutions requests, which will be devolved to local councils in the near future. Hence the DLG devolved 54.55 of the applications during 2011.

The following sites were devolved to local councils in 2011:

LC	Site	Date
Xaghra	Site in Vjal it-8 ta' Settembru	Feb 2011
Mellieħa	Ta' Bragg National Park	April 2011
Hal Luqa	2 sites in Triq Hal Farruġ	May 2011
Birgu	Couvre Porte	May 2011
Hal Kirkop	10 Triq Danny Cremona	June 2011
Birkirkara	Torri Wejter	Sept 2011

The following are the sites concluded by the end of 2011 and which will soon be devolved:

LC	Site	Date
Żejtun	20 Triq San Girgor	Jan 2011
Is-Swatar	Site in Triq is-Sisla	Mar 2011
Xaghra	Site in Triq Sant'Anton Site in Triq Ġnien Imrik	April 2011
Marsaskala	Niche of San Spiridjun	Nov 2011

LOCAL ENFORCEMENT SYSTEM

All local councils form part of the LES across Malta and Gozo. During 2011, Government embarked on the reform of the LES, implementing it gradually until the system was passed on to the five newly formed Regional Committees instead of the previous nine Joint Committees on 1 September 2011.

Following a wide holistic consultation exercise with all stakeholders concerned, this reform will introduce a warning ticket system and an incremental ticket system.

Board of Petitions

The LES will still allow the public to contest contraventions through an already established petitions system. During 2011, the Board of Petitions received a total of 20,265 petitions.

During this same period, the Board of Petitions decided 98.56% of all these received petitions, a total of 19,974. These were decided as follows:

- 13,319 petitions were accepted;
- 642 petitions were partially accepted;

- 5,949 petitions were refused;
- 3 petitions were considered as abstentions; and
- 61 petitions were cancelled.

The rest, which amount to 291 petitions, were undecided.

MONITORING UNIT

During the year, a complete review of the work process of the Monitoring Unit was undertaken. The offices of the Monitoring Unit were refurbished, and the filing system was totally organised. In the last quarter of the 2011, another three public officers were engaged with the unit, each officer being assigned a particular region to monitor. These officers are based in Gozo. Apart from that, the unit continued scrutinising the various functions of the local councils, with particular emphasis on the financial aspect. Regular checks were made on the schedule of payments, reports, minutes and other related documents. In this respect special attention was given to ensure that the councils abide by the Local Councils Act, regulations and procedures as well as the instructions which are given to them from time to time through various memos. The timely submission of reports was also scrutinised.

During the year, members from this Unit were also asked to attend council meetings and to submit reports on their findings.

The Monitoring Unit also investigated and reported on several allegations made against councils. In fact during 2011 the unit monitored around 1,500 cases. This is considered to have been a major improvement on past years.

In those cases where councils were found to have made irregularities, they were asked to take corrective measures. In certain instances, deductions were effected from their financial allocation as punitive measures. During 2011, various local councils were penalised a total amount of €329,836.58 for making payments not according to law or for not adhering to regulations.

CARMEL ABELA

Director (Local Government)

Department of Industrial and Employment Relations

Mission Statement

To protect the interests of workers holding employment contracts while, in a spirit of social partnership, actively promoting a healthy relationship, and to contribute towards stable industrial relations.

Functions

The principal functions of the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations are:

- providing effective machinery for the establishment of standard conditions of employment, in consultation with the social partners, and their eventual promulgation as legal instruments;
- providing the necessary monitoring and enforcement of employment conditions as established by law;
- regulating employment contracts in an equitable manner so as to ensure that rights and obligations pertaining to each party in the contract are observed;
- protecting workers whose employment relationship has been terminated by an employer;
- eliminating discriminatory practices;
- providing support services to the Industrial Tribunal, National Employment Authority, Guarantee Fund Administration Board and Employment Relations Board;
- providing effective mediation and conciliation in order to reduce industrial actions and trade disputes; and
- promoting good relationship between employers' and workers' representatives.

Department Structure

The Director has overall responsibility for the operations carried out by the Department. These activities are carried out by the following Units:

- *Director's Office*, responsible for the:
 - strategic overview of the Department's operations;
 - proper functioning of the three divisions of the Department;
 - registration of trade unions;
 - provision of the machinery for the voluntary settlement of trade disputes in terms of the Act and promoting such settlement;
 - preparation of draft employment legislation.
- *International Affairs and Research Branch*, allowing the Department to fulfil its role as the National Focal Point on issues relating to Industrial and Employment Relations. This Branch is divided into two sections:
 - International Relations Section whose tasks are mainly to: coordinate closely with local associations or organisations which have a role to fulfil in protecting the interests of parties engaged under an employment contract; and to maintain contacts at the technical level with Governments and other international bodies including the EU and ILO;
 - Research Section having responsibility for Library and Archives, Labour Research, Registration of Trade Unions and Employment Agencies. Particular research projects undertaken by this section during 2011 include a study on working time practices within microenterprises.
- *Enforcement Branch*, carrying out the core inspection functions of the Department, divided into the Terminations, Inspectorate and Customer Care Sections.
 - *The Terminations Section* processes queries and investigates complaints of clients, primarily related to employees whose employment has been terminated, whether of their own accord or by the employer. The Terminations Section is also responsible for referral of cases to the Law Courts.

- *The Inspectorate Section* is responsible for monitoring conditions of employment and processing complaints of workers who are still in employment. This involves an ongoing programme of inspections to target particular sectors or to investigate specific complaints. Complaints can be received directly from the person concerned, through correspondence, email or even anonymously.
- *The Customer Care Section* handles all queries received by e-mail, through telephone calls and in person relating to employment conditions. It is the first point of reference for the general public in seeking information on employment relations. If a certain query gives rise to further investigation it is hence referred to either the Inspectorate or Termination Sections.
- *Administrative Branch*, overseeing all operating and/or administrative functions of the Industrial Tribunal, and providing administrative support services to the Department including the administration of the Department's budget, revenue and expenditure, issuance and adjustment of salaries, issuance of honoraria payments to ERB members and Tribunal Chairpersons, administration of PMPs, progressions, allowances, Engine Driver licences, the departmental inventory, supplies' stores etc.

During 2011, this Branch through its Green Focal Point also oversaw environmental issues and promoted eco-friendly measures within the DIER. Similar to previous years, measures such as the use of energy-saving lighting, separation within offices of waste material and recycling of paper were implemented. With regard to Health & Safety, in March this Branch organised information sessions for all DIER concerning fire safety and prevention issues and on the use of fire fighting equipment. Other tasks taken up by this Branch include the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act and Directives arising from the Public Administration Act.

Human Resources

During the period under review, staff from within the Department attended various courses organised by the Centre for Development of Research and Training. Such courses were especially related to Information Technology, office procedures, and customer care.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Employment Relations

Inspectorate Section

The Inspectorate Section carried out 902 inspections throughout the year, covering 24,361 employees out of whom 2,027 were interviewed. During such inspections a total of 244 irregularities were observed.

Officials within this section dealt with an average of 16,205 enquiries regarding conditions of employment – both on the phone and through personal visits at the Office. Another 908 e-mails requesting information were received and answered with immediate effect. In most cases concerning outstanding dues and other irregularities in connection with contract of employment, rectification was effected through the Section Officers' direct efforts. Other cases were followed up through court action. In this regard a total of 41 monetary claims, amounting to €150,232.77 were issued whilst 380 cases each possibly including a number of irregularities were settled and another 26 unresolved cases were referred for legal action consideration.

The Inspectorate Section also processes Posted Workers Notifications; during 2011, a total of 1,298 notifications were received.

Terminations Section

Throughout the year, officials in the Terminations Section served a total of 351 claims against employers in Malta. The total amount for such claims was €50,434.48. During the period under review, 143 cases amounting to €154,112.09 were amicably settled out of Court, as a result of the direct efforts of officers

within this Section. A positive outcome in court action during 2011 resulted in the collection of €204,385.50; however these monies do not necessarily represent claims that originated in 2011.

Another 25 cases, amounting to €32,181.96, were closed on request of the claimant.

A total of 213 requests were made to the police for prosecution whilst court hearings in Malta totalled 32.

Nine appeals against Court judgements were made throughout 2011.

Employment Agencies

The number of licensed employment agencies at the end of December 2011 was 60.

During the period under review, 64 employment agencies renewed their licence. Six new employment agencies were granted a licence to operate as such while five employment agencies had their licence withdrawn. The total amount received as licence fees was €21,314.01.

The section also coordinated closely with local newspapers which publish advertisements for the recruitment of personnel, by providing them with an updated list of licensed employment agencies which are permitted to place advertisements on behalf of their clients for the recruitment of personnel. This initiative hinders unlicensed organisations from placing newspaper adverts for recruitment and assists them seeking formal registration.

Employment Relations Board

The Employment and Industrial Relations Act provides for the setting up of the Employment Relations Board. During 2011, the Board held seven meetings and discussed various issues relating to relating to employment and labour conditions such as maternity leave, transfer of businesses, European Works Councils, Guarantee Fund, Dependent Self-Employed and Banking of Hours.

During these board meetings, various draft legal notices prepared by the Department's officers and forwarded to the Board by the Parliamentary Secretary responsible for industrial and employment relations were also discussed and forwarded to the Prime Minister for his consideration.

Following this consultation process, the following thirteen legal notices were published:

- Transfer of Business (Protection of Employment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 (LN 129 of 2011)
- Protection of Maternity (Employment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 (LN 130 of 2011)
- Parental Leave Entitlement (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 (LN 204 of 2011)
- Posting of Workers in Malta (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 (LN 205 of 2011)
- European Works Council (Further Provisions) Regulations, 2011 (LN 217 of 2011)
- European Works Council (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 (LN 218 of 2011)
- Transfer of Business (Protection of Employment) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2011 (LN 443 of 2011)
- Equal Treatment in Employment (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 (LN 444 of 2011)
- Guarantee Fund (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 (LN 445 of 2011)
- Wage Increase (Employees) National Standard Order, 2011 (LN 501 of 2011)
- National Minimum Wage National Standard Order, 2011 (LN 502 of 2011)
- Protection of Maternity (Employment) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 2011 (LN 503 of 2011)
- Domestic Service Wages Council Wage Regulation Order (Amendment) Order, 2011 (LN 504 of 2011)

Industrial Relations

Conciliations and the Settlement of Trade Disputes

The Department always strives to take an increasingly more proactive approach towards the settlement of trade disputes to the mutual satisfaction of both the enterprise and the union involved. This mediation in

the field of industrial unrest has largely contributed towards an increasingly stable industrial climate, avoiding strikes and other costly forms of litigation. The Department intervened on 78 occasions throughout the year. Agreement was successfully reached in 68 cases, two cases were referred to the Industrial Tribunal while such agreement failed to be reached in only eight cases.

Industrial Tribunal

The Industrial Tribunal is an independent tribunal, set up in terms of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act and has a variable composition established by the law, depending on the nature of the case. This is either of a Chairperson [selected by rotation from a panel of Chairpersons] alone, or a Chairperson and two members, one selected from a panel of persons representing employers' interests, and the other from a panel of persons representing the trade unions. The Industrial Tribunal hears and decides trade disputes referred to it by the Minister responsible for employment and industrial relations, at the request of either one, or both of the parties involved in a dispute. It also hears cases of alleged unfair dismissal, discrimination, harassment and different remuneration for work of equal value. Sessions of the Industrial Tribunal are held at the Courts of Law.

The Department provides administrative support services for the Industrial Tribunal, to ensure its proper functioning.

Throughout the year, 89 new cases of alleged unfair dismissals and 19 other cases of alleged discrimination/harassment/victimisation were received. Eleven cases of trade disputes were also introduced.

The Industrial Tribunal disposed of 88 cases of alleged unfair dismissals, six cases of alleged discrimination/harassment/victimisation and seven cases referring to a trade dispute. The Industrial Tribunal also disposed of another case introduced in terms of other provisions of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act.

There were 541 pending cases on 31 December 2011, of which 473 refer to alleged unfair dismissal.

Industrial Actions

During 2011, three strikes were recorded involving around 1,323 workers and resulting in around 606 man days lost. Another industrial action involved a lock-out which affected 800 employees.

Collective Agreements

Article 5(2) of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act states that where conditions of employment are prescribed in a collective agreement, the employer is obliged to send to the Director of Industrial and Employment Relations an authenticated copy of said agreement, within fifteen days of signing. In accordance with this article, the following agreements between industrial establishments and trade unions were registered at the Department during 2011:

New Collective Agreements	5
Renewals/Extensions	17
Side Agreements/Addendums	2
Amendments	Nil

Registrar of Trade Unions

On 1 January 2011, there were 32 registered trade unions and 19 employers' associations. During this period, no trade unions or employers associations were registered and only one trade union was cancelled. Thus, on 31 December 2011, the Register of Trade Unions was composed of 31 trade unions and 19 employers' associations. Twelve verification exercises for union recognition were also carried out.

Other Activities

Participation in Seminars, Conferences & Working Party Meetings Abroad

- Between 1 and 17 June 2011, the Director led a tripartite delegation at the 100th Session of the ILO Conference in Geneva. The Parliamentary Secretary for Consumers, Fair Competition, Local Councils and Public Dialogue attended and addressed this conference. The Maltese delegation included a number of high-ranking officials from trade unions and employers' associations. As required by the ILO Constitution, the Department paid the travel and accommodation expenses for two workers' representatives and two employers' representatives to attend the conference. The issues considered at this Conference included discussions on decent work for domestic workers, labour inspection systems and the strategic objective of social protection (social security). During the Conference, a Convention and a Recommendation on decent work for domestic workers were adopted.
- Prior to the ILO Conference cited above, an official of the Department attended an EU Member States expert meeting in Brussels dedicated to prepare for the International Labour Conference to discuss EU member states common positions on issues being discussed at the Conference etc.
- The DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Union Commission organised two meetings for Directors General responsible for Industrial Relations. These two meetings were held in Warsaw and Copenhagen and were attended by DIER officials. During these meetings participants shared information on recent developments regarding industrial relations in Member States. Discussions were also held on the Posting of Workers and Working Time Directives, Temporary Agency Workers, Single Open Ended Contracts and Transnational Collective Agreements.
- The Director and Assistant Director attended a European Labour Forum on the role of labour administration in overcoming the economic crises. This forum was organised by the International Training Centre of the ILO. They also attended the 4th Annual Legal Seminar organised by the European Network of Legal Experts. The theme of this seminar was 'Protection against Dismissal in Europe – Basic Features and Current Trends'. They also attended the Industrial Relations in Europe Conference which the European Commission organises every two years. This Conference provided an overview of industrial relations developments in Europe in the last two years.
- The Director also attended a Conference on Inequalities in the World of Work: The Effects of the Crisis. This Conference, which was organised by the ILO in cooperation with the European Commission, dealt with work inequalities in a multi-dimensional fashion and looked at the effects of the crisis in different and complementary areas such as employment, wages and incomes, working conditions and social dialogue.
- Two meetings of the Expert Group on Transnational Company Agreements. During these meetings, the latest developments on the implementation of transnational company agreements were discussed together with the legal effects of transnational company agreements. During the sixth and final meeting of this Expert Group, the draft report on the workings of the Expert group and its conclusions were discussed.
- Two meetings of the Working Group on Information and Consultation of Workers. The Commission started to review three EU Directives on information and consultation of employees through 'fitness checks' in order to keep current regulation 'fit for the purpose'. The goal is to identify excessive burdens, overlaps, gaps, inconsistencies and/or obsolete measures which may have appeared over time. The purpose of the fitness check is not deregulation but rather better regulation and making EU legislation more responsive to current and future challenges. The role of the Working Group is to bring out the different national experiences as regards the implementation of these directives, present relevant research and findings in this area and be actively involved in the 'fitness check' exercise.
- Meeting of the Expert Group on the transposition of Directive 2008/104/EC on Temporary Agency Work. During this final meeting, the state of transposition of this Directive in Member States was discussed. Information on rulings of the European Court of Justice on the subject was also disseminated.
- Two meetings of the Committee of Experts on Posting of Workers. The meetings mainly dealt with the presentation of several recent studies carried out in the field of posting of workers and the final results of the studies launched by the Commission in 2010 on the comparative legal aspects and economic and social effects associated with posting of workers. The preliminary results of the Impact Assessment study and the Complementary Legal Study were also discussed.
- Meeting of the Technical Committee on Free Movement of Workers. The objective of this Committee is to assist the European Commission to prepare, promote and follow up technical work and measures for

giving effect to Regulation 1612/68, which deals with matters concerning freedom of movement for workers within the Union. During the meeting, the results of a questionnaire sent to Member States on the measures implemented regarding frontier workers were discussed. The law concerning free movement of workers and social security was also assessed.

- Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Free Movement of Workers. The objective of this Committee is to assist the European Commission in the examination of any questions arising from the application of the Treaty and measures taken in pursuance thereof, in matters concerning freedom of movement for workers within the Union. During the meeting, the possibility of an assessment to determine whether more initiatives are to be undertaken to enhance the right of free movement, possibly through better enforcement of existing regulations was discussed.

Also during 2011, DIER representatives attended three meetings of the High Level Group of National Representatives on Corporate Social Responsibility. On 25 October, the European Commission published a new communication *A Renewed CSR Strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility*. Two meetings, one in January and the other in May, dealt amongst other issues with the communication, whilst another meeting in November was principally characterised with reactions to the new communication.

Guarantee Fund Administration Board

The Employment and Industrial Relations Act (Cap. 452) and the Guarantee Fund Regulations (LN 432 of 2002 as amended by LN 444 of 2004 and 413 of 2005) provides for the setting up of the Guarantee Fund Administration Board. This Board is composed of the Director of Industrial and Employment Relations who acts as Chairperson, four representatives of employees and four representatives of employers who are appointed on the Employment Relations Board, a member nominated by the Minister of Finance, the Chairperson of the Employment and Training Corporation and a person appointed by the Minister who shall be a member of the legal profession. The Guarantee Fund is endowed with a fund to be utilised, at the Administration Board's discretion, to guarantee payment of valid claims for employees' outstanding wages when the Administration Board is satisfied that the employer has become insolvent.

During 2011, two sittings of the Administration Board were held in which 52 claims were processed and the sum of €44,677.96 were paid out of the Fund. In accordance to Regulation 6(7) of the Guarantee Fund Regulations, an audit exercise by a qualified auditor was undertaken to review the Board's financial statements for 2010. To date, the balance of this fund stands at €477,882.80.

Informational Leaflets

In December 2011, the DIER undertook from its budgetary savings to publish eight different sets of informational leaflets on different aspects of employment, namely Hours of Work, Leave, Maternity Leave, Fixed-Term Contracts, Telework, Part-Time Employment, Young Persons in Employment and Termination of Employment.

Self-Employed (Loan) Scheme

The process of recouping funds from persons who had applied for, and benefited from, the Self-Employed Loan Scheme was continued. For the year under review, €4,208.93 were recovered. In December 2011, judicial letters as per Article 466 of the Code of Organisation and Civil Procedure were sent to all defaulters who fell back on their payment of instalments of said loan scheme.

DR NOEL VELLA

Director (Industrial and Employment Relations)

Tourism Directorate

The Tourism Directorate within the Office of the Prime Minister has a very specific role, and this is to provide support and assistance to enhance the coordination and communication between the Malta Tourism Authority, the Parliamentary Secretariat for Tourism, Culture and the Environment and the Office of the Prime Minister as well as to drive the strategy and policy for tourism. This role was implemented through a number of initiatives that have been undertaken over the past months, including:

- The drafting of local tourism plans, particularly the consideration of Mellieħa as the pilot area for this process. This draft report will shortly be prepared for public consultation before the implementation process.
- The monitoring and review of the National Tourism Policy and the recommendation for procedures that will assist in its effective implementation. This monitoring exercise included consultation and meetings with senior members of the Malta Tourism Authority. During 2011, this directorate together with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Tourism, the Environment and Culture carried out a complete review and update of the National Tourism Policy and, during the first quarter of 2012, will be launching the document for public consultation and final publication as the National Tourism Policy 2012 – 2017.
- The proposal of innovative and new products and services that will enhance the tourist experience in Malta and Gozo. These proposals were discussed with local councils and other stakeholders related to the tourism industry so that the most feasible method of progression could be established.
- The coordination and championing of feasible proposals and their application into the present tourism itinerary and programme. During 2011, a number of industry stakeholders, academics and local councils were brought together to discuss the issues relevant to the new itineraries. In the last quarter of 2011, four local councils: Tarxien, Bormla, Santa Venera and Żebbuġ (Gozo), agreed to work together to pilot this initiative and develop a common itinerary with the assistance and support of a tour organiser.
- Working with the Malta Tourism Authority in preparing a Product Development Study and Report that should identify the islands' essential resources, attractions and alternative unique selling propositions. Primary in undertaking this work with Malta Tourism Authority has been the support and assistance in ensuring effective and efficient air links and accessibility to the islands both in terms of the core source markets as well as new and important markets.
- Preparing the basis for guidelines and a framework for tourism zones in Malta and Gozo. These guidelines should assist in the management and measurement throughout both islands.
- Active participation on the Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) within the EU Commission, particularly through the role of Deputy Rapporteur to the Working Group that is drafting the EU Charter on Responsible and Sustainable Tourism. This document will be launched after a period of public consultation in the second quarter of 2012
- By managing the loan of props to NGOs, local councils and other organisations to assist in the coordination of events organised by these entities, the Secretariat or the Malta Tourism Authority ensuring that these are in line with tourism policy;
- Attendance at conferences and meetings organised during international tourism events and for Pan European Networks to establish a broader coordination in developing strategies and policies related to tourism.

- Maintaining an efficient and effective communications process with the Malta Tourism Authority to ensure better implementation of the National Tourism Policy and to create an effective flow of feedback that could improve strategy and policy development.
- Developing and maintaining an effective tool for communicating strategies and policies both to internal and external stakeholders in the tourism industry.
- Direct participation in the ESCO project that was launched, through the ESCO Secretariat within the DG Education, during the last quarter of 2011. As Chairperson of the Hospitality Reference Group the project will include five critical stages to develop a relevant, reliable and interactive database of skills matched to competencies and qualifications within the hospitality sector of the tourism industry across Europe. The development of this database should improve the aspect of job satisfaction and career advancement within this important employment sector and create a better sense of vocation and professionalism within this service.
- The development of a database at the National Archives in Rabat of tourism documents spanning almost fifty years from 1958 to 1999. With the assistance and support of the Malta Tourism Authority, the Institute of Tourism, Travel and Culture (ITTC) (University of Malta) and the National Archives together with students from the same ITTC, the files that were moved from the depository in Valletta were listed on an electronic database and stored at the National Archives in Rabat. During December 2011, an exhibition was launched with the theme: *Fifty Years of Tourism Development*. The purpose of this project and exhibition is to enhance the aspect of research and development as well as to understand the tourism activity to the islands which will assist in the development of more effective and efficient strategies and policies for this important socio-cultural activity.
- Supporting and working with various associations, non government organisations and educational institutions to assist in the coordination and management of such projects as *Obimed* (Italia – Malta Project) and the Southern Villages Project.
- The directorate has also coordinated and managed the preliminary work that is needed in upgrading and restoring the historical Fort St Angelo as one of the primary attractions and sites for visitors to the islands but also as an important location with relevance to the European and Mediterranean heritage and culture.
- Representation on the *Ġieħ L-Artiġġjanat* committee together with the Commerce Department and various other entities and government departments and actively taking part in promoting the aspect of local craft promotion and support. During 2011 the Tourism Directorate was instrumental in hosting the exhibition of crafts by participants for the ‘*Ġieħ L-Artiġġjanat* Award 2011-2012’ in September 2011 at the Auberge d’Italia in Valletta.

JULIAN ZARB
Director (Tourism)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Director General – Economic and European Affairs

In 2011, the Directorate General continued to implement the Ministry's strategic objectives, with a special focus on European matters and bilateral relations with European countries. The tumultuous events of 2011, particularly the so-called 'Arab Spring' and the Eurozone crisis, called for special application and commitment particularly in the EU fora, where the Directorate General was active in putting forward Malta's positions and interests on the EU Agenda. The Director General attended the pre-General Affairs and Foreign Affairs briefing sessions (GAC/FAC) held prior to the Brussels meeting. The Director General also accompanied the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs to the monthly Brussels meetings, as well as other meetings, when required.

Development and humanitarian assistance remained important to the work of the Directorate General in line with Malta's development policy. Working in collaboration with several local NGOs, the Directorate General coordinated the financing of a number of projects aimed at ameliorating the everyday life of people living in underdeveloped areas across various countries.

The Directorate General was also responsible for monitoring the implementation of United Nations Security Council mandated sanctions, together with other entities meeting under the Sanctions Monitoring Board. In this regard, the crisis in Libya and the situation in Iran called for added focus in a constantly evolving scenario.

Other work of the Directorate General focused on promoting Malta's cultural diplomacy, as well as its economic and trade interests in liaison with relevant government entities in Malta as well as the missions abroad.

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS DIRECTORATE

The Directorate General was mainly focused on maximising and defending the national interest, while at the same time providing support to Maltese businesses that were either negatively affected by the adverse situation prevalent at the time or wanted to expand their portfolio further afield. In this regard, the Division continued in its work towards aiding the commercial sector through decisions taken with other countries on the political and administrative level.

Several important visits were conducted over the year with a view to achieving the Ministry's political strategic objectives. It is worth mentioning, for example, the official visit paid to Poland in April 2011, for talks with Prime Minister Donald Tusk and which focused on the priorities of the Polish Presidency of the European Council. During this visit, Malta and Poland signed three important agreements, further strengthening their bilateral legal framework. Another official visit was paid to London by the Prime Minister and the DPM/MFA in May 2011, for official talks with British PM David Cameron and Foreign Secretary William Hague. Exchanges also took place at the Presidential level such as the state visit to Bulgaria in May 2011. A number of bilateral agreements were concluded during these visits. The Directorate General was active on all these and other exchanges in order to encourage the best possible relations with these and other countries.

In a bid to further strengthen Malta's relations with neighbouring countries, particularly the Mediterranean members of the European Union, the DPM/MFA conducted official visits to Rome, Athens, Nicosia,

Madrid and Lisbon, during which a number of bilateral agreements were concluded while important talks were held, particularly on the issues of irregular migration and the situation in North Africa.

The Directorate General started working on the prospective state visit to Rome of the President of Malta in the first half of 2012. Malta and Italy continue to enjoy excellent relations in various areas such as the commercial and tourism sectors, which this year saw the Italian tourism market gaining the second rank of importance in Malta. On the political level, 2011 saw the visit to Italy of the President of Malta who participated in the 150th anniversary of Italian Unification. The two countries continue to hold discussions on matters of mutual interest, such as the continental shelf, the phenomenon of irregular migration and the issue of interferences and irregular use of frequencies assigned to Malta. The Directorate General was active on all these issues promoting Government's position and safeguarding the national interest.

Other work focused on strengthening relations with the larger EU countries. This saw official visits to Berlin, Paris and London. Several prominent high level visits were also received in Malta, such as that by the Foreign Ministers of Germany, Austria and Sweden.

Germany remains a crucial partner for Malta and the Division has constantly been in the background providing support to the frequent initiatives undertaken by the Embassy in Berlin, Malta Enterprise and Finance Malta, to organise activities promoting investment and commerce. The Franco-Maltese relationship was further strengthened through cooperation on the Mediterranean policy especially on the promotion of democracy and human rights in the North African countries. There were also positive developments in other sectors such as health, higher education, and research and innovation.

Relations between Malta and the Nordic countries continue to grow. This year saw the setting up of the Forum on Scandinavian Businesses in Malta. This Forum was instrumental in launching a number of initiatives with Sweden, including hosting delegations of Swedish businessmen in order to showcase Malta's investment opportunities. A commercial agreement was signed between Malta Enterprise and FINPRO (Head of Finland Trade Centre in Milan).

The Directorate General also worked on strengthening ties with countries of the European Economic Area (EEA). Two memoranda of understanding were signed in September between Malta and Norway, and Malta and Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein on the implementation of the financial mechanism for the period 2009-2014.

The relationship with Switzerland was given an impetus with the conclusion of a new Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation. Switzerland is currently providing Malta with a contribution of €1.8 million for a five-year period. These funds are being used to support the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies and the purchase of a PET scanner for Mater Dei Hospital.

The Directorate General has also been active on relations with those countries that fall under the European Perspective such as the Western Balkans, Iceland and Turkey. Malta believes that it is in the interest of the Union as much as it is in the interest of the Western Balkan region to speed up as much as possible the integration of this region into a dynamic Union which would help immensely to consolidate the security and stability of the region. In this respect, consistent support was proffered to their accession perspective particularly drawing on Malta's own experience from the EU accession process. Bringing national legislation and working methods in line with EU standards is the foremost catalyst for change, prosperity and stability. The accession treaty with Croatia was signed on 9 December 2011. It is hoped that Croatia will join the Union, as planned, on 1 July 2013.

The Directorate General continued to support Montenegro's EU perspective in preparation for its prospective membership of the EU. In February, a delegation from Montenegro visited Malta for technical talks on the EU process. The relationship with Montenegro will be further strengthened in the coming months with the state visit to Malta of the President of that country.

Malta has been at the forefront in emphasising Serbia's accession to the European Union as crucial for the stability of the entire region. The arrests of General Ratko Mladic and of Goran Hadzic, which brought Belgrade closer to Europe and the European Union, attest to the strong political will and maturity shown by the Government of Serbia. It is hoped that in February 2012, the Council will decide in favour of granting Serbia candidate status. In operational terms, Malta's support took the shape of a heightened presence on the ground such as by participation in EU crisis missions under the provisions of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The Directorate General was also proactive by seeking the conclusion of a series of bilateral agreements between Malta and western Balkan states in important sectors, such as in avoidance of double taxation and in the readmission of persons residing without authorisation.

The Directorate General also worked on promoting ties with Kosovo, through the establishment of diplomatic relations in September. This will facilitate exchanges between the two countries on both the political and economic level.

As regards relations with Turkey, while upholding Malta's support to Ankara's EU perspective, the DPM/MFA visited Istanbul for talks with his counterpart, Ahmet Davutoglu during which an agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income was signed. The Division also commenced preparations for the proposed official visit to Malta by the Foreign Minister of Turkey in 2012.

The Directorate General was also involved in a number of visits outside Malta, as well as in participation in the EU Council Working group on the Western Balkans (COWEB).

Lastly, the Directorate General coordinated matters regarding the submission of the relative country briefs, in connection with each incoming and outgoing visits, and also meetings. In its efforts to strengthen the bilateral legal framework, during the period under consideration, the Division also continued to coordinate matters with other relevant ministries with regard to ongoing negotiations on a number of new agreements, protocols and memoranda of understanding covering wide-ranging sectors relating to avoidance of double taxation, protection and promotion of investments, visa facilitation, reciprocal representation in the granting of visas, storage of petroleum and oil stocks, and cooperation in cultural matters, combating organised crime, cooperation between Ministries of Foreign Affairs, cooperation on health matters, re-admission of persons residing without authorisation, and cooperation in tourism, with a view to conclude, sign and/or ratify or bring into force such instruments.

GENERAL AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION DIRECTORATE

THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

The Presidency

The Hungarian Presidency | January – 30 June 2011

Hungary assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union on 1 January 2011, which dealt with several unexpected events with substantial regional and global effect. The debate on the package of economic management was of paramount importance, given the financial and economic developments in Greece, Ireland and to a certain extent Portugal. Even more important was the massive Japanese earthquake and Tsunami, with its attendant risk of nuclear meltdown and the consequent effect of this on other countries including EU Member States. At virtually the same time, the Southern Neighbourhood shook in a political earthquake with the Arab Spring in North Africa, starting with Tunisia, followed by Egypt, Libya and others. Migration was also another issue faced by the Hungarian Presidency particularly following the political developments in North Africa and the endless influx of illegal immigrants arriving in EU territory from Libya and Tunisia.

Regional cooperation was one of the main objectives of the Hungarian Presidency. In fact, the adoption of the Danube Region Strategy brought a new and ambitious dimension in the region's cooperation, as it symbolises that in the age of globalisation the reliance of states on each other is increasing.

The Presidency also worked to bring the *Roma* issue to the forefront of the EU's attention. During its Presidency, Hungary worked to develop an EU strategy to promote the integration of *Roma* people. Together with its Spanish and Belgian partners of the Presidency Trio, Hungary made a commitment under the Cordoba Declaration, to promote the social and economic inclusion of *Roma*, fight against their social exclusion and improve their access to fundamental rights. The Hungarian Presidency also paid particular attention to the enlargement process of the Union, in particular countries hailing from the Western Balkan region.

Hungary took over the EU's Presidency in a rather difficult time, when the EU had to find an efficient and comprehensive solution to the sovereign debt crisis that had hit several Member States. But the Presidency set up an ambitious work programme for European economic recovery and its agenda was largely determined by handling the consequences of the economic crisis and launching new forms of cooperation. The aim was to ensure that the EU would be better equipped to prevent further economic crises in the future.

The Polish Presidency | July – 31 December 2011

Poland's Presidency of the European Council came at a time when the EU was being faced with great challenges and opportunities including the future of its energy plans in the light of climate change, the planning of the EU's long-term budget, defending the free movement of people within the bloc and the evolution of Europe's Neighbourhood Policy against the background of the Arab revolutions and developments in Eastern Europe. The Polish Presidency priorities were summarised under three headings: 'European Integration as a Source of Growth', 'A Secure Europe' and 'Europe benefiting from its openness'.

Of great importance during the Polish Presidency was the adoption of the so-called 'six-pack', a legislative package on strengthening the economic governance of the Union. During the Polish Presidency, the EU took key decisions to prepare the re-launch of economic growth with the development and strengthening of the single market. The Polish Presidency sought to reinforce the external dimension of Europe's energy policy, which was adopted by the European Council in December 2011. On 10 October 2011, a Ministerial Energy Conference on a 'Competitive and integrated market as a guarantee of energy security' was organised in Krakow. During the conference, key issues regarding the EU's energy policy, such as an increase of competition and security on the common energy market through development of regional cooperation and infrastructure projects, in particular the North-South Energy Axis concept, were discussed. Furthermore, a new framework for monitoring of energy markets was adopted in Luxembourg on 10 October 2011.

Good progress was also made on European integration of the Western Balkans with the signature of Croatia's Accession Treaty taking place on 9 December 2011. The Presidency also hosted the Eastern Partnership Summit, which confirmed the EU's objective to increase political association and further economic integration between the EU and its partner countries within an enhanced neighbourhood policy facing the East.

Protocol on Transitional Provisions

In October 2010, the European Parliament unanimously agreed to ratify the Protocol Amending Article 2 of Protocol No 36 on Transitional Provisions Annexed to the Treaty on the European Union, to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and to the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Community, as adopted at an Intergovernmental Conference on 23 June 2010. The Member States national ratification procedures started on September 2010.

In November 2010, Malta deposited the Instrument of Ratification with the Government of the Republic of Italy, as prescribed under Article 3 of Protocol 36, thus becoming the first EU Member State to complete the ratification process. The Protocol entered into force on 1 December 2011 thus allowing Malta to have its sixth seat in the European Parliament.

EU Enlargement

The Directorate General was involved in the current process of enlargement of the Union and, when required, delivered Malta's positions through regular participation in the Council Working Party on Enlargement and Countries negotiating Accession. The Directorate General continued to monitor closely the accession negotiations of Croatia and Iceland, providing continuous input to the Permanent Representation in Brussels on various chapter negotiations. Accession negotiations with Croatia were formally completed on 30 June 2011, and the Accession Treaty was signed on 9 December 2011. The Directorate General continued to monitor closely the developments in the other candidate countries mainly the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Furthermore, positions were taken with regard to the opening of accession negotiations with Montenegro as well as with regard to the accession candidate status of Serbia.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE (COE)

On 23 March 2011, Mr Thomas Hammerberg, the Commissioner for Human Rights within the Council of Europe visited Malta. Such visits take place on a regular basis to assess how a country is faring in relation to established criteria as established by the Council of Europe. During his visit, Mr Hammerberg met the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, as well as a number of non-governmental organisations, and also visited open centres in Ħal-Far and the Kordin Correctional Facilities.

In the report drawn up after this visit, efforts made by Malta with regard to the open centres in Hal Far were noted and Malta's constraints mentioned. The report also notes the increase in immigration flows after the Libya crisis. In its reply to the report, the Maltese Government echoed its commitment to uphold in full Malta's obligations to enforce human rights across its jurisdiction, including within correctional facilities and institutions. The Maltese Government has taken on board recommendations made by the Commission, which in some instances have already been implemented.

ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

Malta continued to participate in the work of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and participated also in coordination meetings within the EU aimed at presenting common EU positions at the OSCE. In June 2011 Ambassador Lamberto Zannier of Italy was unanimously elected as Secretary General of the OSCE for the following three years.

Following upon the 1st and 2nd December 2010 *Astana Summit*, which was attended by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and which discussed themes relating to security and Asian and Euro-Atlantic cooperation, Malta continued, during the year under review, to participate with particular interest in meetings of the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia). The Mediterranean Conference was this year held in Budva, Montenegro and focussed mainly on the democratic transformation of the region.

The 18th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council was held in Vilnius on 6 and 7 December 2011, providing the foreign ministers of the 56 OSCE participating states with an opportunity to review and assess the Organisation's activities during the past year and offer national viewpoints on security matters.

SANCTIONS

General

The sanction regimes of the United Nations Security Council and the restrictive measures of the European Union are constantly followed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From a policy perspective, the Ministry is closely involved with regard to Restrictive Measures agreed upon by the European Union. Through the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations in New York, the Ministry also follows all developments with regard to the sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council. It is important to point out that on certain occasions the EU complements and at times goes beyond sanctions imposed by the United Nations to ensure a more efficient and effective implementation of sanctions.

The national authority of Malta in this sector is the Sanctions Monitoring Board. This incorporates a number of ministries and entities, including those in the judicial, finance, customs, and transportation sectors. The Board's work is coordinated and customarily chaired by the Director General – European and Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the crucially important financial sector, day-to-day implementation of sanctions is implemented by the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, the Malta Financial Services Authority and the Central Bank of Malta.

The sanctions resulting from resolutions of the UN Security Council are implemented in the EU through decisions and regulations of the European Union, in which Malta plays an active role. Further to the direct implementation of EU regulations and decisions, the implementation of such measures is also regulated by national legal notices which specify the local penalties and, where there is need, the local arrangements for the issuing of licences, e.g., in the case of Libya.

The relevant UN Security Council resolutions, EU decisions and regulations and local legal notices are circulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to all ministries and entities within the Sanctions Monitoring Board to be implemented as required in each sector. Besides the freezing of assets and the control on import and export of specific products to sanctions-hit countries, there are also travel bans, which are processed and implemented by the Malta Police and the Ministry's Central Visa Unit.

All activities carried out by the Sanctions Monitoring Board are subject to scrutiny by the United Nations Security Council. In March and June 2011, visiting UN Panels of Experts on Iran and Libya sanctions both expressed satisfaction with their findings and discussions held with the Board.

Sanctions on Iran

Over the year in question Malta actively participated in the drafting of EU decisions and regulations transposing and extending UN sanctions on Iran. Malta took all necessary measures to implement UN and EU sanctions regimes on Iran at a local level through a number of legal notices.¹

Sanctions on Libya

Through Resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011), the UN SC adopted sanctions to tackle the Libya crisis, which the EU and Malta transposed at local level. In conformity with the UN Security Council's resolution No 2009 (2011), adopted on 16 September 2011, Malta also took all necessary measures so that the assets of several Libyan entities were unfrozen.

¹ LN 14/2007, LN 116/2007, LN 124/2008 and LN 327/2010

Following requests by the new Libyan authorities to unfreeze assets held in Malta, MFA consulted with the relevant UN Security Council Committee to accede to these requests in accordance with the provisions of UNSC Resolution 2009 (2011). Following a similar request made by the Libyan authorities, arrangements were also made for the release of the *Air Afriqiyah* aircraft held in Malta under UN sanctions.

Asset Tracing Unit

As required by UN and EU sanctions, the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment used an Asset Tracing Unit to collect information from various ministries and other entities for sanctions-enforcement purposes with regular reports being submitted to the Chairman of the Board. MFEI also administered a licensing system to allow companies having legitimate business in Libya to continue functioning on condition that no resources were made available to any listed individuals and entities.

Sanctions on Al-Qaida, Taliban and Associated Individuals and Entities

The sanctions regime on Al-Qaida, Taliban and Associated Individuals and Entities was first established by resolution 1267 (1999) on 15 October 1999. On 17 June 2011, the UN Security Council split the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions regime into two separate lists. This major change in these sanctions and all other amendments were circulated by MFA to Sanctions Monitoring Board members.

Restrictive measures imposed on Egypt, Tunisia, and Syria

During the year under review, MFA implemented restrictive measures imposed by the EU on Syria, Egypt and Tunisia. Malta also acted upon several bilateral requests from the new authorities of Egypt and Tunisia to freeze any assets of their former rulers.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

13th Italo-Maltese Executive Programme for Cultural Cooperation 2011-2013

On 25 February 2011, Malta and Italy signed the XIII Executive Programme on Cultural Cooperation for the period 2011-2013.

Inter-Ministerial Commission for the European Capital for Culture 2018

The Directorate General continued to contribute through regular participation in the work carried out by the Inter-Ministerial Commission (IMC), with meetings taking place every two weeks. On 17 October 2011, the Valletta 2018 bid book was launched and submitted by the Mayor of Valletta to the European Commission for its preliminary evaluation. During the period under review, the Valletta 2018 Foundation was also established to take over the implementation of the project up to 2018 and beyond.

Miscellaneous

The Directorate General continued to receive cultural and artistic invitations from several entities abroad and channelled these invitations to the pertinent Maltese authorities to allow Maltese artists to participate in them as appropriate.

On 22 July, the Prime Minister launched a National Cultural Policy with the aim of preserving, promoting and developing the cultural and creative sector with a focus on the economic aspect. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had contributed in the preliminary and consultative stages of the draft document as chapter 6 of the same deals with International Cultural Cooperation. Amongst the issues raised in the document is the establishment of a Malta Culture Institute to promote Maltese culture and creative identity abroad.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TRADE

During 2011, the Directorate General, in coordination with its diplomatic and consular representations abroad and constituted bodies in Malta, contributed to the wider effort to increase Malta's external trade, promote Maltese commercial interests abroad and to attract overseas investment to Malta.

The Directorate General responded on a regular basis to trade enquiries on prospective business opportunities received from Malta's diplomatic representations abroad. The Directorate-General also monitored international economic relations and compiled trade and other economic statistics/reports and other economic indicators in connection with incoming and outgoing business delegations.

TRADE AND COMMERCIAL DELEGATIONS

In May 2011, the Embassy of Malta in Tunisia organised a delegation to Malta consisting of Tunisian businessmen in the ICT sector.

In September 2011, a commercial delegation from Slovakia visited Malta on the margins of a state visit to Malta by the Slovak President. Discussions centred on bilateral commerce and Malta's strategy of implementation for Vision 2015, an initiative which identifies the creative industry, advanced manufacture, transport and logistics and science and education services as target sectors for further development.

In November, a 22-strong delegation visited London and Dublin in a mission organised by Malta's High Commission in London and Malta Enterprise with a further Maltese commercial delegation from sectors like ICT, finance, beverages and tourism visiting Holland and Belgium between March and April 2011. In December, a further 24-strong business delegation visited Tunisia to encourage trade and investment between Malta and Tunisia. These visits included general presentations on business and investment opportunities in Malta and one-to-one meetings to develop partnership opportunities.

MISCELLANEOUS

On 14-15 September 2011, DPM/MFA visited Germany with one of the aims being to further promote commercial relations and tourism between the two countries and to seek further German investment in Malta in sectors like renewable energy. In the year under review, DPM/MFA also inaugurated the Scandinavian Commercial Forum within Malta's Chamber of Commerce, the said Forum serving to consolidate existing contacts and to help Scandinavian and Maltese businessmen to discover new investment and commercial opportunities.

As part of a wider effort by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MFEI and Malta Enterprise to promote Malta overseas in February 2011, a group of new Regional Leaders from Malta Enterprise attended various presentations aimed at increasing their effectiveness. In May, MFA and Malta Enterprise also signed an agreement facilitating the work of regional commercial and investment representatives from Malta Enterprise in Malta's embassies and consulates abroad.

Throughout the year, the Directorate General was also actively involved in the tripartite Internationalisation Committee meetings grouping together the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry and Malta Enterprise. The Committee's primary aim is to improve coordination and synergy among the local key players in the field of trade and investment promotion overseas.

DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

In line with Malta's development policy, the Directorate coordinated the process leading to the part financing of 18 projects by local voluntary organisations in Africa, Asia, South and Central America, MFA co-financing projects as follows:

- The installation of a sand filter system in Ethiopia, which will be located next to a clinic which provides basic care and treatment for the poor and will serve as a great incentive for a campaign about drinking water.
- The expansion of a water supply system, to provide safe water and promote safe hygiene and sanitation practices in the identified villages in Chena and Enamour Words in Ethiopia.
- The purchasing of equipment for an HIV/AIDS section at the Hop exchange Medical Centre in Ghana.
- The construction of a new maternity wing in Tanzania to provide better facilities for expectant mothers, better care for mothers at risk and further decrease the infant morbidity and mortality rate.
- The construction of classrooms and sanitation facilities for school children in Peru.
- The setting up of rain water harvesting systems and the refurbishment of several classrooms in Uganda.
- The construction of a study centre for street children and for those who attend the school in Ethiopia. This includes a lodging quarter which may be used by both students and sick children on their way to Addis Ababa or Sudan for specialised care.
- The construction of a Youth Formation Centre with dormitories, a conference hall, study rooms and other facilities in the Philippines.
- The training of uneducated and untrained women in local development processes, which they will initiate and own in South Sudan. Small enterprises and a development association are being created to provide training that will lead to more people benefiting from the project.
- The construction of 30 houses to shelter and accommodate homeless families in Arequipa, Peru.
- The construction of a Home for homeless lepers in Ethiopia. The project is providing 70 families with shelter and accommodation and will also include basic education, healthcare and a meal per day for 234 children.
- The provision of health services to persons living with HIV/AIDS, orphans and vulnerable children in Ethiopia; to intensify and enhance the community-based care and support services as well as protective practices for vulnerable children and their families. This project is of direct benefit to 50 households of persons living with HIV / AIDS and 100 households of HIV/AIDS.
- Contribution to the eradication of severe poverty in Kenya with the main objective of providing support to a slum educational institution and a community centre in Nairobi. The proposed project is divided in two parts: Phase 2 of a Residence building, and the construction of a computer class, and two blocks of toilets in Peru.
- The building of a sports complex in Juticalpa, Olanchó, Honduras, which is to be used by youths in their free time with the aim of keeping them away from drugs.
- Continuation of the work being done on the Fish Farm in Izabal, Guatemala. This will involve the organisation of seminars and hands on training sessions to the local fishermen and local authorities as to how to increase food production from the many water bodies that abound in the Izabal diocese.
- The construction of a residence in the Philippines in which the Aetas community can reside in from Monday to Friday in order to be able to pursue their university studies. This residence will have enough space to host 12 persons.
- The purchase of furnishings for a new block in Joseph De Piro Middle School for girls in Asif Town 2, Juhannabad, Lahore, Pakistan. The construction of the block was also co-funded by the Ministry's 2010 ODA projects call through CAM Youths.

The Ministry sponsored an educational visit for Palestinian students from Nablus University. In coordination with the Parliamentary Secretary for Consumers, Fair Competition, Local Councils and Public Dialogue, a familiarisation visit of Palestinian Mayors to Malta was organised by MFA to acquaint the Mayors with the system of local government and the competencies of local councils. Malta also contributed €30,000 to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian refugees and sponsored two Maltese NGO officials to attend the Development Education Summer School (DESS) which took place in Finland.

Humanitarian Aid is another integral part of Malta's Development Policy. Despite budgetary limitations Malta contributed €15,000 to assist in the aftermath of the New Zealand earthquake, while the sum of €23,000 was allocated to Japan after its earthquake and tsunami. In response to the humanitarian crisis in

the Horn of Africa, Malta allocated funds amounting to €25,000 to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

During the Libyan conflict, the Maltese Government provided humanitarian assistance and solidarity with the Libyan people in the form of medical care and supplies as well as provisions of food and water. Transportation of badly injured Libyan nationals was provided for treatment in local hospitals. The Maltese authorities also helped in the evacuation and repatriation of thousands of stranded third country nationals to their country of origin.

In light of the events in North Africa, Malta showed its support for democratic transition and stability by offering scholarships in several areas including English and diplomacy to the new authorities and civil society representatives of Libya, Tunisia and Egypt.

As in previous years, the Government of Malta administered the Malta/Commonwealth Third Country Programme, to train participants from developing countries of the Commonwealth at a cost of €49,500 (€59,124). The six training courses in 2011 were in the following fields: Coastal Management; IT and diplomacy (Diplo Foundation); Insurance Management; Banking and Finance Policies in Small States; Competitive Strategies for Small States; Port Operations and Management Programme; Legal Frameworks for ICTs, Building Capacity and Implementing Regulation. The Maltese Government also contributed the amount of €25,000 to the Diplo Foundation, to offer courses on Climate Change.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is cooperating with the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs on a three-year project of €800,000 aimed at financing climate change projects across Africa. In accordance with the Copenhagen Accord of 2009, the Maltese Government committed funds to Maltese NGOs for projects to combat climate change. The funding will go towards the financing of six projects in Africa targeting access to water; sanitation; biogas and solar energy. This assistance, including training programmes, will cost €300,000. Projects include the drilling of boreholes, biogas, harvesting of clean water, provision of mini solar grids and improvements in sanitation to help reduce water-borne diseases and infant mortality.

Officials from the Development Unit regularly attended the following EU Working Group meetings: HAC (Humanitarian Aid Committee), EDD (European Development Days), DCI (Development Cooperation Instrument), EDF (European Development Fund), EPA (Economic Partnership Agreements), EU-Africa MDG Partnerships, Aid Effectiveness Committee and DG Development meetings. Together with the European Commission and other EU members, Malta participated in the Africa-EU Partnership, which seeks to achieve the MDG targets.

In November 2011, MFA organised an exhibition showcasing its development cooperation and humanitarian aid programmes with three sections on 'ODA Projects', 'Humanitarian Aid', and 'Multilateral Assistance'. The exhibition raised general awareness on Malta's role in development cooperation and humanitarian aid, highlighting the Ministry's efforts to implement its commitments towards the developing world and humanitarian crisis-stricken countries.

Malta committed to the objective of reaching a level of 0.17% of ODA/GNI by 2010 and has also committed to allocate more funds within its budget so as to increase its ODA/GNI ratio to 0.33% by 2015. In this regard, Malta has already achieved and exceeded the intermediate individual ODA targets that had been agreed upon, with Malta's ODA reaching a level of 0.18% of GNI.

JOSEPH COLE

Director General (Economic and European Affairs)

External Relations and Mediterranean Affairs Directorate

Malta's relations with non-European countries and its position on a number of international political issues have been coordinated by the Directorate. Such positions were also expressed, where appropriate, at the EU level within the relevant Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) structures.

Directorate officers participated in Capitals-formation meetings of the following Working Groups: COMAG (Mashrek/Maghreb), COMEM (Middle East and Gulf), COMEP (Middle East Peace Process), COEST (Eastern Europe), COASI (Asia), COTRA (Transatlantic – USA & Canada) and COLAT (Latin America), COMED (Mediterranean Affairs) contributing to common positions and reflecting Malta's national interests and political realities.

Active participation in regional fora and initiatives of direct relevance to the Mediterranean region, particularly within the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Western Mediterranean (5+5) Dialogue was ensured together with timely contributions to the largely thematic approach of the Mediterranean agenda adopted by these fora. With a view to ascertain Malta's role in the UfM, the Directorate participated in the regular UfM Senior Officials meetings contributing to the drafting of various documents required for the functioning of the UfM Secretariat including the budget for 2012, the Annual Work Programme for 2012, the Staff Regulations and the Project Guidelines. The Directorate also closely followed the activities of Ambassador Cecilia Attard Pirota as Deputy Secretary-General responsible for the Division of Civil and Social Affairs including Civil Protection and that of the other divisions within the UfM Secretariat in Barcelona. The Directorate also assisted Malta Enterprise and the line ministry (MFEI) to host the Eighth Euromed Ministerial Meeting on Industrial Cooperation held in Malta on 11-12 May, 2011.

In the 5+5 framework, Malta has taken the initiative to propose the holding of the 5+5 Dialogue Summit for Heads of State and Government in Malta. This proposal was received enthusiastically and, although the Summit had to be postponed a number of times due to the political situation in the Euro-Mediterranean region, it is expected to be held in Malta in the second half of 2012. The Malta Summit shall provide a good opportunity for 5+5 members to discuss ways of improving working methods of the Dialogue and discuss salient developments in the region. The Directorate is coordinating the preparations for this auspicious event with the pertinent embassies and has also been involved in the preparations for the Minister's attendance at the Meeting for Foreign Affairs Ministers of the 5+5 in Rome which was postponed to 20 February 2012.

The activities of the Parliamentary Assembly for the Mediterranean (PAM) were closely followed by the Directorate. The activities of the PAM during 2011 focused on the dramatic socio-political changes during the so-called Arab Spring, as well as the economic crisis in the EU.

Malta continued to work for a structured political dialogue between the EU and the League of Arab States, as envisaged in the Malta Communiqué of February 2008, which ultimately resulted in the EC-LAS Liaison Office inauguration on 14 October 2009. Malta remains committed to develop political dialogue and regional international relations together with an increase in the functions of this Office.

The Directorate this year intensified its efforts and continued to build on years of work to strengthen Malta's relations with the countries of the Arab Gulf. Hon Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Tonio Borg attended and intervened during the Ministerial Meeting between the European

Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in April 2011. During his intervention, he spoke about the role that Malta has always played in the Arab World and its work for the strengthening of relations between the GCC and the EU.

The importance of the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations was highlighted in the background of the recent events that took place in North Africa and the Middle East. Following the first Regional Conference for the Mediterranean of the Alliance, which was hosted by Malta in November 2010, and the adoption of the Regional Strategy for the Mediterranean, a document aimed at strengthening intercultural dialogue and reinforcing constructive exchanges and mutual coexistence, the Directorate has continued to follow and participate in the activities of the Alliance. A Focal Point from the Directorate was appointed, who is responsible for the cooperation between Malta and the Alliance. During the past year, Focal points met in Doha, Lisbon and again in Doha during the Annual Global Forum that was hosted by Qatar. The Global Forum, held in Doha, Qatar, in December 2011, brought together all the member countries, together with representatives of civil society, youth and the media, provided the opportunity for open discussions on dialogue across cultures.

Hon Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Tonio Borg actively participated in the meeting of the Group of Friends in the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2011, during which he spoke about Malta's efforts in the Mediterranean sphere and how recent events have emphasised the importance of our hard work.

Throughout the past twelve months, this Directorate was actively involved in the monitoring process of the Arab Spring and the wave of revolutions and unrest which characterised the Southern hemisphere of the Mediterranean Shore.

With reference to the unrest in Libya, the Directorate not only was responsible for the compilation of briefing material in relation to the evolving situation in the country, but ensured that the highest offices within the Ministry remained *au courant* with the volatile situation and latest developments.

In July 2011, the Directorate was directly involved in the preparations for the visit by the DPM/MFA to Benghazi. During the visit, the Hon Borg announced a substantial package of assistance in terms of scholarships and vocational training. The Directorate was also involved in the opening of the Malta Liaison Office in Benghazi as well as the reopening of the Embassy and Consulate Offices in Tripoli in September.

Another major development which saw the direct involvement of this directorate, was the visit by the Prime Minister the Hon. Dr. Lawrence Gonzi to Libya, accompanied by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Finance, the Economy and Investment. These visits set the scene for further technical and ministerial exchanges which are set to take place during the course of 2012. The necessary preparations for these exchanges are currently ongoing within this directorate.

From a wider perspective, this Directorate also made the necessary preparations for Dr Borg to attend the numerous meetings of the Contact Group on Libya which had been set up during the early days of the crisis with the aim of serving as a forum where representatives of numerous countries as well as international and regional institutions discussed steps to be taken to alleviate and solve the crisis in Libya. As the Contact Group was upgraded into a Friends of Libya Working Group, tasked with assisting the *interim* forces undergo a process of national reconciliation, the international community continued to provide an important framework for discussions.

This Directorate also provided substantial support and assistance to the various high officials within the United Nations travelling to Malta in transit to Libya, including the United Nations Secretary General Special envoy on Libya as well as Head of the United Nations Support Mission on Libya.

On the EU front, this Directorate also actively participated in the preparations for discussions held both at the MaMa, as well as the Foreign Affairs Council, seeking to underline the importance of offering support and assistance to the Libyan people in full respect of the Libyan people's needs. In this context, this Directorate also participated in the identification of possible assistance through the Libya Coordination Needs Assessment (LCNA), which resulted in Malta's participation within the pertinent LCNA pertaining to IBM. Currently, internal exchanges are ongoing on the possibility of drawing up further plans of assistance in the field of Media and Communications.

With reference to the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia, this Directorate was actively involved in the preparations for the visit by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Tunis in February.

The convening of the Maltese Tunisian Joint Commission in June was also possible through the major contribution of this directorate, which not only sought to oversee and collate the technical inputs and expertise provided by the different line ministries, but also was instrumental in preparing all the necessary logistics which enabled the successful conclusion of the discussions. During the Joint Commission, the Hon Borg had announced a substantial package of assistance in terms of scholarships and vocational training. In this regard, it should also be noted that this Directorate was instrumental in the execution and disbursing of the first tranche of assistance provided in 2011. Throughout the past months, this directorate was actively involved in pushing the pertinent line Ministries in seeking ways to implement the provisions of the agreed minutes of the afore-mentioned joint commission, a number of technical exchanges are set to take place in 2012 given that the *interim* government has been duly formed in December, 2011.

In March 2011, this Directorate was actively involved in the visits undertaken by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Minister Delegate of European Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to Malta. The visits, which took place as part of a wider framework of talks on the disputed Western Sahara under the auspices of the United Nations, provided the optimum opportunity for bilateral exchanges to take place. In preparation to the visit, this Directorate oversaw the negotiation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Political Consultations, which was duly signed during the ministerial visit. This visit in turn provided the necessary impetus for technical exchange on the draft agreements in the justice sector between Malta and the Kingdom of Morocco, which took place in January, 2012.

The Middle East region continued to feature as a prominent component of the Directorate's work. On the margins of the Euromed Ministerial Meeting held in Malta on 12 May, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Malta and the Palestinian Authority on Economic Cooperation. Preparations for this visit and signing of the MoU were carried out by the pertinent directorate officers, as well as Malta's Representation in Ramallah, in collaboration with MFEI. The Deputy Prime Minister paid a visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories in July. During this visit, Malta and Israel signed an Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation. Another agreement between Malta and the Palestinian Authority was signed in Ramallah in the presence of Prime Minister Fayaad. Minister Borg signed the agreement with Tourism Minister Khoulood Daibes. The agreement concerns the provision of training courses to Palestinian students in heritage restoration. This course was held in December 2011, in Bethlehem. The Directorate, in coordination with Malta's diplomatic representations in Tel Aviv and Ramallah, was also closely involved in the preparations leading to the Deputy Prime Minister's productive meetings with top officials in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Contributing to the resolution of the long-standing Middle East conflict remained a priority, particularly through effective participation in the pertinent EU structures and other international fora. The Directorate, in coordination with Malta's Representative Office in Ramallah, assisted in the preparations with UNRWA in delivering a container of clothes items donated by MFEI to Gaza.

A major diplomatic effort proved successful with the Deputy Prime Minister's visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 3 January 2012. This visit continued to strengthen the already existing good relations between our countries, and was an important opportunity to promote Malta with a country of such vast

resources and influence. This visit was also an occasion for the signing of two very important agreements, the Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Agreement for Cooperation in the Fight against Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime

During this visit, it was agreed to set up a Joint Committee for bilateral discussions between our two countries. Furthermore, possible cooperation in the Education sector was explored and will be followed up with a view of increasing the number of scholarship students attending courses in Maltese higher education institutions and English language schools.

The Directorate, together with the Embassy of Malta in Riyadh, are currently preparing for the state visit of HE the President of Malta in Saudi Arabia, that is planned to take place during the second half of 2012.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Qatar in June 2011, to discuss the events in Libya and cooperation between Malta and Qatar in this regard. During his visit, he met with both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad of bin Jassem bin Jaber Al Thani, as well as the Minister for International Cooperation. The State of Qatar provided humanitarian aid to Libya in substantial amounts also through the facilities offered by Malta. In view of these excellent relations, Malta proposed a Treaty for Bilateral Cooperation in various area of interest. This was received positively by Qatar and currently is being discussed with a view of having it signed soon. The advent of the Emir of Qatar in Malta in the coming months will be an ideal opportunity to conclude the said agreement. The Prime Minister met with the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad of bin Jassem bin Jaber Al Thani in New York, in the margins of UN General Assembly, where the Prime Minister of Qatar expressed interest in visiting Malta to further discuss the future of relations between Malta and Qatar.

On the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2011, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs strived to strengthen Malta's relations with the Arab Gulf countries by meeting with several representatives of their governments. During his meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, bilateral relations were discussed, including an agreement for the mutual recognition of driving licences. The Deputy Prime Minister also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, Sheikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Oman, Yousef Bin Al-Abdulla Bin Alaw, where they discussed areas of common interest including the work of Malta in the Arab world and a number of agreements that are in the final stages of negotiation.

The Prime Minister, at the margins of UN General Assembly, met with the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Of great satisfaction for the Directorate was the decision by the Kuwaiti Government to open a Kuwaiti Embassy in Malta. On 5 May, Ambassador Ali Suleiman al-Faisal Musalem presented his credentials to the President of Malta, as a resident Ambassador. Discussions are also currently underway for the opening of a Maltese Embassy in Kuwait, with support from the Kuwaiti Government. The friendship between Malta and Kuwait was further amplified by the visit made by the Speaker and a delegation from Parliament in March 2011 within the Kuwaiti-Maltese Parliamentary Friendship Group.

The Directorate kept abreast with developments in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and engaged bilaterally with the countries of the region, foremost amongst which Russia.

On 8 February, Malta and Russia signed the Bilateral Implementing Protocol to the EU-Russia Readmission agreement, which entered into force on 3 June. In September, Malta initiated procedures for the renegotiation of the Air Services Agreement to bring into line with EU law.

The Directorate continued its endeavours to enter into Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreements which constitute an important legal and economic instrument on a bilateral level. An agreement with Russia was initialled on 19 May and is awaiting signature. On 7 April, a text was agreed with Ukraine and in May negotiations also progressed with Azerbaijan. Negotiations were opened with Moldova in August.

Relations were furthered with the countries of the South Caucasus, especially Georgia, as the region seeks increased integration with the EU. On 2 March, Godwin Montanaro, the Maltese Ambassador resident in Poland, presented his credentials to the President of Georgia and thus became non-resident Ambassador to Georgia. On 8 June the Minister of Interior of Georgia Ivane Merabishvili met with the Home Affairs Minister Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici and an Agreement on the Fight against Organised Crime was signed which entered into force on 21 July. In June, Malta also renewed the participation of two Maltese monitors in the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia for a further year as from September 2011.

The Directorate was also involved in preparations for a successful participation at the Eastern Partnership summit which took place in Warsaw, Poland, on 29-30 September. Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi attended, wherein he held bilateral meetings on the fringes of the summit with the President of Georgia Mikhail Saakashvili and the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev.

The US Resettlement Programme concerning refugees was another issue which the Directorate continued to follow up closely, and significant progress was achieved on this front. The total number of refugees who left for the United States has reached the figure of 810 by the end of 2011. The programme is expected to continue during 2012.

Another important issue with the US that the Directorate is closely following, concerns Trafficking in Persons (TiP). The Government of Malta is currently in the process of publishing an action plan to ensure that the fight against human trafficking, as well as victim identification and support, are undertaken and delivered more efficiently and effectively.

Progress was also achieved on the issue of cruising licences for Maltese-registered yachts in US waters. The Directorate was also involved in facilitating the donation of military equipment by the United States, and a formal End-Use Agreement was concluded for this purpose.

In 2011, the Directorate continued to be closely involved in expanding Malta's network of double taxation and tax information agreements with Latin American and Caribbean states and territories. A Double Taxation Agreement was signed with Uruguay, and this is currently awaiting ratification by the Uruguayan side. Taxation cooperation agreements were signed with Bermuda, whilst another with the Bahamas was agreed to. Negotiations on the revision of the 2001 Double Taxation Agreement with Barbados commenced in the third quarter, and are on the way to conclusion.

Turning towards Asia, the Directorate was involved in preparations for celebrations of the 40th Anniversary of diplomatic relations between Malta and China, which were established on 31 January 1972. The Directorate was also involved in preparations for the visit of HE Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China at China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which visit transpired in early January 2012.

The Ministry also assisted in preparations for the state visit that HE George Abela, President of Malta and Mrs Abela made to Australia in March 2012. Furthermore, the Ministry was also involved in the preparations for the Parliamentary Delegation led by the Hon Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives, in October 2011.

The Directorate actively followed the approval process undertaken by the Indian cabinet towards eventual signing of the Agreement of the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Fiscal Evasion, which Agreement was initialled back in September, 2010.

During the course of the year, the Directorate coordinated the negotiation and conclusion of a number of bilateral agreements with countries falling under its responsibility:

State	Date	Agreement
Tunisia	13 June 2011	Agreement on Youth Cooperation between the Government of Malta and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia
	14 June 2011	Memorandum of Understanding between Centre du Promotion des Exportation de la Tunisie (CEPEX) and Malta Enterprise Corporation
Morocco	7 March 2011	Memorandum of Understanding for Political Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco
Israel	16 December 2010	Convention between the Government of the State of Israel for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income
Palestinian Authority	11 May 2011	Memorandum of Understanding for the Establishment of a Joint Economic Cooperation Committee between the Ministry Finance, Economy and Investment of Malta and the Ministry of National Economy of the Palestinian National Authority
	28 July 2011	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Malta and the Government of the Palestinian Authority on Heritage Restoration Courses
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	3 January 2012	Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Malta and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Fields of Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime, Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and its Smuggling
	4 January 2012	Convention between the Government of Malta and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Tax Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and the related Protocol
Georgia	8 June 2011	Fight against organised crime
Russia	8 February 2011	Protocol on the Implementation of the Agreement between the European community and the Russian Federation on the Readmission of Persons Residing without Authorisation (Implemented Protocol)
Laos	13 January 2011	Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Malta and the Lao People's Democratic Republic
China	8 November 2011	Agreement between Malta and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income
USA	15 December 2011	End-Use Agreement
Bahamas	7 September 2011	Agreement on the Exchange of Information Relating to Tax matters
Bermuda	25 November 2011	Agreement on the Exchange of Information Relating to Tax Matters
	25 November 2011	Memorandum of Understanding on the Interpretation of Agreement on the Exchange of Information Relating to Tax Matters
Uruguay	11 March 2011	Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Fraud

HELGA MIZZI

Director (External Relations & Mediterranean Affairs)

Multilateral and Global Issues Directorate

During 2011, the Multilateral and Global Issues Directorate continued with its mission to enhance relations with international organisations, such as the United Nations and its agencies, the Commonwealth, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Organisation for Migration.

During 2011, Malta established diplomatic relations with Congo and Malawi. These relations will facilitate cooperation between Malta and these two countries. Furthermore in June, Malta recognised South Sudan as an independent state, at the same time that South Sudan declared its independence.

In September 2011, the Directorate coordinated the visit of the Prime Minister to New York, to attend the 66th session of the UN General Assembly. In his address to the General Assembly, the Prime Minister recalled the initiative on the Universal Declaration on Human Responsibilities, adding that this declaration will be open for signature to all UN Member States interested in supporting it.

Throughout this 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Malta held several bi-lateral meetings further discussing this initiative. A number of countries showed their interest in this initiative, in particular Bahrain, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Indonesia, Lebanon, Maldives, Mauritania, Montenegro, Morocco, Pakistan, San Marino, and Tanzania. With the aim to increase support for this proposal, this Directorate is actively involved in preparations for a high-level international gathering having the declaration on Human Responsibilities as its focus. This is scheduled to take place in October 2012.

The Directorate was also actively involved in the preparation of the necessary documentation for Malta's representation and participation in the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Meeting, held in New York in September 2011. This meeting served as a preparation for the 2011 CHOGM held in Perth, Australia. In this regard, extensive work was carried out so as to prepare Malta's position on the various topics discussed during this high level meeting, which is attended by all Heads of State of Commonwealth Members. The 2011 CHOGM focused on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, the role of women and youth as instruments of change, the Commonwealth Reform, and a possible Charter of Values of the Commonwealth.

Moreover, during 2011, the Multilateral and Global Issues Directorate continued its work with the Commonwealth Secretariat. Six training programmes were held under the Malta/Commonwealth Third Country Programmes in the following areas:

- Insurance Regulation and Supervision
- Modern Diplomacy for Small States
- Banking & Finance for Small States
- Competitiveness Strategies for Small States
- Management of Coastal Recreational Resources
- Legal Frameworks for ICT

During the same period, a number of Maltese officials participated in election observation missions held by the EU in Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, Peru, Zambia, Tunis, Nicaragua, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Particular attention was devoted to addressing the international aspects of irregular immigration, more pronounced due to the situation in Libya, with the Directorate actively involved in pursuing Malta's interest in this regard within the EU and other international entities and organisations. Opportunities were also availed of at the HLWG on Asylum and Migration to make the case for support for the Pilot Project for internal reallocation of beneficiaries of international protection present in Malta. Furthermore, in June the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) was officially opened in Malta. This office's role is to strengthen the cooperation between EU Member States on all aspects of asylum.

During the year, 128 refugees and persons awarded humanitarian protection were resettled: 111 were resettled in the United States of America, 10 in Ireland, six in Germany, and one was resettled in France.

As a member of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), this Directorate participated in the Plenary Meeting of the GICNT in June 2011 in South Korea. During this meeting, it was agreed that a group be formed to examine aid in situations of nuclear emergencies and their prevention.

Officials from the Directorate regularly attended 11 CFSP Working Groups meetings held in Brussels, apart from participating in various international meetings. The Working Groups attended by this Directorate are the following: CONUN (United Nations), CODUN (Disarmament), CONOP (Non-Proliferation), COMAR (Law of the Sea), COHOM (Human Rights), COARM (Arms Control), COAFR (Africa), COJUR (Public International Law), COJUR/ICC (Jurists Working Group dealing with the International Criminal Court), COTER (Terrorism) and the High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration. The Directorate also covers the EU-Africa Partnerships on Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME) as well as on the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition, during 2011, Malta successfully supported the candidature of Prof David Attard as a member of the International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea, and the candidature of Ambassador Joseph Licari as Chairman of the Council of Europe's Bank Administrative Council.

The following treaties were signed/acceded to by Malta during 2011:

2 February	Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters
24 February	The Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on International Access to Justice
24 February	The Hague Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters
24 February	The Hague Convention of 19 October 1996 on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children
25 March	Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency
30 March	Annex IV of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
30 March	1978 Protocol amending the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships.
31 May	Final Acts of International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference
21 September	Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court
29 September	Amendments to the Agreement Relating to the International Telecommunications Satellite Organisation

NICOLE MILLER

Director (Multilateral and Global Issues)

Department for Citizenship & Expatriate Affairs

The Department's main function is to administer and implement the provisions of the Citizenship and Immigration legislation and relative policies. In undertaking the relative tasks in order to carry out the said function, the Department, during the year under review, continued to play a significant role in the management of the legal migration process in Malta and to provide the services related to Maltese citizenship matters.

CITIZENSHIP

The liberal approach that is provided by Maltese legislation, as regards the acquisition of Maltese nationality by descent, makes Maltese migrants and their descendants eligible to hold Maltese nationality. As a result of such provisions, the large Maltese diaspora present in the traditional migrant countries has kept the Department intensely occupied in its tasks regarding the citizenship function also during 2011. This liberal approach is the result of various amendments that have been made to Maltese citizenship legislation over the years whereby:

- the right was given to husbands of female Maltese nationals to acquire Maltese citizenship, which right is not subject to residence conditions in Malta;
- the concept of dual citizenship being the rule and not the exception was introduced;
- Maltese migrants, who were deemed to have lost their Maltese citizenship when they acquired the citizenship of their country of emigration, re-acquired their Maltese citizenship automatically;
- the right to dual citizenship was extended to first and subsequent generations of Maltese born abroad; and
- acquisition of Maltese citizenship by persons born abroad, who are of Maltese descent, has been rendered a mere formality.

The tasks related to the implementation of the provisions of the 2007 amendments to the Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap 188), again as in the previous years, provided the largest source of inflow of work for the Department. As a result of these amendments, children born outside Malta, prior to Independence, of mothers, who were born in Malta and who became citizens of Malta on 21 September 1964, as well as second and subsequent generations of Maltese migrants, who were born abroad, became eligible to acquire Maltese citizenship by registration, that is, as of right, following the submission of the relative application.

The Department, mainly through Malta's missions abroad, continued to receive a steady flow of applications from persons in the said categories. The majority of such applications were received from the Australian continent, a good number of the others from persons residing in the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States of America and South Africa. In addition to such applications, the Department replied to numerous enquiries for information concerning eligibility to claim Maltese citizenship on the basis of the above-mentioned provisions.

The Department continued to receive applications from spouses of citizens of Malta for registration, applications for naturalisation from foreigners who have resided in Malta for a considerable number of years, and requests for the confirmation of the right of persons possessing Maltese nationality to hold dual/multiple citizenship, provided mainly the rest of the inflow of work.

During 2011, the Committee of Inquiry appointed to review cases concerning the deprivation of Maltese citizenship continued to examine three cases of persons who had acquired Maltese citizenship by naturalisation or registration, and who were notified in previous years that they would be deprived of their

Maltese citizenship in view that it was deemed that such citizenship was acquired by means of fraud. In two of the said three cases, the Committee recommended to the Deputy Prime Minister that the deprivation of citizenship was justified and hence the persons concerned were deprived of their Maltese citizenship.

MIGRATION (EXPATRIATES)

The Department is involved in the management of the migration process through its role in the issue of residence documentation to the majority of the different categories of foreigners who are authorised to reside in Malta. Such tasks entail the implementation of the provisions of national immigration legislation and policies and of the *acquis communautaire* in this field.

In the case of third country nationals, the said residence documentation consists of a (uniform) residence permit issued in the form of a sticker, which contains information that reflects the authorisation of stay in Malta, affixed in the holder's passport and issued in the format and containing the specific security features established by the relative European Union regulation. This document is of special relevance to its holders because it entitles them to enter, travel in, and exit Schengen territory, without the requirement of a visa.

The purpose of the stay for which the persons concerned have been authorised to reside in Malta varies according to the relative authorisation. Amongst others, such purpose could be work, study, family formation, long term residence or an inherent right in the case of spouses and dependents of Maltese nationals (Appendix D). The relative authorisation is granted on the basis of legislation provided for in the Immigration Act (Cap 217) and subsidiary legislation and current policy.

EU directives dealing with migration issues, such as the admittance of third country nationals for the purpose of study, family reunification, research, long term residence and highly qualified employment, have been transposed into Maltese legislation, and thus continued to provide the Department with the tools for the management of Malta's legal migration process.

In this respect, the Conditions of Entry and Residence of Third-Country Nationals for the purpose of Highly Qualified Employment Regulations, 2011 came into effect on 4 November 2011 by means of LN 433 of 2011. The Department, with other ministries, was involved in the drafting of these regulations which are transposing Council Directive 2009/50/EC of 25 May 2009, regarding the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment.

The EU wishes to attract highly skilled workers, who are third-country nationals, to its territory and, by means of this Directive, provisions have been made to facilitate in a harmonised manner the admission and residence of such workers in EU Member States. If the said workers satisfy the conditions stipulated by the Directive, they would be admitted and given certain rights, such as facilitated family reunification, mobility through the European Union, and socio-economic benefits. Their status would be reflected by means of a permit entitled EU Blue Card. The Department, in view of its responsibility for the issue of residence permits, would be implementing most of the provisions of these regulations.

As from 2009, third-country nationals who enjoy international protection and who are in possession of a travel document became entitled to apply for a residence permit. During 2011, 2,281 persons enjoying such international protection were issued with a residence permit by the Department.

EU nationals and their family members, who, in Malta, are in the exercise of any of their Treaty Rights as workers, self-employed persons, economically self-sufficient persons or students, are required, in accordance with both EU and national legislation, to register their residence in Malta. In 2011, 1,339 residence documents were issued to EU nationals.

Such persons are issued with a stand-alone residence document, also in the form of a sticker (in a different format from that mentioned above) affixed on a card provided for this purpose. When issuing such documentation, the Department continued to be vigilant so that there would be no abuse of the provisions

of legislation regarding free movement rights, whilst at the same time ensuring that the said rights are upheld when implementing these provisions.

During 2010, the Department embarked, with other ministries, on a project being undertaken by De La Rue, which is dealing with the design of a new IT system that will cater for the production of such residence permits in electronic card form, as per EU regulations, that will replace the stickers mentioned above. In 2011 the Department continued to work on the project.

During the year, the Department continued to give a one-stop shop service to persons entitled to hold exempt person status/freedom of movement. Since this service started being provided, persons concerned are no longer required to call at the Police Immigration Office to have their passports stamped with the relative endorsement that reflect such immigration position, but are instead, in the case of third-country nationals, issued with a residence document in the above-mentioned format in order to facilitate their movements in the Schengen territory.

The Department's function requires the support of the Police Immigration Office, with whom it continued to cooperate in full during 2011. The Department also maintained constant interface with the Employment and Training Corporation and the Department for Social Security vis-à-vis their role in the migration process as well as the Attorney General when the Department's decisions are challenged in Court and before the Immigration Appeals Board.

EU RELATED MATTERS

In view of the Department's role in the migration process and of the emerging EU legislation in this regard, as in previous years the undersigned and the Assistant Director have participated in the meetings (held abroad) of the Commission's Technical and Advisory Committees on the free movement of workers as well as in other committees of experts on migration.

Currently two proposals concerning migration are being discussed in the relevant working committees of the Council, and the Department is contributing to the input required in the examination thereof and the participation of the Assistant Director in the Technical Working Group of the Council. The said proposals deal with a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment; and a Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Nationality

The Department continued to deal with enquiries regarding the national status of both Maltese and non-Maltese citizens and with applications for the acquisition of the citizenship of Malta under the provisions of the Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap 188). During the year, 988 persons were registered as citizens of Malta, whilst 92 others were naturalised as citizens of Malta, as shown in Appendices A and B.

Applications for naturalisation made under the Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap 188) are considered in the light of the established Citizenship Guidelines for the grant (or refusal) of citizenship: five applications for citizenship were refused in 2011.

The number of persons who acquired Maltese citizenship during the past three years is as follows:

Year	Registration	Naturalisation	Total
2009	745	74	819
2010	863	81	944
2011	988	92	1,080

Dual Nationality

During the year, the Department continued to deal with quite a number of enquiries concerning dual citizenship. Former Maltese citizens, who have resided abroad for more than six years, may hold dual nationality, provided the relative conditions laid down in the Maltese Citizenship Act are satisfied. A breakdown of the number of confirmations issued up to the end of 2011 is given in Appendix C.

Expatriates

Persons who enjoy 'Freedom of Movement'

This Department is responsible also for confirming persons to whom Section 44 of the Constitution refers enjoy freedom of movement, that is, the right to remain in Malta and to work here (without the necessity of a work permit). Confirmations issued by this Department during the year cover 59 persons. Details of confirmations issued during the past five years are shown at Appendix B.

'Exempt Person' Status to the Foreign Husband of a Citizen of Malta

As from 1 August 1989, the foreign husband of a female citizen of Malta enjoys *exempt person* status. This means that if the said husband wishes to work in Malta, he does not require a work permit, whereas if he merely wishes to reside here, he is not required to have his permit to reside in Malta renewed periodically. The number of persons to whom such status was confirmed during the year was 71.

'Exempt Person' Status to the Foreign Wife of a Citizen of Malta

As from 24 April 2001, the foreign wife of a citizen of Malta enjoys freedom of movement only after five years from the date of marriage. Until then she enjoys *exempt person* status which nevertheless gives her the right to remain and to work in Malta. During the year, 135 wives of citizens of Malta were informed that they enjoy *exempt person* status.

Uniform Residence Permits

During the year, 10,902 applications were received from third-country nationals for the issue of a uniform residence permit, of which 9,776 were issued. Third-country nationals, whose application is still being processed, are issued with an interim permit authorising them to reside here until a decision is taken on their case. The total number of persons, their nationality and the type of permit held by such persons as on 31 December 2011, is shown in Appendix D.

The Department also received 1,738 applications for residence documents in respect of EU citizens and their family members, who are third-country nationals, for the necessary processing. 1,339 documents were issued.

Revenue

During 2011, the Department derived €328,316 from fees charged for various services.

JOSEPH MIZZI

Director (Citizenship & Expatriate Affairs)

APPENDIX A

Foreigners registered as Citizens of Malta under the Maltese Citizenship Act, Cap 188 - 2011

Nationality	Husbands of Citizens of Malta	Wives of Citizens of Malta	Former Citizens of Malta	Children of a Maltese Mother	Minor Children of Maltese Descent	Persons of Maltese Descent	Total
Albanian	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Algerian	1	-	-	-	-	1	2
Argentinian	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Australian	29	33	10	94	99	249	514
Belgian	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Brazilian	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
British	13	20	2	31	21	16	103
Bulgarian	-	2	-	-	1	-	3
Canadian	5	12	-	12	13	14	56
Chile	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Chinese	-	5	-	-	-	-	5
Citizen of Luxembourg	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Colombian	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Croatian	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dutch	1	1	-	3	-	-	5
Egyptian	5	2	-	-	-	3	10
Filipino	-	4	-	1	-	-	5
French	-	-	-	1	1	12	14
German	-	5	1	2	1	-	9
Ghana	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Iraqi	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Irish	1	1	-	1	-	-	3
Israeli	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Italian	6	4	-	6	5	1	22
Jordanian	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Kazakhstani	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Lebanese	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Libyan	12	1	-	2	-	-	15
Macedonian	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Mexican	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Mongolian	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Moroccan	1	7	-	-	-	-	8
New Zealand	-	-	-	1	-	2	3
Nigerian	8	-	-	-	-	-	8
Norwegian	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Peruvian	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Polish	-	1	-	-	2	-	3
Romanian	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Russian	-	32	-	-	-	-	32
Serbian	4	1	-	-	-	-	5
Sierra Leone	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
South African	6	3	-	-	9	11	29
South Korean	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Spanish	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Swiss	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Syrian	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Thai	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Tunisian	1	3	-	-	-	4	8
Turkish	3	2	-	-	-	-	5
Ukrainian	-	7	-	-	-	-	7
United States of America	13	9	1	11	20	17	71
Zambian	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Stateless	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Not Yet Established	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Total	129	169	14	165	179	332	988

APPENDIX B

Foreigners Naturalised as Citizens of Malta under the Maltese Citizenship Act, Cap 188 - 2011

Nationality	Males	Females	Total
Albanian	1	2	3
Australian	2	-	2
Belarus	-	1	1
Belgian	1	-	1
Bosnian	1	3	4
British	6	1	7
British (Overseas)	2	-	2
Chinese	1	2	3
Ecuadorian	1	1	2
Filipino	-	2	2
Finnish	1	-	1
German	2	-	2
Guyana	-	1	1
Iraqi	1	2	3
Italian	1	1	2
Libyan	1	1	2
Latvian	-	1	1
Mexican	-	1	1
Moroccan	-	1	1
Pakistani	-	1	1
Polish	1	1	2
Russian	-	3	3
Serbian	2	1	3
Slovenian	1	-	1
Sri Lankan	1	-	1
Syrian	2	1	3
Thai	1	4	5
Tunisian	3	-	3
Ukranian	4	3	7
Not Known	11	9	20
Stateless	1	1	2
Total	48	44	92

Persons Informed that they enjoy 'Freedom of Movement'

Category of Persons	Persons born in Malta who ceased to be Maltese citizens whilst being emigrated (Sections 3(1) and 5(1) of the Maltese Citizenship Act)	Children of Maltese Emigrants (Column 1) or of Citizens of Malta, who are under 21 years of age and who hold another citizenship	Non-Maltese Wives of Maltese Citizens or of Persons appearing in Column 1	Non-Maltese Husbands of Maltese Citizens or of Persons appearing in Column 1*	Total
Year					
2007	2	48	17	5	72
2008	-	46	17	24	87
2009	2	39	17	19	77
2010	-	39	12	11	62
2011	-	34	12	13	59

* As from 24/04/2001 (and provided they have been married for at least 5 years)

APPENDIX C

Citizens of Malta also holding Citizenship of the Country indicated - 2011

Country	Confirmations Issued during								Total
	1989-1999*	2000-2005**	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
Algeria	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Australia	1,594	1,767	150	196	202	174	195	187	4,465
Austria	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Belgium	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Brazil	14	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
Canada	1,894	1,188	142	161	196	106	125	134	3,946
Denmark	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Egypt	-	5	-	-	1	2	2	-	10
Finland	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
France	13	19	4	3	1	3	4	1	48
Germany	4	19	-	1	1	-	3	1	29
Greece	6	5	-	-	-	1	1	-	13
Holland	13	8	1	-	1	-	1	-	24
India	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ireland	3	10	2	2	2	-	1	-	20
Israel	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Italy	271	190	7	5	9	5	6	4	497
Jamaica	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Jordan	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Libya	-	28	1	4	4	4	3	4	48
Mexico	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
New Zealand	21	10	-	1	4	-	-	3	39
Nigeria	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Norway	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3
Pakistan	-	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	5
Poland	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sierra Leone	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Singapore	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
South Africa	7	17	5	4	6	11	2	2	54
Spain	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
St Christopher	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sweden	-	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Switzerland	21	10	-	1	-	-	-	2	34
Syria	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Tunisia	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
United Kingdom	906	1,557	74	99	106	70	91	94	2,997
United States	918	788	108	78	103	69	93	96	2,253
Venezuela	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Zimbabwe	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
Total	5,700	5,658	497	555	636	446	528	532	14,552

* For year by year details, see Report for 2000

** For year by year details see Reports for 2005 and 2006

APPENDIX D

Residence Permits Held By Third Country Nationals as on 31 December 2011

Country of Origin / Purpose	Family member	Partner	Temporary	Exempt Persons	Humanitarian	Religious Purpose	Long Term Resident	Economically Self-sufficient	Study	Work	Interim Permit	International protection / Temporary Humanitarian	Total
Albania	10	1	5	17			9		1	15	17		75
Algeria		1	4	5			2	1		2	8	2	25
Antigua & Barbuda								1					1
Argentina										1	1		2
Armenia	1		1	5				14		2	5	2	30
Australia	3	3	4	49			2	10		18	8		97
Azerbaijan			4	2				11		2	1		20
Bahamas			1	1									2
Bahrain										1			1
Bangladesh	3		2	1			3			5	6	2	22
Belarus		4	5	22			1	3	1	5	2		43
Belize											2		2
Benin				1		1							2
Bosnia & Herzegovina	17	1	2	19			22			70	44		175
Brazil		1	18	10		1		2		14	34		80
British National Overseas										1			1
British Overseas Citizens			1										1
Burkina Faso											1	13	14
Cambodia			2								6		8
Cameroon				2					1	1	5		9
Canada		7	15	32				19	1	22	13		109
Chad												1	1
Chile			4							1	4		9
China	31	6	55	63			48	282	19	212	214		930
Cocos Island											42		42
Colombia			27	6				1		1	12		47
Congo				1								13	14
Costa Rica								1					1
Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)				1							1	74	76
Croatia	8		6	6			6		1	30	12		69
Cuba				4				2					6
Dominica								3					3
Dominican Republic										1			1
Ecuador			17	1					1		1		20
Egypt	5		27	38			10	13	2	24	38		157
El Salvador				1							1		2
Eritrea	3										5	291	299
Ethiopia	3								3	1	4	66	77
Gambia				1									1

Country of Origin / Purpose	Family member	Partner	Temporary	Exempt Persons	Humanitarian	Religious Purpose	Long Term Resident	Economically Self-sufficient	Study	Work	Interim Permit	International protection / Temporary Humanitarian	Total
Georgia	8		9	7			5	3	1	16	13		62
Ghana				7		1			3	1	3	19	34
Grenada								1					1
Guam												1	1
Guatemala				1							1		2
Guinea - Bissau												1	1
India	16	1	25	15		11	19	4	6	136	70		303
Indonesia			1	2					1	3			7
Iran	4	1	8	1				25		2	8	3	52
Iraq				3						1		7	11
Israel			12	3				6		6	1		28
Jamaica			1								1		2
Japan	5	2	32	20			3	8	5	14	19		108
Jordan		2	5	9			1			1	5		23
Kazakhstan		1	12	4					1		5		23
Kenya						9	1			4	2		16
Korea			90	3						6	50		149
Korea (Dem Peoples Rep)			1							1	8		10
Kuwait			4						155	2	5		166
Kyrgyzstan				2				3		2	2		9
Lebanon	1	1	5	7			2	4		2	12		34
Liberia												16	16
Libya	46	4	136	100			9	27	13	52	79	3	469
Macedonia			4	6					2	5	3		20
Malaysia				4			1			5	2		12
Maldives										3	1		4
Mali				1				1				6	8
Mauritania			2										2
Mauritius										2			2
Mexico			2	3		1				1	6		13
Moldova	1	1	5	11			2			8	4		32
Mongolia											1		1
Montenegro				1			1			2			4
Morocco		5	28	79				1		14	42		169
Myanmar						2							2
Namibia										1			1
Nepal			1						12	2		1	16
Nevis								5					5
New Zealand		3	1	4				2		8			18
Niger												32	32
Nigeria	4	2	10	58			2		4	21	24	11	136
Pakistan	2			7		4	8	19		58	20	10	128

Country of Origin / Purpose	Family member	Partner	Temporary	Exempt Persons	Humanitarian	Religious Purpose	Long Term Resident	Economically Self-sufficient	Study	Work	Interim Permit	International protection / Temporary Humanitarian	Total
Palestine				6					4	1	8	8	27
Panama										1	1		2
Paraguay										1			1
Peru			5	7			1			3	6		22
Philippines	9	10	21	88		1	10		1	307	166		613
Republic of Serbia	71	7	59	62			86	10	3	281	234		813
Reunion											1		1
Russia	31	28	234	279	2		35	98	14	103	175		999
Saudi Arabia								4			2		6
Senegal										1			1
Serbia & Montenegro											8		8
Seychelles							1	2					3
Sierra Leone				5							1	7	13
Singapore	3			1						2	2		8
Somalia												1,362	1,362
South Africa	1	3	13	12			3	92		16	14	1	155
Sri Lanka				3		3	1			6	1		14
Sudan	2	1	1	1			1			1	5	71	83
Surinam								1					1
Syria	2	1	9	50			1			4	41	22	130
Taiwan			1	1				1		1			4
Tajikistan									1				1
Tanzania						1				3	1		5
Thailand	2	8	6	59			4		1	20	37		137
Togo												35	35
Trinidad and Tobago				1									1
Tunisia	13	4	13	59			6	3	3	18	28		147
Turkey	24	1	52	48			13		5	85	64	3	295
Turkmenistan			1	1									2
Ukraine	23	22	53	121			17	61	4	66	58		425
United Kingdom								2		2			4
USA	2	3	46	50			6	12	33	37	42		231
Unknown	2			2			2	7		6	102	5	126
Uzbekistan		1	2	4						4	8	1	20
Venezuela			9										9
Viet Nam		2	1	2							3		8
Yemen				1									1
Zambia								2	1				3
Zimbabwe	1			1			1						3
Total	357	138	1,120	1,510	2	35	345	767	303	1,777	1,882	2,089	10,325

Financial Management Directorate

HUMAN RESOURCES

In 2011, amongst its other priorities, the Ministry continued to strengthen and enhance the professional capabilities of the Maltese Diplomatic Corps.

The Human Resources Branch provided support to the senior management, Heads of directorates/units/missions and the employees in general. The senior management structure was strengthened through the appointment of Assistant Director Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs, whilst the call for applications for various Assistant Director positions is currently underway. Recruitment was made to fill various posts at different levels of the diplomatic structure. Five Second Secretaries were appointed to the grade of First Secretary. By means of the external recruitment process, ten Second Secretaries were recruited.

The Human Resources Branch processed a number of progressions in the public service grades whilst continuing to implement promotion and progression procedures in the diplomatic and departmental grades. To complete such works the Branch monitors the staff PMP reports and requests the necessary performance reports from the respective Heads of directorates/units/missions.

The Ministry continued to give great importance to staff training both locally and abroad. During the period under review, two diplomatic officers were provided with study leave to follow diplomatic studies. Other officers benefitted from short-term courses in a number of areas including language training, human resources, health and safety, procurement and tendering procedures and induction courses for both serving and newly-recruited diplomatic officers. Training in the Electronic Cash Management System was provided for accounting staff at Head Office and also for Malta's Missions in Athens, Copenhagen, Dubai, London, Moscow, Ramallah, Riyadh, Tel Aviv and Warsaw. A talk was also given to promote and encourage students following the Degree in International Relations at the University of Malta and students in the fifth Form at St Aloysius College, to pursue a career in diplomacy.

Constant monitoring of personal emoluments, particularly of allowances and overtime, was maintained throughout the year.

Following the introduction by Government of family-friendly measures, a further two employees started to telework. Disciplinary action was taken against two members of staff in terms of Regulation 19 of the PSC Disciplinary Regulations. Administrative assistance was also provided to outgoing and returning diplomats in overseas missions abroad.

FINANCE

An important event in the Ministry's calendar for 2011 was the hosting of the Honorary Consuls' meeting in June, resulting in a successful participation of Maltese Consuls from the various countries. The other main events hosted throughout the year were the New Year Exchange Greetings, the High Level Meeting, the 6th Informal Meeting on Western Sahara and the Tunisian mixed Commission. The level of participation and performance for these events was very satisfactory. This Directorate was also involved in the organisation of various initiatives among which was the *Notte Bianca* where a Jazz band played and a

culinary exhibition was held at *Palazzo Parisio* to entertain the public who visited the premises. The Ministry also organised a series of monthly talks.

The Financial Management Directorate made use of the Departmental Contracts Committee Board set up last year to view the issuance of departmental tenders in the procurement of goods and services. This ensured that the Ministry was compliant with the Procurement Regulations in force and transparent in the procurement of goods and services from the various suppliers. Due to this new procedure (calls for quotes issued instead of direct orders), there were considerable financial savings made while at the same time the Ministry benefitted from the best services available on the market.

The Financial Management Directorate also managed effectively and responsibly the funds allocated in its 2011 Budget and savings registered where possible, ensuring in the process that the output was of the highest standard.

The Ministry also contributed, out of its yearly budget, funds to the International Institute of the Ageing and Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies.

Talks with respect to Voice of Malta liquidation had to be postponed due to the Libya uprising. There are plans for discussions to resume during 2012.

MISSION ACCOUNTS SECTION

During 2011, the Electronic Cash Management System (ECMS) continued to be implemented throughout other embassies where training was given to various staff both locally and abroad. This electronic system connects the accounts system at embassies with that of the central government in Malta, so that efficiency in the use of allocated funds is increased. It is envisaged that another group of embassies will start making use of this system in the first quarter of 2012. This means that nearly all the missions shall now be making use of this system. The missions that have been added to the ECMS this year are: Warsaw, Athens, London, Tel Aviv, Ramallah, Copenhagen, Moscow and Dubai. This system connects the missions' accounting system with Head-Office. The last group of embassies will be connected to the system in the first quarter of 2012. The system provides a real-time picture of the finances of MFA's missions abroad and thus providing a thorough audit of all financial expenses. The Embassies of Lisbon and The Hague were audited. The Mission Accounting Desk Officers responsible for these two embassies were asked to provide a detailed report in response to the one issued by NAO, thus giving a comprehensive explanation of queries raised.

The Mission Accounting Desk Officers gathered information over a period of a year related to the medical expenses incurred by the Malta-based officers in MFA's embassies, in order to assess whether a medical insurance covering all Malta-based officers would be more viable than paying 90% of each medical claim undertaken by the MBOs. However, it transpired that a medical insurance resulted in a much higher figure than the total amount paid for a whole year in respect of all MBOs.

GREEN INITIATIVES

During 2011, internal Green circulars were introduced and circulated within the Ministry so that awareness on the working environment among the employees was increased.

The MFA energy audit report, which was carried out throughout the Ministry and its offices in 2011, was finalised. In order to save energy, various recommendations were highlighted. It was estimated that a total of €34,663 would be needed in order to implement the necessary recommendations. With the yearly budgetary funds available for 2011, a good quantity of energy saving bulbs were purchased and would soon be installed at MFA premises.

Subject to MFA receiving more funds during the three-year plan policy established by the Green Leaders Coordinator, OPM, it is being planned that the rest of the recommendations would be implemented gradually within the forthcoming three years.

MAINTENANCE

Regular maintenance was carried out at the Ministry and Directorates throughout 2011.

There was the restoration of ceiling paintings at the Deputy Prime Minister's office, as well as the refurbishment of the reception at Melita Street, in order to upgrade the security system.

There was the ongoing maintenance and painting of ground and first floor apertures.

There was the tendering for the provision of a new lift at the Ministry as the existing lift which is over 40 years old was found to be beyond economical repairs.

A project is underway to refurbish damaged ceilings on the third floor level of the Ministry thereby ensuring the health and safety of MFA's employees.

A Health and Safety Committee was set up in conformity with Act 2000 (Cap 424 of the Laws of Malta). The committee is entrusted to ensure the health and safety of MFA's employees at all times and to eliminate all hazards, in every respect at their place of work.

There was regular maintenance, servicing and repairs of air conditioning units to keep them in a good working condition and to avoid illness to the employees.

The Directorate continued to be involved in the upgrading of various missions abroad; most refurbishment works, as well as the introduction of biometric passports were necessary in view of Schengen requirements. Refurbishment was also carried out in missions which are Maltese owned.

ANGELE AZZOPARDI

Director (Financial Management)

Protocol and Consular Services Directorate

VISITS

During this period, the Directorate was responsible for assisting in the preparatory organisational work and in the implementation of visits to Malta by foreign dignitaries, notably: HE Dr Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany; HE Prof Dr Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament; HRH Edward Kent, Duke of Kent; HE Mr Herman Van Rompuy; HE Mr Hamad Bin Ali Al-Attayah, Chief of Staff of the Qatari Armed Forces; President of the European Council; HE Ivan Gašparovič, President of the Slovak Republic; HE Hilary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States of America; HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, United Kingdom.

Official visits were made by the EU Commissioners responsible for: Home Affairs, HE Ms Cecilia Malmström; Energy, HE Mr Günther Oettinger; Environment, HE Mr Janez Potočnik; Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, HE Mr Laszlo Andor; Regional Policy, HE Mr Johannes Hahn; and Agriculture and Rural Development, HE Mr Dacian Ciolos.

Other Ministers to visit Malta were: HE Carl Bildt, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden; HE Mr Abdelkader Messahel, Minister in charge of Maghreb and African Affairs of Algeria; HE Taib Fassi Fahri, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco Ruyauame; HE Dr Liam Fox, British Defence Secretary; The Hon Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defence of Canada; HE Mr Eric Besson, French Minister of Industry, Energy and Digital Economy; HE Mr Vano Merabishvili, Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia; HE Mr Mohamed Mouldi Kefi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia; HE Mr Liam Fox, UK Minister for Defence; HE Dr Philipp Roesler, German Federal Minister of Economics and Technology; HE Dr Anwar El Feitori, Minister for Transport and Telecommunication of Libya; HE Mr William Hague, UK Foreign Minister; HE Mr Pieter De Crem, Belgian Minister for Defense; HE Mr Daniel Lipšic, Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic; and HE Mag Johanna Mikl-Leitiner, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Austria.

Visits by high level officials included that of: Archbishop Bakhomiou, 1st Asst of HH Pole Schenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church – Egypt; HRH Crown Prince Henri & Sir Luc Friden, Prince of Luxembourg and Minister of Finance of Luxembourg; HE Mr Jatri Adduh, Member of the National Secretariat of the Frente Polisario; HE Mr Sidi Mohamed Ould Boubacar, Ambassador of Mauritania and Egypt; President of the Mauritanian Delegation; HE Mr Christopher Ross, U N Secretary General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara; HE Mr Abdel Elah Mohammed al-Khatib, U N Special Envoy to Tripoli; HE Mme Fu Ying, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China; HE Mr Kiman UCH, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Cambodia to France and Malta, acting as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia; HE Mr Laszlo Felkai, Hungarian State Secretary for Interior; Mr Abdulkarim Bazama, Head of the TNCs Intelligence Body, Libya; Hon Giuliano Amato, Former Prime Minister of Italy; Ms Elizabeth Dibble, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of European and Euroasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State; HE Abdel Elah Alah Al Khatib, UN Secretary General Special Envoy to Libya; Mrs Zagorka Dolovac, Attorney General of the Republic of Serbia; Mr Ian Martin, Special Adviser of UN; Mr Hamad Bin Ali Al-Attijah, Chief of Qatari Armed Forces; HE John S McCain III, HE Lindsey Graham, HE Mark Kirk and HE Marco Rubio, Senators of CODEL Mc Cain Group, USA.

In addition to the above, the Directorate set up a number of programmes for routine visits by non-resident Ambassadors. The directorate also coordinated the visit to Malta by 30 non-resident Ambassadors in connection with the programme of the exchange of New Year greetings.

There were also two outgoing state visits to Australia and Bulgaria during 2011.

FAREWELL CALLS

During this period, the term of duty ended for the following Ambassadors: Ambassador of the Republic of Angola; Ambassador of the Czech Republic; Ambassador of France; Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia; Ambassador of the State of Kuwait; Ambassador of the Slovak Republic; Ambassador of Spain; High Commissioner of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka; Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey; and the Ambassador of the United States of America.

ACCREDITATIONS

This Directorate sought and obtained the *agrément*s and/or credentials of Maltese Ambassadors to Algeria, Austria, Bahrain, China, Cyprus, Egypt, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Italy, South Korea, Kuwait, Libya, Moldova, Nepal, Netherlands, Oman, OSCE, Portugal, Qatar, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Ukraine, Yemen.

CREDENTIALS

During 2011, *agrément*s approving the newly nominated Ambassadors Designate/High Commissioners Designate were issued to the following countries: Kuwait, Seychelles, Spain, Argentina, Japan, Austria, Tunisia, Denmark, Turkey, Czech Republic, Cuba, Ethiopia, Armenia, Laos, Kenya, Colombia, Uruguay, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Norway, Serbia, Ecuador, Chile, USA, Mexico, Angola, Zambia.

Consequently, Ambassadors and High Commissioners of the following countries presented their credentials to the President of Malta up to December 2011:

Iran (20/01/11), Sierra Leone (20/01/11), Korea (20/01/11), Israel (08/02/2011), Jordan (17/02/2011), Azerbaijan (17/02/2011), Morocco (17/02/2011), Mali (17/02/2011), Kuwait (05/05/2011), Syria (05/05/2011), Seychelles (05/05/2011), New Zealand (19/05/2011), Botswana (19/05/2011), Spain (09/06/2011), Belarus (09/06/2011), Montenegro (09/06/2011), Germany (14/07/2011), Argentina (14/07/2011), Japan (14/07/2011), Austria (13/10/2011), Tunisia (13/10/2011), Denmark (13/10/2011), Turkey (10/11/2011), Iraq (10/11/2011), Czech Republic (10/11/2011).

HONORARY CONSULS

During 2011, the Ministry continued to strengthen its network of Honorary Consuls around the world. In the past 12 months, new appointments of Honorary Consuls have been made in the following cities: Managua (Nicaragua), Kolkata (India), Corfu (Greece), Catania (Italy), Chicago (USA), Kotor (Montenegro), Guatemala City (Guatemala), Quito (Ecuador), Marseilles (France), Rebecq (Belgium), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh), Douala (Cameroon), Zagreb (Croatia), Melbourne (Australia), Stockholm (Sweden).

In the meantime, 14 other candidates from 11 countries are in the process of being appointed as Honorary Consuls.

In June 2011, the Ministry organised the biannual Consuls' meeting. This successful meeting was well attended with around 100 Honorary Consuls present. The Honorary Consuls were given presentations from various entities promoting investment, commerce, tourism, financial services, registration of shipping and aircraft, English-language teaching and ECO Gozo.

Honorary Consuls provide an excellent and unremunerated service to Malta both in providing assistance to Maltese nationals and in promoting Malta, particularly with regard to tourism, English-language teaching, financial services, cultural and other exchanges and, in general raising the profile of Malta in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

Furthermore, *agrément*s were also issued to appoint three new Honorary Consuls in Malta representing The Gambia, Vietnam and Kazakhstan.

DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCES

Naval Vessels

During the period under review, this Directorate processed 122 requests for visiting naval vessels from the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, France, Spain, United States of America, The Netherlands, Sweden, Algeria, Pakistan, Portugal, Russia, Belgium, the Republic of Korea and Canada.

Over flights

This Directorate processed 1,053 requests for diplomatic clearances for state/military aircrafts to overfly and/or land in Malta during the same period. The requests for diplomatic clearance were received from the following countries: Italy, United States of America, France, Switzerland, China, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Serbia, Germany, Russian Federation, Greece, Spain, United Arab Emirates, Oman, United Kingdom, Canada, Brazil, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Portugal, Turkey, Sudan, South Africa, Poland, Morocco, Sweden, Belgium, Ukraine, India, Israel, Jordan, Nigeria, Kuwait, Qatar, Argentina, Iran, Chile, Ethiopia, Mali, Benin, Pakistan, Egypt, Turkey, Venezuela, Montenegro, Zambia, Hungary, Czech Republic, the Gambia, Norway, Tanzania, Syria, South Africa, Lebanon, Vietnam, Georgia, Malawi, Djibouti, New Zealand, Slovenia, Ireland, Mauritania, Bahrain, Ecuador, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cyprus, Denmark, Austria, Latvia, Macedonia the EU and the United Nations.

In this connection, this Directorate attends the EDA (European Defence Agency) working group on the harmonisation of diplomatic clearance procedures among EU Member States.

The high record registered in both naval vessels clearances and the over flights, is due mainly to the Libyan crisis and its involvement from February 2011 to October 2011.

Military

During the same period, the Directorate issued 20 clearances for the wearing of uniforms during military-related occasions by military personnel of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany and Canada.

Clearances were also issued for 28 visits to Malta by military personnel from the United Kingdom.

This Directorate also issued accreditation for four Defence Attachés/Deputy Defence Attachés from Greece, the United States of America, France and Canada.

Conferment of Foreign Decorations

The Directorate processed 40 requests from France, the Netherlands and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta for the conferment of decorations on Maltese citizens.

Diplomatic ID Cards

This Directorate issued a total of 305 identity cards to diplomatic (181), administrative (56), and service staff (14) of resident missions as well as for the consular corps in Malta (three) and that of Malta abroad (30) and the staff at international organisations (21).

PROTOCOL SERVICE TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS ACCREDITED TO MALTA

Duty Free

The Directorate processed around 330 requests from various resident missions for duty free entitlements on the purchase of cigarettes, spirits, alcohol and other specific purchases.

VAT Refunds

The Directorate continued to administer the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations of 1961 with respect to the diplomatic corps accredited to Malta by ensuring that the diplomatic privileges and immunities are being respected and implemented. In this context, this Directorate processed around 800 claims for VAT refund and referred them to the VAT Department for reimbursement.

Other Services

Between January and December, 2011 1,076 requests for use of the VIP and Ministerial Lounge at the airport were received and processed.

This section is the first point of contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the embassies and for the general public either for information, advice, or to fix an appointment. This section receives around 30 to 35 calls each day and around eight to ten people visit the office personally. Around 50 e-mails are also received each day on the info generic e mail address of the Ministry which are either answered directly or else directed to the responsible sections.

This Directorate also extends assistance to Embassies and International Organisations in Malta as regards queries and requests concerning different ministries and government departments, such as driving licences for diplomats, car licences, importation of cars, VAT exemption, issuing of car plates (CD, DMS and TF), and other licences, such as radio transmission licences.

NATIONAL DAYS

This Directorate also transmitted numerous national day messages from the President of Malta to various Heads of State and vice versa.

AUTHENTICATIONS

The total income for 2011 was €278,689. Throughout the year, 6,539 customers called at the Directorate to legalise a total of 23,042 documents.

VISAS

During the year, 546 visa applications of Maltese nationals were processed through Malta missions in Rome (mainly) and Tripoli. (There was a period when no visa applications were being sent via Tripoli, since the service of the diplomatic mailbag was stopped as from February 2011 onwards and only resumed circa early January 2012. Arrangements were made so that visa applications to Nigeria and Ghana were then sent to their missions in Rome to the Maltese Embassy thereat)

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs offered two scholarships at Masters level in Legal, Economic, Political, Diplomatic or European studies. Eleven applications were received, out of which two were chosen. One student is studying at the College of Europe in Bruges and one student is studying at the University of Sussex in the UK.

The following countries offered scholarships to Maltese students: Italy, Tunisia, Japan, Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, India, Indonesia and China. The organisations MEDAC and IMLI also offered scholarships to Maltese students. Singapore offered short-term training courses to public officers in various fields.

ILLEGAL MIGRATION

During 2011, the Protocol and Consular Services Directorate kept in continuous contact with the Maltese embassies abroad, foreign embassies accredited to Malta, and the Police Force in order to issue valid Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs) to third-country nationals (TCNs) in order that they could be repatriated. In this regard, requests for 73 individuals were made.

During 2011, logistical difficulties were encountered to send the documents to Libya due to unavailability of flights and closure of embassies in Tripoli.

Requests were sent to 19 diplomatic representations accredited to Malta: Bangladesh, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Ivory Coast, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Morocco, Niger, the Palestinian Representation in Malta, the Republic of Guinea (Conakry), Senegal Somalia, Syria, Sudan, Togo.

The majority of requests for ETDs were sent to the following countries: Ethiopia, Sudan and Mali (including via Consul of Mali in Malta).

During this period, the embassies which replied with requested ETDs were of the following countries: Nigeria (seven ETDs issued) and the Republic of Guinea (six ETDs issued).

ROGATORY LETTERS

During the past year, this Directorate conveyed correspondence between the Maltese and foreign judicial authorities with regard to around 44 different Rogatory letters.

ARREST AND DETENTION OF MALTESE

The Directorate also handled correspondence and communications in relation to Maltese detainees abroad, wherein Maltese representatives were asked to report the number of Maltese detained within their jurisdictions. Furthermore, this Directorate dealt also with requests by foreign governments in relation to their detainees in Maltese prisons. Enquiries with regard to 12 foreigners detained in Malta were handled.

MALTESE NATIONALS IN DISTRESS

In 2011, there were various consular issues of particular relevance which were divided as follows: six cases of arrests of Maltese nationals abroad mainly on drug/theft related cases and cases of Maltese who died abroad and whose remains were repatriated (or attempts were made to contact their relatives in Malta in view of this). Another case dealt with a mother and four Maltese children who were held against their will in Syria, fortunately after many efforts these were allowed to return to Malta safe and sound. There were also other requests such as for whereabouts (including one request during the flooding in The Philippines in December), to transfer funds to Maltese in distress abroad, requests for assistance to make

contact with relatives abroad which had lost contact, as well as requests to issue travel documents to Maltese nationals who lost their travel documents abroad (even with the assistance of missions of other EU Member States). In all cases, it is worth mentioning the valuable support that our embassies and consulates gave in all of the consular issues that were registered abroad.

As from the start of 2011, there were the political upheavals in countries close to Malta – namely Tunisia, Egypt, Syria and particularly, Libya.

In February 2011, in the wake of the Libya crisis, the Directorate was particularly involved with regard to Maltese nationals in Libya who were greatly assisted by the Maltese Embassy in Tripoli, as well as the Libya crisis centre (call centre) which was set up in February 2011 to coordinate/assist with the evacuation of hundreds of Maltese nationals/workers who asked for assistance to be evacuated and who were evacuated to Malta in a relatively short period. Apart from Maltese nationals, thousands of foreign nationals of many different countries were assisted in their evacuation from Libya via Malta, for which Malta gained international praise. With regard to this situation, it is worth mentioning the assistance that was forthcoming from the diplomatic staff at the Maltese Embassy in Tripoli.

EMERGENCY AND CRISIS SITUATIONS

Apart from the Libya crisis, during the past year, there arose emergency situations in several Arab countries due to the political upheavals in the particular countries. In Japan, due to the earthquake and Tsunami in March, this Directorate with assistance of the respective Maltese embassies was also involved with assisting Maltese, as well as during the August 2011 riots in London. During this situation and other similar instances, this Directorate kept in very close contact with the authorities of the countries concerned, mainly through the COCON W/G to assist any nationals present. This Directorate provides also travel advice to assist Maltese travellers.

CONSULAR COOPERATION WORKING GROUP (COCON)

This Directorate participated in the seven meetings of the Consular Cooperation Working Group, which aims to facilitate consular cooperation for the benefit of European nationals. During this year, the main topics that have been discussed were mainly the countries in the Arab world, best practices in the field of consular practice, best practices of consular websites, legalisation of documents, and also discussions on a Commission proposal for a Directive on Consular protection of unrepresented EU nationals in third countries.

TRAVEL ADVICE

The Directorate issued travel advice for Maltese travellers according to situations prevailing in particular countries, which advice would be in harmonisation with that offered by other EU Member States.

OTHER CONSULAR SERVICES

The Directorate deals also with assistance to foreign missions with regards to several issues of a consular nature. It processed documentation in relation to deaths of 28 foreigners in Malta, returned 124 foreign identification documents which were reported lost in Malta (and forwarded to this Directorate by the Malta Police authorities), and 10 further documents which were seized by the Police. During the year, the Directorate received five cases regarding incidents which involved foreign nationals.

The Directorate also handled requests for information regarding certain aspects of Maltese laws, complaints from either foreigners or foreign missions as well as other requests from international organisations present in Malta. Furthermore, this Directorate has sought the assistance of foreign embassies to enquire about their national laws.

The Directorate was involved in the giving of evidence in Court in relation to the implementation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations in Malta, as well as evidence relating to other issues falling within the remit of this Directorate.

DATA PROTECTION

The Directorate dealt with issues of data protection within the Ministry. In particular this year, the Data Protection Officer was involved in the introduction of biometric capture process in the visa application. The officer was also involved in the preparation for the embassies' Schengen evaluations. This same officer is also the Alternate FOI officer.

JOANNA PISANI

Director (Protocol and Consular Services)

Information Management Unit

The Information Management Unit (IMU) is responsible for the infrastructure of information technology at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as its embassies abroad. It is also assigned to manage the systems used by the Ministry in the provision of service to both EU and Schengen members.

The Unit also provides and maintains information and communication technology (ICT) offered by the Government. During 2011, more than 600 requests were made to the Unit for various types of services.

In 2011, the IMU was instrumental during the Libya Crisis, as the Unit was used as a crisis centre for the evacuation of Maltese from Libya. The Centre received calls from the public, reporting the location of Maltese people and intervened to have them brought back to Malta. The Centre operated virtually round the clock for a whole fortnight, during which time over 2,600 calls were received, whilst more than 7,200 outside calls were made to Maltese in Libya and their relatives in Malta.

E-PASSPORTS

The launching of electronic passports through Maltese embassies abroad is nearing its completion. It is envisaged that this project will be fully implemented by Q1 2012.

SCHENGEN VISA SYSTEM

The Unit kept in focus on the European central system of the Schengen visas that was officially launched on 11 October 2011 in the North African region comprising Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania. This means that the Maltese Embassies in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, together with all other Schengen members, can now process Schengen visa applications by means of the biometric system. Preparations for Go Live started in mid 2011, with a number of pilot projects involving the regions in question. This was made in order to ensure full functionality of the system on D-day.

This project proved to be a complete success for Malta. In Libya, Malta is catalyst in providing full service for the issuance of Schengen visas in accordance with the latest norms of the European Union. The various requests for guidance in the implementation of the Schengen visa system from other countries in the Schengen zone confirm this. Malta has already concluded agreements with Italy in this regard, the service of which came into effect on 23 October 2011.

RESIDENCE PERMIT SYSTEM

The formulation of another new project is the Residence Permit System. Through EU directive, residence permits are to be issued in the form of an electronic ID card. During 2011, a number of meetings were convened with all interested parties to issue the necessary requisites for this system. This system is foreseen to be completed by mid 2012.

ELECTRONIC CASH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ECMS)

Following last year's success, it was time for the embassies within the Eurozone to form part of this system. Three days of intensive training was carried out from Malta to all embassy employees assigned to

financial management. By way of this system, the central office would have a clear and realistic view of the financial situation of each embassy.

WEBSITE

The ministerial website will be updated by a new module, within the same site, relating to Treaties ratified by Malta throughout the years. This project is expected to be launched by Q1 2012.

EXTERNAL BORDER FUNDS

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently enjoying the benefits yielded through the External Border Funds on three different projects.

Procurement of equipment for the detection of false and falsified documents

This project relates to the purchase of equipment for the detection of false and falsified documents. The project comprises specialised training to officials, website enhancement for virtual security alerts concerning false and falsified documents. Work in progress is at an advanced stage and is to be completed by June 2012.

As part of this project, 100 employees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were offered intensive training under the expert guidance of the Forensic Department of the Malta Police Force. This training, which was carried out over a span of three days, included the detection of false and falsified documents, as well as the electronic capture of fingerprints for use on issuance of Schengen visas and e-passports.

Development of the Visa Information System

This project relates to the procurement of biometric capture work stations and development of the Visa Information System (VIS), as well as the information campaign on the latest process required by new VIS regulations. This project was initiated in 2011 and is to be finalised by June 2012.

Strengthening Malta's involvement in the issuance of Schengen Visas

This project is in its initial phase. The major part of its formulation is to be carried out during 2012, and is earmarked to be completed by June 2013. The scope of this venture is to enhance and strengthen Malta's involvement in the issuance of Schengen visas. It comprises the purchase of mobile units to be used in remote areas where no embassies are located, as well as the source of third party contractors to help issue such visas.

Moreover, a request for funds for 2012 under the same scheme was made for two other projects:

- Request for funds to set up a communication system involving embassies, the Malta Immigration Authorities, as well as other similar authorities within the Schengen zone.
- Request for funds for the necessary repairs at the Embassy of Malta in Tripoli, resulting from crisis outburst in Libya, as well as for property investment in Benghazi to be used as Consulate of Malta.

SCHENGEN EVALUATION

The preliminary arrangements for Malta's Schengen evaluation to be carried out in 2012 are already in place. One evaluation, besides others, involves the issuance of visas and related practices. This evaluation is to take place in January 2012 at Maltese representations in Cairo and Moscow.

ANNA CATANIA
Chief Information Officer

Central Visa Unit

MALTA ENTERPRISE

In February 2011, the Head of the Central Visa Unit was a guest speaker at the Malta Enterprise at an information session for Regional Leaders on The Schengen *acquis* and Malta's Visa Policy. The information session gave an overview on the updated developments covering the procedures and conditions for the issuance of visas as well as a number of Schengen-related decisions.

CONSULAR COOPERATION - FRANCE

In April, a bilateral agreement was reached between the Central Visa Unit and the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et Européennes* for the representation of the Government of Malta by the French authorities in the issuance of short-stay visas in 18 countries worldwide, where Malta has no diplomatic mission or consular post.

PARTICIPATION AT HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORKSHOP

Between 14 and 17 June, CVU personnel attended training sessions, financed by the United States, on the concepts of Human Trafficking. The workshop discussed legislation and treaties, trafficking means and methodologies.

MALTA'S AMBASSADORS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

In July 2011, the Head CVU was a guest speaker at the High-Level Meeting for Malta's Ambassadors on the Developments in the Southern Neighbourhood. The presentation dealt with the CVU's role in visa facilitation and Schengen-related matters specifically during the Arab Spring.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Following the drafting of Malta's National Action Plan (NAP) against Human Trafficking, the Head CVU was nominated a member of the Stakeholder Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings. The implementation of the action plan will be coordinated by the TIP Coordinator appointed by the Office of the Prime Minister, with the support of all ministries and other authorities concerned, including the Human Trafficking Monitoring Committee. The aim of this action plan would be to address all aspects of the fight against Human Trafficking, namely the prevention of human trafficking cases, protection of victims and the prosecution of perpetrators.

PARTICIPATION AT ICEF BERLIN WORKSHOP

Between 31 October and 2 November, the Malta Tourism Authority extended an invitation for a CVU Visa Officer from the Central Visa Unit to participate at the Authority's stand at the ICEF Berlin Workshop. During the workshop, considered to be the most comprehensive forum for international educators, service providers and study abroad agents, the CVU Visa Officer handled visa related enquiries from a good number of study abroad agents visiting the Malta stand.

VISA WORKING PARTY MEETINGS

During 2011, CVU Visa Officers participated regularly in the monthly meetings of the Visa Working Party which examines proposed legal instruments aimed at improving the conditions for implementing the common visa policy. The VWP is also responsible for the European Union's negotiations with third countries concerning simplification of visa agreements, which the EU Commission deals with under a mandate by Member States.

PAUL DEMAJO ALBANESE
Head (Central Visa Unit)

Ministry for Gozo

Directorate General (Operations)

FUNCTIONS

The overall objectives of the Directorate General (Operations) are:

- to participate actively in the development and implementation of the Ministry's strategic, operational and resource plans and cooperate with senior staff towards the achievement of the Ministry's goals by sharing resources, providing support and assistance, disseminating information of mutual interest, etc;
- to provide direction to Heads of directorates, including the Chief Information Officer within the Office of the Permanent Secretary, in the preparation of operational plans to support the Ministry in the implementation of policy directives;
- in liaison with the respective Heads of directorates, to plan, develop and ensure the implementation of work standards within the Office of the Permanent Secretary to ensure quality, timeliness and cost-effective results;
- to supervise the drawing up of corporate strategic operational plans as may be required by Government's central agencies, such as Financial Business Plans, and ensuring their submission within the established timeframes;
- to liaise with Heads of directorates within the Ministry in order to evaluate staff and identify training needs and provides, as far as possible, programmes to address such requirements;
- to establish and maintain effective channels of communication with client groups, and with other ministries, directorates, departments and agencies to enhance the exchange of information and ideas on matters of common interest and to ensure that services and programmes are appropriate to the needs of clients, as well as being compatible and complementary to other service initiatives;
- to coordinate the operations and activities of the line directorates of the Ministry;
- to manage the day-to-day operations of the Back Office Unit as well as the Gozo offices of the Land Registry, Public Registry and Notary to Government.

NOTARY TO GOVERNMENT OFFICE

The Office of the Notary to Government in Gozo prepares drafts and publishes deeds to which the Government and parastatal bodies are a party.

Since the post of Notary to Government is vacant, no deeds were published since the resignation of the previous incumbent. However, copies of Formal Contracts and Formal and Informal Testaments are being certified by a newly appointed Acting Archivist. This Office is also responsible for the conservation of Notarial Acts according to law and for their safe-keeping and custody regarding immovables situated in Gozo and Comino. Such acts can be inspected by the public who can also demand a copy of relevant deeds according to the relevant laws. During 2011, 812 individuals requested copies of relevant deeds. Revenue collected during the period amounted to €3719.41.

The majority of notaries practising in Malta continued to send copies of deeds published in Malta relating to transfers of immovables situated in Gozo and Comino.

This Office also has a storage room in the Gozo Administration Centre, where registers of deeds deposited at this office are kept.

CIVIL STATUS REPORTING OFFICE

The functioning of the Civil Status Reporting Office is to input data regarding births, marriages and deaths.

The total number of birth certificates inputted during 2011 and which were finalised in May, was 59,525 (up to register year 1863), while the total number of marriage certificates inputted between May and December was 67,875 (up to register year 1931).

On the other hand, the total of the verification of birth certificates verified was 61,275 (up to register year 1954).

LAND REGISTRY OFFICE

This section deals with applications regarding the registration of property in Gozo. The following applications were received during the year:

Applications LRAs:	1,790
Charges:	748
Official searches:	764

When comparing the Land Registry applications received during 2011 with those of 2010, there was an increase of approximately 20%. Applications for charges increased by 15.97% when compared to the applications received last year. In fact, a record number of charges were registered. As regards to the number of Land Registry applications, this year saw the third highest number ever registered.

PUBLIC REGISTRY OFFICE

During the year, 2,749 Notes of Enrolment were registered with this Office, while there were 1,736 notes of Hypothec. With regard to Notes of References relating to hypothecs, these amounted to 587, while 14 Legal Hypothecs were registered. The number of Schedules of Deposit relating to redemption of ground-rent of immovables in Gozo and Comino amounted to 32. There were also 38 Warrants of Prohibitory Injunctions and 14 *subbasti*.

The total number of acts registered in the Civil Status Section was as follows:

Births	280
Marriages	185
Deaths	257

The number of certificates issued by this same section was as follows:

Extract Certificates	6,212
Full Certificates	423

During 2011, the Marriage Registry processed 187 marriage applications. During the same year, there were:

Religious Marriages	143
Civil Marriages	38
Other Religions	0

In addition, searches regarding transfers and hypothecs, as well as their input and testamentary searches were ordered through the Gozo Public Registry. The relative cost amounted to €149,195.64 in respect of Searches and €6,544.39 in respect of Wills. The official searches were delivered through the Public Registry.

SALARIES SECTION (HEALTH DIVISION)

During 2011, the main functions carried out within this section were:

- payment of the salaries (personal emoluments) to the employees working within the Health Division. The Division for which this Section is responsible constitutes a substantial part of the Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care. The necessary adjustments to the employees' wages are worked out and inputted via the Dakar, a web-based program. This Section also directed the Central Salaries Section in carrying out adjustments such as recruitments, resignations, appointments, progressions, termination of contracts, new rosters, change in working hours, etc. Pay lists issued before each pay date, from the Central Salaries Section, are meticulously verified to ascertain that all adjustments were effected correctly;
- answering of queries on the part of employees about their salary as well as the issuing of requested documents such as P3s;
- coordination with the Personnel Section of the Health Division on matters concerning the attendance, transfers, resignations and change in working hours of the employees;
- issuing of reports relative to the Personal Emoluments block on a regular basis;
- processing of the required payments to governmental and non-governmental entities which provide their services to the Health Division; and
- drawing up of payroll schedules and any multi-payments in connection with supplementary pay lists.

SALARIES SECTION (EDUCATION)

This Section continued to offer its services to all the employees who fall under the Education Division in Malta. In July 2011, the Salaries Section carried out a successful migration from the Payper system to that of Dakar.

Correspondence and communications received by e-mails and telephone calls from the Leaves and Records Sections were dealt with efficiently and amendments were sent to the Central Salaries Section on time.

Around 370 returns of casual staff were received every four weeks and wage sheets were subsequently issued to every casual employee. Throughout 2011, around 15,785 mid-day break supervision claims were processed and paid on a quarterly basis. There was an increase in Professional Development claims which amounted to 8,345. New entries, mostly of new teachers and supply teachers and SLSAs (Supply Learning Support Assistants) were also taken in hand.

TAS and ESTS students were also paid by this Section.

Eleven of the Section's staff were assigned telework during the year. Every four weeks a report is issued in respect of the work done during their teleworking schedules.

The staff monitored incoming requests for information and complaints and assisted the public with the best service possible. Moreover, the staff dealt effectively and efficiently with a large volume of incoming queries and requests which were forwarded by the Education Division.

SALARIES SECTION (MRRA)

The main function of this Section is to process the salaries including allowances and overtime of all the employees of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. Correspondence and communications received by e-mails and telephone calls from Leaves and Records Sections were dealt with effectively and amendments were sent to the Central Salaries Section on time.

The staff also dealt with a number of queries, requests and parliamentary questions forwarded by the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs and the Ministry for Gozo.

CENTRAL SALARIES SECTION

During 2011, the Central Salaries Section was responsible for:

- the proper processing of salary and the timely issue of payrolls thereof;
- the proper maintenance of adequate records of promotions, progressions and appointments of all employees on the government payroll;
- the correct interpretation of the various directives from PAHRO, government collective agreements through PACBO, MPO and MFEI circulars and relevant changes in the Public Service Management Code (PSMC);
- processing of data supplied by the HR/Salaries Sections in every department to ensure the timely printing of payroll and cheque payment;
- in collaboration with the HR Systems & Data Management Directorate (PAHRO), the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) and the Dakar officials, the Payroll Administrator (IT System) and all desk officers conducted preliminary induction training in conjunction with parallel runs/testing processes to ensure the successful implementation of the Dakar Payroll Software during 2011.
- provision of assistance and information across governmental departments on salary/payroll related queries on a timely and adequate basis.
- communicating and replying to queries raised by public service employees and the general public through telephone, generic e-mails and mail correspondence.

During 2011, the total amendments in salaries/payroll effected by this Section amounted to approximately 92,425 inputs distributed across 13 payments through relative forms.

TREASURY PENSIONS SECTION

The main responsibility of the Treasury Pensions Section is to issue treasury pensions and gratuities to government employees who have been in continuous service since 15 January 1979, including the Armed Forces of Malta, the Correctional Services and the Malta Police Force employees. The Section was also responsible for the issuing of bonus and income supplements to eligible ex-civil service employees who are not receiving a bonus from the Department for Social Security.

During the year, 647 public service employees who retired were eligible for a treasury pension, bringing the total to 14,848 pensioners. Of these, 472 were male and 175 were female. The total of deceased pensioners amounted to 548, of whom 384 were males and 164 were females.

During 2011, the total treasury pensions issued amounted to €73,745,162.94 and the total amount of gratuities paid was €12,578,694.14.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICE SECTION

The Freephone 153 helpline falls under the remit of the Government Information Services and strives to provide the general public and government entities with information ranging from a query as simple as the contact details of a particular office to more complex requests on current government policies. This service was delivered efficiently and in a timely manner.

The public also made extensive use of the section's e-mail address (153@gov.mt). Generally, this service is used by clients who request specific public documents which are then sent to them electronically.

During the year, 82,193 calls were registered as 'incoming calls' on the Freephone by the computerised telephone system. Statistics that show the number of incoming calls comparable over a five-year period,

are recorded in the table below. Requests by e-mail averaged four per working day. Average messages recorded after office hours and replied to on the following working day, reached eight queries daily.

Year	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Service demand	82,193	77,390	71,215	65,777	64,559
Weekly average	1,580	1,488	1,370	1,265	1,241

From February to November 2011, the Freephone 153 offered its assistance to the Malta Communications Authority. It served as the official helpline for the Digital Switchover, that is, the switchover of Maltese free-to-air channels from analogue to digital format. During this period, the Freephone 153 responded to public enquiries in an efficient and professional manner and was highly commended by the Chairman of MCA for the service provided on their behalf.

Freephone 153 remains committed to its obligations defined in the Quality Service Charter and its Service Level Agreement, mainly to reply promptly and courteously to the enquiring public and to provide timely and accurate information.

CONSUMER UNIT

The Consumer Unit provides a freephone service to both Maltese and Gozitan consumers, enabling them to put forward their complaints, free of charge. This Office accepts complaints up to a threshold of €3,494 only. Complaints which exceed this amount are to be dealt with at the Civil Law Courts. Complaints can also be filed via e-mail by sending the necessary details or else by visiting the consumer office in person and providing all the necessary documents in respect of the claim.

Complaints are registered on the Complaints Handling System, where all the details of both the consumer and the trader are registered together with all the details of the complaint. The Consumer Unit then mediates between both parties in order to reach an amicable agreement. If no agreement is reached during mediation, the consumer can take his/her case before the Small Claims Tribunal. If the Chairperson's sentence is not honoured, the case is then referred to the Court of Appeals.

During 2011, a total of 8,684 calls were received every month through the freephone service. The most common complaints were those concerned with electrical household goods and telecommunications products and services. The last few months also saw an increase in complaints with respect to aspects of travel.

ENERGY BENEFIT SECTION

The main functions performed by this section are:

- keying in of energy benefit applications which are then assessed and authorised;
- authorisation of humanitarian cases;
- carrying out of payment adjustments of charitable organisations;
- dealing with PA 109's and call letters forwarded by Area Offices;
- carrying out of the necessary amendments on SABS as regards to Energy Benefit application details;
- creation of arrears/overpayments where applicable;
- provision of responses to queries from Social Security Department, Area Offices and Social Policy Information Centre;
- dealing with Benefit Fraud investigation cases;
- dealing with error/warning reports issued with every voucher generation process;
- dealing with MITA regarding running of Energy Benefit system.

The table below indicates the work performed during 2011:

	Total
Authorised Applications	2,980
Charitable Organisations	280
Humanitarian Authorised	56
BFI Cases	366
PA 109 - Assessed	3,524
PA 109 - Authorised	4,899
Overpayments Created	149
Arrears Created	506
Vouchers for Re-dating	4,012
<i>Incoming Mail</i>	
Call Letters	1,396
PA 109	6,776
New Applications	3,217

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT (CALL CENTRE)

During 2011, the Call Centre's main objective was to answer all incoming telephone and e-mail queries from all categories of taxpayers (i.e. individuals, companies, employers and expatriates) relating to Income Tax and Social Security Contributions. During 2011, the IRD Call Centre replied to 61,126 telephone calls; 14,742 e-mails and 2,199 correspondences.

The feedback received through the IRD Call Centre is used to help the Inland Revenue Department to update its policies, procedures and legislation.

Ongoing training and support is given, especially when new procedures or legislation are introduced by the Department. Through this continuous training process, the Call Centre Customer Relations Officers are constantly kept abreast of any changes that occur in order to enable them to reply to the public's queries in the most efficient manner.

MARIO CALLEJA
Director General (Operations)

Corporate Services Directorate

The role of the Corporate Services Directorate is to provide central support services and to coordinate the corporate activities of the Permanent Secretariat and the directorates falling under the remit of the Ministry for Gozo. During 2011, the Directorate continued to provide support services, particularly in the areas of financial planning and management, human resources management, and office services. The Directorate coordinated the compilation of the Business Plans and Financial Estimates and ensured the timely and accurate preparation of management information. The Corporate Services Directorate contributed to the collective management of the Ministry through policy development.

During 2011, the Directorate also carried out the following:

- Approved advance payments made by the various directorates under the Ministry.
- Raised financial returns as requested by the Ministry of Finance, the Treasury Department and the National Statistics Office.
- Updated monthly returns regarding commitments raised under the various capital projects.
- Raised on a quarterly basis financial information regarding accrual accounting.
- Raised quarterly returns of suppliers who did not provide the Directorate with a fiscal receipt.
- Recorded inventory items procured by the Directorate and made the necessary information available to the directorates in order to update their respective asset records.
- Vetted requests for the receipt of Qualification Allowances.
- Coordinated requests for information made by the central agencies.
- Coordinated progressions and promotions of staff in the Ministry and line directorates.
- Facilitated the implementation of central and ministerial policies and initiatives across the Ministry;
- Compiled information related to replies to parliamentary questions
- Chaired the Departmental Contracts Committee.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Corporate Services Directorate coordinated the issuing of 131 appointments during the year. The Directorate was also involved in the promotion exercise in respect of three officers, 58 progressions, and the confirmation of appointment for 10 employees.

The Directorate provided support services in the field of human resources management and development. It also ensured conformity with policies, systems and procedures and the provision of data and other information required by central government agencies. The Directorate continued liaising with the other line directorates within MGOZ. The staff complement of the Ministry was monitored and vacancies were filled according to approvals by MFEI and PAHRO in accordance with the requirements of the directorates.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

During 2011, staff development continued to be given a high priority. The Directorate in collaboration with the Centre for Development, Research and Training (CDRT) organised training programmes in Gozo on the following topics for government employees serving in Gozo:

Public Administration Act
Freedom of Information Act
Interviewing Skills
Data Protection
Dynamic Communications
Management with Leadership
Training in the Maltese Language
Basic ICT Skills
Employee Support Programme (two courses)
Registry Services

COORDINATING ACTIVITIES

During 2011, the Directorate took measures to ensure that government services in Gozo are provided in an efficient and effective manner. In this respect, the Directorate was responsible for the coordination of the verification of sick leave availed of by government employees with a view to curbing abuses. During the year, the Corporate Services Directorate requested 3,693 medical visits to be carried out.

The Directorate was also involved in a number of initiatives in accordance with the legal obligations stipulated in the Data Protection Act as well as the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The Corporate Services Directorate continued to maintain inventory lists, temporarily store and dispose of obsolete, unserviceable and surplus items within the Ministry as provided by the Financial Regulations.

Furthermore, in 2011, the Directorate granted 21 Qualification Allowances to personnel across the Ministry.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Management Unit

The Information Management Unit is responsible for matters relating to information systems, communication and technology within the Ministry for Gozo. The Unit works in collaboration with the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA). The IMU is managed by the Chief Information Officer, with the assistance of four ICT Officers and an office secretary.

ICT Projects

In 2011, several meetings were held between the IMU, the Ministry of Health, Mater Dei and MITA, in order to finalise the new business workflows required at the Gozo General Hospital (GGH) and plan/monitor the Integrated Health Information Systems (IHIS) extension, so that these can be successfully implemented at GGH. Various meetings were held also with the Breast Screening Programme staff in order to accommodate their workflow with those at GGH.

The IMU implemented a number of software projects, including the Radiology Information System (RIS), the Laboratory Information System (LIS), a Stock Control System, the Library Information System (LIS), and Abattoir Traceability System amongst others. The Unit was also involved in meetings/activities related to Attendance Verification System aiding in the analysis of the business process.

The Information Management Unit proceeded with the task, over 2011, to remove direct telephone lines and replace with PABX telephone extensions in an attempt to minimise rental as well as inter-department call costs. By the end of 2011, a total of 32 telephone lines were disconnected, saving over €600 on rental charges per year. The IMU also managed to establish VOIP connections to the Education Office and Abattoir Site, so that calls between Ministry for Gozo and these sites are now free of charge.

The IMU was involved in the creation of a number of websites. A new website for the Ministry, which will replace the current website, www.gozo.gov.mt, was developed by a local company. The relevant maintenance agreement was signed with the supplier during 2011. Officers from the IMU were also involved in the migration and refinement of the data content from the current website to the new website.

The IMU also embarked on an ambitious project aimed at the development of the www.visitgozo.com portal. The portal will be used as a major vehicle for the promotion of the island by the Tourism and Economic Development Directorate within the Ministry for Gozo. The drafting of the tender together with an appropriate service level agreement is currently underway.

The past year witnessed a large number of LAN Extensions, in the form of new switches, network points, cabling and patching within the different sections/ directorates within the Ministry for Gozo. Furthermore, this office assisted under directorates/sections in various projects which necessitated LAN works.

Cost-Saving Initiatives

The IMU embarked on a number of cost-saving initiatives including the dissemination of circulars via e-mail rather than printouts, scanning of documents rather than printing, and consolidation of printing facilities, through the centralised procurement of multifunction printing devices. A maintenance agreement has also been concluded with GO in order to reduce the support costs being incurred by the Ministry for Gozo. An advantageous fixed line agreement has also been negotiated and concluded with the same supplier.

Assistance Services

The IMU managed other service provisions including, but not limited to, video conferencing sessions between the Gozo Law Courts and foreign legal offices/sites, and the setting up of nine private filtered internet connections over different sites.

ICT Governance

The IMU formalised a number of policies and procedures aimed at providing centrally-managed processes and efficiency in current workflows whilst governing the use of various services. These include a Request for Service Procedure, Workstation and User Movement Procedure, and Tenders/Quotation Uploading Procedure. Printer, e-mail, internet and telephone policies are in their reviewing stages. A total of 10 requests for the installation of non-standard software and three major exemption requests were processed and approved. Furthermore, a number of audits, aimed at vetting user accesses to CdB and DAS, were carried out.

ICT Training

The Information Management Unit also took the initiative to organise information sessions and ICT training for the Ministry for Gozo employees with the aim of increasing knowledge in ICT.

The IMU, in collaboration with its counterpart within all the other ministries, actively participated in the discussions, conclusion and the initial launch of an ESF 4.98 project aimed at improving the skills of the Information Management Units on a public administration basis. Major benefits of this project are earmarked for the year 2012.

SCHEMES

The Corporate Services Directorate processed 35 applications for special passes for the Gozo ferry service submitted by citizens residing in Malta and having relatives residing permanently in Gozo.

The Directorate also administered the scheme for the payment of a monthly accommodation subsidy to Gozitan students following courses at the University of Malta, MCAST and Institute of Tourism Studies on a full-time basis. 662 university students and 153 MCAST & ITS students benefited from this subsidy in 2011. A subsidy was also paid to Gozitan residents employed with government-funded or government-owned institutions for every day of attendance at their workplace. 3,164 applications were received during 2011.

86 local NGOs were assisted financially during 2011. The assistance is provided with the aim to strengthen the social fabric of the Gozitan community.

Departmental Contracts Committee

Following the introduction of the new Public Procurement Regulations, the award of departmental tenders is being carried out after the seeking of approval of the Departmental Contracts Committee (DCC) of the respective ministry. Within the Ministry for Gozo, this committee is set up at the Corporate Services Directorate. The DCC held its first meeting on 30 August 2010 and sessions since were held as follows:

Year	Sessions	Tenders Considered
2010	16	70
2011	35	125

OTHER ACTIVITIES

During 2011, the Directorate continued to monitor the expenditure under both the Capital and Recurrent Votes of the Ministry and kept a constant watch to maintain financial accountability. The Directorate was also involved in the processing of Gozo treasury pensions, stocking and distribution of counterfoil books, and accounting for receipts of all the other directorates within the Ministry. The following figures show the Ministry's revenue and expenditure and the number of treasury pensioners in Gozo as at end 2011:

Revenue

Administrative Penalties	€0
Fees on contracts/Notarial fees	€4,032.76
Court Fees	€280,898.84
Services rendered to Local Councils	€64,746.56
Miscellaneous Reimbursements	€1,140
Miscellaneous Receipts	€8,074.78

Expenditure

Recurrent	€58,330,952.38
Capital	€12,976,297.66

Treasury Pensions

Civil	€1,045
Police	€137
Widows	€158
P.I.S.	€ 1
Total	€1,341

The Directorate was also responsible for the DAS consolidated function in Gozo, including the vetting and processing of the Ministry's financial transactions, and the performance of the cheque run routine.

CARMEN GALEA

Director (Corporate Services)

Projects and Development Directorate

The Projects and Development Directorate incorporates the Architectural and Engineering Services, Works Branch, the Construction and Maintenance Unit and the Agriculture and Fisheries Branch.

The main objectives of the Projects and Development Directorate are to:

- ensure that Gozo has the proper infrastructure required for the island's development;
- protect, manage and enhance the natural heritage of Gozo;
- provide the proper environment and extend the necessary services in the agricultural and fisheries sectors so that progress and growth can be achieved in these industries;
- support investment;
- ensure that progress in Gozo follows the principles of sustainable development and effectively promote Gozo as an eco-island.

ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

This Section housed at the Head Office of the Directorate provides professional services and project management support to all sections of the directorate and to other directorates within the Ministry for Gozo from a central unit. As in previous years, architects and an engineer from this section provided technical support to various sections of the directorate and to other directorates, mainly the EU Affairs Directorate, the Eco-Gozo Regional Development Directorate and the Customer Services Directorate in the implementation of projects and works in Gozo.

WORKS BRANCH

Finance and Administration

The main functions of the Finance and Administration Section is the management of human resources, contracts, stores and registry and provides the administrative support to all the other sections within the branch.

Districts Section

The Districts Section's primary function is to provide services to the local councils on a contractual basis. The Section also carries out works which fall within the responsibility of the Central Government.

Throughout 2011, the main works embarked upon by the Districts Section consisted in the embellishment and maintenance of playing fields, the construction and maintenance of pavements, the building and maintenance of retaining rubble and *franka* stone walls and the cleaning of water culverts as well as the patching of streets in various localities.

Roads Section

The Roads Section is responsible for the general upkeep and maintenance of roads on the island. The section was engaged in the construction of retaining walls and pavements, construction of water culverts, repair of rubble walls, maintenance on roundabouts and central strips, patching with hot and cold asphalt in

all arterial and secondary roads, the fixing and maintenance of traffic signs and the applying of road marking paint.

This section also issued tenders for new roads and was responsible for the supervision of works carried out by the various contractors. During the year under review, resurfacing works were carried out on part of Lourdes Street in the limits of Ghajnsielem and part of tač-Cawl Street in Qala.

Manufacturing and Services Section

The Manufacturing and Services Section comprises carpentry, electrical and metal work units. The section also carries out repair and maintenance work on government-owned vehicles and machinery.

In 2011, new furniture and apertures were manufactured for various government directorates, departments and other entities. Furniture and apertures were manufactured and fitted at the Ministry for Gozo, Gozo Administrative Centre in Victoria, Gozo Experimental Farm in Xewkija, the Front Office Paying Agency and the Civil Abattoir. This Unit also carried out other minor and sundry repairs and maintenance works at various government directorates, departments and entities.

During the year under consideration, the carpentry unit was entrusted with the construction of a number of platforms in connection with cultural activities, like *Lejlet Lapsi*, and the Gozo Agricultural Exhibition. The Unit was also responsible for the erection of carnival stands and the set-up of cubicles for the local councils elections.

The Electrical Unit is mainly concerned with the maintenance of street lights at various sites. Localities under its responsibility included, amongst others, Fontana, Kerċem, Marsalforn, Mgarr, Munxar, Nadur, Rabat, Sannat, Santa Luċija, Xaghra, Xewkija, Xlendi and Żebbuġ. This Unit also carried out installation of flood lights in connection with the holding of various cultural activities such as Carnival, the Gozo Agricultural Exhibition and Christmas activities. During 2011, this unit installed new electrical systems at the Crisis Centre, Back Office premises in Xewkija and offices at the Administration Centre as well as continued with the installation of a new system at the Gozo Experimental Farm, which was commenced in the previous year. This Unit also carried out regular maintenance works on electrical units and installations in various offices and sites.

The Metal Unit of this Section manufactured benches, railings and beach ladders which were installed at various beaches and tourist resorts. The unit manufactured barriers and gates which were installed at the Civil Abattoir and carried out metal works at the Dawwara Nursery and Villa Rundle. It also carried out minor metal works needed at the carpentry and electrical units of the Manufacturing and Services Section.

The Mechanical Garage housed within the Manufacturing and Services Section carried out repairs and maintenance works on vehicles and machinery owned by the Directorate. This unit also coordinated the supply of light vehicles and heavy machinery for use by other sections within the Projects and Development Directorate. During the period under consideration, it provided vehicles for use by the Beach Cleaning Section as well as machinery to the Agriculture Branch to be used in the trimming of trees and the carting away of material.

This unit was also responsible for the carrying out of levelling works in rural streets, namely, at Ta' Lambert in the Ghajnsielem/Xewkija area and Ghar Ilma in Santa Luċija. This Unit was also involved in the excavation and levelling works at the Government Experimental Farm and the horse race track at Xewkija. This Unit was also involved in carting away illegally dumped material from various sites to an approved dumping site.

Building and Engineering Section

The Building and Engineering Section is responsible for the provision of services which include the preparation of specifications for tenders, expropriations, draughtsmanship, quantity surveying and the issuing of trenching permits.

During the year under review, this Unit continued with its programme of carrying out alterations, maintenance and improvement works at the Administrative Centre in Victoria. The main task carried out by the Section's employees at the Administrative Centre was that of upgrading and converting office space to house the Head Office of the Directorate for Projects and Development. This Unit brought to an end the construction works at the Civil Abattoir which were commenced in the previous year. It also carried out embellishment and upgrading works at the Dawwara Nursery. Other maintenance and construction works were carried out at the Government Experimental Farm. This Unit was also involved in the dismantling and reconstruction of a dangerous structure in Lourdes Street in Ghajnsielem.

This Section was responsible for the issue of tenders and quotations and supervised works carried by contractors. During 2011, this Unit supervised works on the following projects: the cleaning of valleys at Ghasri and Marsalforn, the construction of retaining walls and maintenance on dams at Ghasri and Marsalforn and the Three Hills Garden in Marsalforn. These works are being carried out in conjunction with the Eco-Gozo and Regional Development Directorate.

Building Maintenance and Restoration Section

The Building Maintenance and Restoration Section is responsible for the carrying out of restoration, maintenance and construction works.

During the year under review, this Section was mainly engaged in carrying out works in the Cittadella area. It conducted structural repairs on the staircase and underlying room leading up to the Citadel as well as the restoration of the roof structure of the clock tower. In case of the latter, works included the dismantling and replacement of the existing stone slabs and timber beam roof structures. This Section carried out works on the consolidation of the perimeter walls as well as rebuilt rubble walls. It also carried out pointing and re-painting works within the precincts of the Citadel.

During 2011, this section carried out maintenance and restoration works on St Andrew's Statue at Xlendi and the votive statue in Capuchin's Street Victoria. It was also involved in the dismantling of the internal temporary wall buttresses at Santa Cecilia chapel in the limits of Ghajnsielem. Various works on marble plaques, including new inscriptions and the restoration of old plaques, were also carried out by the marbler who is attached to this Section.

CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE UNIT

The main objective of the Construction and Maintenance Unit is that of rendering services in the construction and maintenance areas to the general public, voluntary organisations, and other government entities.

In 2011, the CMU reconstructed retaining and boundary walls which had either collapsed or else were hindering access to passage ways. A total length of 129m x 6 courses of retaining and boundary walls were re-constructed with *franka* stone. On some sites, excavation works and works on new foundations had to be undertaken in order to stabilise the structure. The CMU reconstructed more than 1,000m in length x 1.5m in height of rubble walls which had caved in, in previous years mainly due to heavy rainfall.

The CMU is also responsible for the improvement and maintenance of farm access roads, passages and ramps in fields and surrounding areas. Repair works, levelling and surfacing of passages leading to fields were given priority in order to provide proper access to farmers. In this regard, during the year under

consideration, more than 1,000m in length by an average width of 3.5m of farm roads were levelled and repaired whilst another 83m x 2.45m of ramps were reconstructed.

Another responsibility which falls in the remit of this Unit is the construction and carrying out of works on new pavements and ramps. Pavements, where it was technically possible, were constructed in a way to facilitate access to persons with special needs. During 2011, the CMU constructed more than 570 metres in length of pavements and ramps in various localities in Gozo.

CMU employees carried out maintenance work at the NGO offices in Xewkija, at various playing fields and football grounds and on other sports facilities, namely the horseracing track and *Boċċi* pitches. Repair works on chain link fencing was carried out at Xagħra, Kerċem, Nadur and Ghajnsielem football grounds. Maintenance work was carried out at Ta' Passi Christmas Village in Ghajnsielem.

The CMU rendered services to various government directorates, departments and local councils. Plastering and painting work were carried out at the Gozo Public Library, Exhibition Hall at the Ministry for Gozo, Inland Revenue Department, Institute of Tourism Studies, Crafts Centre in Ghajnsielem and at Agius De Soldanis Girls' Secondary School. Installation and maintenance on electrical equipment and systems were also carried out at the Gozo Law Courts, at the ITS and at Agius De Soldanis School. Employees were also deployed to maintain various fountains. Works on iron railings, iron grates, parking signs and repair of tools were carried out by the blacksmith at the premises' workshop. Iron railings and grades were afterwards installed at playing fields and other public sites. Repair works on water culverts and some construction and maintenance works on government tenements were also taken in hand by this Unit. Other sundry works were carried out by CMU employees that are currently on loan with Qala and Xewkija Local Councils. This Unit is also charged with the running of the Handyman Service scheme which entails the carrying out of various odd jobs in elderly persons' homes.

SEWERAGE MASTER PLAN

The major achievement during 2011 was the elimination of the Wied il-Mielah sewage outfall. As from June, all sewage collected in the Żebbuġ, Għasri, San Lawrenz and Għarb areas was diverted to the waste water treatment plant at Ras Il-Hobż. This was achieved through the completion of the Wied il-Mielah pumping station and the connection of the relative rising main to the drainage system. The closure of the Wied il-Mielah sewage outfall marked a milestone in that all wastewater collected in Gozo was now treated prior to discharge.

Another project embarked upon in 2011 was the construction of a new waste water pumping station at Mġarr which by the end of the year was nearly in its final stages of completion. This project complements the rehabilitation of the Żewwieqa waterfront. It is envisaged that sewage collected in Mġarr and on the Gozo Channel ferries will be pumped into the network. Throughout the year, various works on the water and wastewater networks was undertaken. Defective sewer and water mains were replaced as well as new mains were installed in conjunction with the reconstruction and building of new roads.

Works on the Sewage Masterplan are carried out by the Water Services Corporation and are funded from the Capital Vote of the Ministry for Gozo.

Further to this, a pressure main is being installed along Mġarr Road. This pressure main will be used to deliver second class water from the Sewage Treatment Plant at Ras il-Hobż.

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES BRANCH

Civil Abattoir

- *Structural Work:* The Ministry for Gozo has invested in an abattoir which meets EU standards in slaughter process, animal welfare and safety of operation. The new abattoir, which is housed in the shell of the

original abattoir plus additional structures, provides for completely new plant and equipment and cold storage facilities. All structural work and the installation of new equipment at the civil abattoir were concluded in 2011. The civil abattoir became fully operational in the beginning of December 2011.

- *Slaughter of Livestock:* During the year under review, most of the slaughter of livestock had to be carried out at the Civil Abattoir in Malta due to the refurbishment programme which was still going on in 2011. The number of cattle slaughtered in Malta was 1,156 heads, comprising 540 cows and 616 bulls. On the other hand, 4,986 heads of swine were slaughtered in the same period. In December 2011, as the slaughter house in Gozo became operational, 20 cows, 30 bulls and 537 swine were slaughtered in this new facility.
- *Incinerator:* All fallen animals, condemned meat and offal were disposed of by means of incineration at the existing facilities in Malta. During 2011, 505 bovines, 598 ovines, 15 equines and 1,145 pigs were incinerated. It is to be noted that poultry testing positive for *Salmonellosis* and 53,827 kgs of material were disposed off by the same method at these facilities.

Veterinary Services

This section is responsible for the regulation of animal husbandry and slaughter in Gozo.

Field Work

- *TB/Brucellosis Testing:* All farms supplying milk to the Malta Dairy Products (MDP) were tested for TB, Brucellosis, Leukosis, Blue Tongue and BSE during 2011. The following tests were carried out on 72 cattle herds as follows:

TB Tests	7,662
Brucella Tests	7,666
Leukosis	7,666
Blue Tongue	104
BSE	377

Additionally, TB/Brucella tests were also extended to farms which support ruminants. A total of 593 units which raise goats and sheep were checked. Tests were conducted as follows:

Brucella tests on sheep	3,875
Brucella tests on goats	1,053

- *Blood tests:* All blood tests were carried out at the Malta Diagnostic Laboratory as no adequate facilities exist at the Civil Abattoir laboratory in Gozo. Tests were conducted as follows:

	Bovines	Sheep	Goats
MDP	7,666	0	0
Non-MDP	3	3,875	1,053

- *Pig Tattooing:* Another function of the unit is the tattooing and registration of pigs in Gozo.

No. of tattoos (born)	5,920
Registration of Deaths	1,153
Registration of slaughtered animals	5,523

All pig units were inspected and a technical report and census made.

- *Poultry:* During 2011, and as in previous years, inspections on a frequent basis were carried out on all poultry cutting establishments. Owners of these establishments were advised on the need to abide by the respective regulations governing their trade. Poultry farms too were subjected to routine inspections. Prior to the slaughter of broilers, an inspector from this unit carried out an exhaustive anti-mortem inspection to ensure that broilers were fit for consumption. Laboratory analyses were conducted on a regular basis on random samples of faeces and eggs collected from various units in order to detect any diseases at an early stage.

- *Animal Welfare:* This Unit carried out various inspections on poultry and swine farms to ascertain that animals are kept and bred in line with current animal welfare legislation.

Mgarr Inspectorate

One of the main functions of the Mgarr Inspectorate is to prevent diseases from reaching Gozo. In this regard, inspections were carried out on a shift basis all year round on farmers' vehicles crossing over to and from Malta. Strict control and monitoring of the movement of animals between the islands was also maintained.

Extension Service Section

During the year under review, dairy farmers sought advice from the Extension Service Section on various matters concerning their industry. Farmers were given advice on methods how to upgrade their farms to be in line with existing regulations. Additionally, employees from the Section conducted on site inspections to be in a better position to assess farmers' needs. The Section liaised with MEPA on farm permits and plans on behalf of farmers. Employees from this unit attended MEPA meetings to keep abreast of developments.

Prevention of Diseases

The Veterinary Services takes the necessary measures to monitor, control and prevent the outbreak of contagious diseases on the island.

- *Salmonella* - All layer farms were inspected. Faeces and blood samples were taken and sent to the laboratory for analyses. During the year under consideration, four poultry farms tested positive for *Salmonellosis* and had all their stock culled and destroyed under supervision.
- *Blue tongue disease* - In order to better control this disease on farms, blood samples were periodically taken from four to six randomly chosen cattle farms and sent for laboratory analyses.
- *Rigid control of animal movement* - With the inter trace in place all animal movements were recorded and cross checked. The strict control of animal movement helps to prevent the proliferation of diseases on farms.

Gozo Marketing Centre

The Gozo Marketing Centre' main function is to provide farmers with a market where they can sell their locally grown agricultural produce, mainly fruits and vegetables. The total value of agricultural produce sold through the Gozo Marketing Centre during 2011 amounted to €58,638 which is lower than for the previous year. There was also a significant decrease in weight of produce sold during the same period.

Gozitan farmers, apart from selling their produce in Gozo, make use of the Marketing Centre in Malta. During the year under consideration, the total value of produce sold by Gozitan farmers through both Marketing Centres amounted to €1,214,695. This also represented a decrease over the previous year. It is to be noted that Gozitan farmers sell the bulk of their produce at the Marketing Centre in Malta.

The Gozo Marketing Centre is directly linked to the Pitkali Markets Management System (PMMS) in Malta. This enables instant inputting of data on deliveries by farmers, sales from each pitkali store and issuing of invoices to farmers and greengrocers. Through this system, queries about deliveries and farmers' sales can be traced and checked from the Gozo Centre.

Afforestation, Parks and Public Garden Section

The principal aims of the Afforestation, Parks and Public Gardens Section are to embellish and upgrade the rural and urban environment by increasing the number of trees and shrubs planted in open spaces and the propagation of endemic and indigenous species. This Section has a supervisory role on the works

carried out by the Environment Landscape Consortium which was contracted by the Ministry for Gozo to manage a number of soft areas and verges in Gozo.

Afforestation

The Afforestation Section is responsible for the maintenance of a number of public gardens in Gozo, namely Villa Rundle in Victoria, Ulysses Grove in Xewkija and Papa Ġwanni XXIII in Mgarr. It is also responsible for the landscaping and upkeep of central strips, roundabouts, street verges and other soft areas.

Afforestation projects have been undertaken in conjunction with Eco-Gozo Regional Development Directorate in the construction a new garden at Marsalforn in place of a derelict site, an extension to Papa Ġwanni XXIII grove, which was planted with indigenous trees during 2011 and in the preparatory work and application to MEPA for the afforestation of an infilled quarry at Qortin ta' Isopu in Nadur and the upgrading of Ulysses Grove in Xewkija.

During the year, hundreds of ornamental trees and shrubs and thousands of seasonal flowering plants, propagated at the Section's own nurseries, were planted all over Gozo. The number of plants/trees planted in 2011, according to category, is as follows:

Bedding plants/seasonal plants	6,783
Decorative	1,134
Medicinal	123
Standard trees	1,690
Total	9,730

During 2011, the Afforestation Section was involved in carrying out site maintenance works. Another function of the Unit is the pruning of trees and shrubs. The Afforestation Section honoured its contractual obligations with the Local Councils of Munxar, Żebbuġ, Qala and Ghajnsielem to maintain their soft areas. Income derived from these contracts amounted to €2,491. This Section also supplied palm fronds to fishermen and olive branches to religious entities.

As in the previous year, the Gozo Agricultural, Industrial and Cultural Exhibition and the Flower Exhibition which used to be held at the Villa Rundle Gardens in August and in May respectively had to be relocated to other locations due to the upgrading project which is currently in hand.

The Nurseries

The Agriculture Branch runs two ornamental nurseries namely, Tad-Dawwara and Tal-Ħlewwa, which are situated at Victoria and Kerċem respectively. As already stated, decorative trees, shrubs and seasonal flowering bedding plants were propagated in these nurseries. Indigenous species were also propagated. Production is principally intended for use at the Directorate's afforestation sites, public gardens as well as central strips and roundabouts. The following comparative table shows the number of plants supplied for afforestation use in the last three years:

Plants supplied for Afforestation purposes					
Year	Standard	Decorative	Seasonal	Medicinal	Total
2009	109	386	50,133	22	50,650
2010	576	179	15,737	18	16,510
2011	1,690	1,134	6,783	123	9,730

The large drop in the propagation of seasonal plants, which are mainly used for planting in soft areas and verges, was mainly due to the fact that the Environmental Landscapes Consortium, which had been contracted by the Ministry for Gozo to manage most of these areas and verges, supplied its own flowering plants. However, the nurseries managed to increase considerably the propagation of standard, decorative and medicinal plants over the 2010 period.

The nurseries, as in previous years, supplied plants and shrubs for a trial project within the Ministry for Gozo intended to reclaim abandoned land, prevent soil erosion and embellish the environment. It is also to be noted that 1,530 plants, mostly seasonal, were donated to various local councils, schools and voluntary organisations. These nurseries also supplied hundreds of potted plants on return basis to various entities in order to embellish their premises when holding cultural or similar activities. The nurseries offer the opportunity to the public to purchase ornamental plants and logs for use as firewood. Though the total number of trees and shrubs sold during 2011 decreased over the previous year, income generated from these sales was higher than the previous year. The table below shows the number of trees sold and revenue generated during the last three years.

Sale of Trees and Shrubs (excluding seasonals) from Nurseries					
<i>Year</i>	<i>Total no of plants</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Decorative</i>	<i>Medicinal</i>	<i>Total</i>
2009	841	279	287	142	2,451
2010	873	309	447	117	2,828
2011	772	256	362	154	2,976

Gozo General Hospital Gardens

This Section is also responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the gardens at the Gozo General Hospital. Employees from this Section pruned trees, hedges and shrubs and cleared debris and weeds from the gardens. Other works carried out in these gardens included the planting of bedding plants, which were propagated at the Dawwara Nursery, watering and the cultivation of soil.

Government Experimental Farm

The Government Experimental Farm's main function is to cultivate and conduct experimental trials of crops and trees using modern techniques. It is also envisaged that with the collaboration of the Institute of Earth Sciences at the University of Malta, the Experimental Farm will be transformed into a Research, Development and Innovation Centre in rural sciences. A major upgrading, which is being funded out of the Eco-Gozo budget, is also being undertaken in order to permit research to be carried out at a more scientific level for the benefit of the agricultural community and to recuperate local varieties of crops and livestock which are at risk of extinction.

Protected Cropping

During the year under review, no crops were grown in the greenhouses as these were dismantled. Two new and modern greenhouses are being built in their stead.

Sale of Vegetable Seedlings, Fruits and Fruit Trees

During 2011, some 9,000 pepper, artichoke, aubergine, cauliflower, onion and cabbage seedlings were sold to local farmers and the general public. Income generated from this sale was €230. The Government Experimental Farm also sold 67 kilos of soft fruit mainly peaches and nectarines as well as 455 kilos of citrus fruit comprising lemons, oranges, and grapefruit. In 2011, the Farm also sold 104 fruit trees, namely peaches, pomegranates, plums and apples, with income amounting to €520. Some other 230 fruit trees had to be brought over from the government tree nurseries in Malta in order to meet public demand.

Livestock and Birds Section

The Government Experimental Farm houses some animals notably sheep, goats, ducks, and hens. The purpose of holding these animals is to educate school children in connection with the Hands on Farming Programme. During the year under review, a small number of pure rabbits and poultry were sold for breeding purposes. The Government Farm is also responsible for the carrying out of the Captive Birds Breeding Programme to encourage bird enthusiasts to adopt this practice instead of trapping.

An important research project undertaken at the centre is the experimental project for the recuperation of the Maltese Black Chicken which is being undertaken in collaboration with the University of Malta.

Fields

During 2011, the Government Experimental Farm continued with its trials on local vegetables and forage. Trials were conducted on watermelons and wheat fodder. As a result of these trials, it sold 157 kilos of watermelons and transferred 40 large bales of wheat fodder to the MRRA. A substantial amount of the wheat fodder was stored at the Farm for internal use.

In order to maintain the practice of limiting use of pesticides and sprays, fruit fly traps were placed in the citrus orchards to attract and kill the fruit fly insect.

Visits

During the year under review, various visits were conducted at the Government Experimental Farm. Delegations from the University of Malta as well as members of the Agrisles Project visited the premises. Dr Juan Capote, Director of Animal Science Department of the Canary Islands conducted a visit in connection with the sheep/goats project embarked upon by the Experimental Farm. Coca Cola International and the General Soft Drinks companies together with Ministry for Gozo officials called at the Farm to explore the possibility of enhancing the harvesting of rain water on the premises. Several farmers visited the premises to seek technical advice on various matters related to their trade.

Courses and Meetings for farmers

During January 2011, this Unit organised another four courses, to supplement the ones held in December of the previous year, on the awareness of pesticides use. The course was organised by the Projects and Development Directorate and the Eco-Gozo Regional Development Directorate. These courses were attended by 104 participants. The farmers were subjected to a test conducted at the end of the courses and were awarded a licence by MSA for the purchase and use of pesticides. Additionally, this Section organised two meetings for beekeepers as well as a meeting for sheep and goat breeders.

Other work/activities

As part of the upgrading of the farm into a Research and Innovation Centre, the old greenhouses were dismantled and two new and modern ones were built. During 2011, the Government Farm purchased equipment and machinery, namely a large tractor and a compact tractor and furniture to be used by employees deployed on the Farm. A contract was awarded for the supply and installation of a fertigation and water network to enable research on water use in agriculture. An existing reservoir is also being refurbished. These investments are being funded out of the Eco Gozo vote.

Officers from the Government Experimental Farm carried out various inspections at farmers' premises on the latter request in order to discuss matters and give technical advice related to their trade. In 2011, twigs and small branches resulting from tree pruning were shredded in a machine which was housed on the premises.

Land and Water Use Section

One of the functions of this Section is the monitoring and preservation of soil resources in accordance with the Fertile Soil Preservation Act of 1973. Whenever soil has to be translocated, normally prior to commencement of construction works, officers from this section call on site to ascertain that all fertile soil is removed to safe storage for eventual use to reclaim poor land, gardens and fields. During 2011, this Section processed 33 applications which entailed the removal of approximately 20,640 cubic metres of soil.

This Section is responsible for the issuing of transportation permits to farmers, fishermen, couriers, egg and poultry and pig breeders to carry their produce to Malta free of charge. This Unit also carried out on site assessments in connection with the compensation for damages to crops and lands. Additionally, land inspections were conducted in connection with applications for development permits and repair of rubble walls.

During 2011, this Section received and processed 37 applications for the purchase of fruit trees and vine rootlings. It also issued licences to four commercial vintners who pressed 117,700kgs of grapes.

Front Office Paying Agency - Gozo

The Front Office Paying Agency's main function is to register and keep records of land under cultivation and to support farmers in their bid to access the various schemes which may be available.

Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS)

The LPIS comprises a computerised system in which data pertaining to all land under cultivation is inputted. During the year under consideration, the LPIS was continuously updated through adjustments and transfers of land ownership and the registration of new land. Site-plans of all parcels of land under cultivation were kept in order to facilitate identification. This Unit dealt with and solved a number of problems regarding the overlapping and incorrect location of farm land. Some problems which could not be solved by the Unit were forwarded to the Board of Disputes.

Farmer's Aid Applications

During 2011, the aid schemes which were made available to farmers from 14 February to 13 May were the following: Arable Aid; Fruit and Vegetables for Production; Vines; and Less Favoured Area.

This Unit received 1,285 applications from full-time and part-time farmers for the above mentioned schemes. It is to be borne in mind that a single application can be made out for more than one aid scheme. During 2011, payments to farmers, as in previous years, were effected under the 'Single Payment System'. This scheme establishes the financial aid payable to farmers and is divided in two sections, namely, authorised entitlements, and normal entitlements. Authorised entitlements are intended for the horticulture sector. Normal entitlements cover arable land, set-aside fields and olive tree fields. Fruit and vine trees were not included in this scheme.

The Agri-Environment Measures (AEMs) which were introduced under the Rural Development Plan for 2007 – 2013 (Axis II), were also available during 2011. These measures are intended to protect and enhance the environment through good agricultural practices, particularly the good use of pesticides and herbicides. Farmers could apply at the Gozo Office for financial assistance in respect of nine measures:

New Measures

From 3 October 2011 to 2 December 2011, nine new measures were launched the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. Due to high demand, these measures were extended up to 16 December 2011. The following are the measures and the number of applicants submitting proposals to the relative measure at the Front Office – Paying Agency in Gozo:

- Measure 121 - Modernisation of Agricultural Holdings - 107 applications
- Measure 123 - Adding Value to Agricultural Products - 9 applications
- Measure 124 - Cooperation for Development of New Products, Processes and Technologies in the Agricultural and Food Sectors - 2 applications

Other Duties

During 2011, this Unit processed 31 applications referred to it by MEPA for the development of agricultural land. Apart from liaising with MEPA, this process often involved site inspections by the Directorate officials. This Unit dealt with beekeepers' aid applications, as well as processed 43 applications in connection with the farmer's market which is due to be introduced in Gozo.

Fisheries Section

During 2011, the number of registered fishermen stood at 429 which represents a marginal increase over the number of the previous year. Out of this total, 81 persons were registered as full-time fishermen, whereas 132 individuals were registered as part-time and 216 recreational fishermen. Notwithstanding the overall increase in the number of registered fishermen, it has to be noted that there was a significant drop in the number of full-time and part-time fishermen.

Thirty four fishermen were granted a licence to lay *kannizzati* in the following four districts:

Xlendi	19
Marsalforn	9
Mġarr-Grigal	4
Mġarr-Lbiċ	2

Additionally, tuna fishing licences were issued to seven full-time fishermen whereas 73 surface long line permits (*irmigġi*) were issued to fisherman to harvest swordfish. This Section also maintains a register of fishing vessels in Gozo. By the end of 2011, there were 429 fishing vessels recorded with this Section. These are subdivided into three categories, namely, full-time fishing craft, part-time fishing craft and recreational. The majority of these craft fall under the recreational category with the full-time being the least numerous. The bulk of the fishing vessels are located at Mġarr harbour whereas Marsalforn, Xlendi and Dwejra bays hold substantial smaller numbers. A very small percentage of vessels are distributed in other small bays of the island.

Maintenance

During the past year, maintenance and repair works were carried out on the electric winches at Mġarr, Marsalforn, Qbajjar, Mġarr ix-Xini and Xlendi bays, while sundry maintenance work was carried out on all other winches located in various bays. Other works included the changing of berthing rings, the cleaning of sand in front of the slipway at Mġarr harbour, and the replacement of fenders on the Xlendi quay. Additionally, regular inspections were carried out in all fishing centres.

JOSEPH PORTELLI

Director (Projects and Development)

Customer Services Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the Customer Services Directorate are to:

- ensure a liaison system among the various operation centres with the objective of improving customer services for the population;
- ensure proper planning relating to customer services;
- manage the branches, offices and sections of the Ministry for Gozo which provide a direct service to the public, ensuring that customers are always given a service of high quality;
- provide a quality Health Service to Gozitans and visitors to Gozo; and
- coordinate and support initiatives of a cultural and/or social nature taken by NGOs, local councils and other organisations.

During 2011, the Directorate of Customer Services was directly responsible for 23 sections and liaised with the Gozo branches of the Inland Revenue Department, VAT Office and Electoral Office.

EDUCATION OFFICE

The Education Office in Gozo also offers a wide range of services to the Gozo College schools (state schools), church schools, and to the three special schools namely the Art School, School of Music and Drama School. Pupils and the public in general were offered various services.

The following construction, refurbishment and maintenance works were completed:

Schools	Projects during 2011
Agius de Soldanis	Façade refurbishment including apertures, corridor tiling, corridor lights Shifting of administration offices Gate for full accessibility New electrical installation in three floors north side New electrical installations in two floors Install new network for interactive whiteboards (ITWB) and electrical installations
Sir M A Refalo	New entrance Platform lift Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
Ghajnsielem	Completion of tile laying, painting in stairs, four corridors, Head's office and kinder class Painting corridors and exterior wall Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
Xagħra	New Toilets Painting ground floor corridor New gypsum facade for stage in main hall Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
Qala	Artificial Turf Laying Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
Sannat	Refurbishment of corridor and 3 kinder classes including apertures Eight cabinets for Kinder and Special Needs Platform Lift in Hall Refurbishment of Special Needs Kitchen and Clinic Installation of four Air Conditioning Units for Special Needs classes

	Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
Kerċem	Ramp for accessibility Steps from school to playground Painting wooden classes doors
Xewkija	Aluminium Windows of all classes Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
San Lawrenz	Aluminium Windows of all classes & Head's Office Plastering and painting of corridors Painting of various games in playground Repair Roof Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
Nadur	Cabinets in each class Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations
Għarb	Aluminium skylights in two blocks (main entrances) Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations Aluminium apertures in shaft
Żebbug	Health and safety office Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations Refurbishment of a number of classes
School of Music	Aluminium Windows Wooden Cabinet
Agius de Soldanis	Façade refurbishment including apertures, corridor tiling, corridor lights Shifting of administration offices Gate for full accessibility New electrical installation in three floors north side New electrical installations in two floors Install new network for interactive whiteboards (ITWB) and electrical installations
Sir M A Refalo	New entrance Platform lift Install new network for ITWB and electrical installations

General overview of initiatives

- Professional development for all teaching personnel including SMT;
- Circulation and sharing of professional material in an ongoing action/research mindset;
- Monthly Council of Heads meeting including Heads in church schools;
- Preparation of half yearly exams at college level;
- Meetings of parents whose children need dyslexia and ADHD care;
- Regular weekly curricular meetings for teaching staff;
- Meetings for parents of children in Gozo College;
- Various meetings for teaching staff, parents and students re NCF still at consultation stage;
- Publication of Gozo College Educational Journal Volume 3;
- Publication and distribution of a Curricular Forum among all teaching personnel;
- Participation in Carnival activities;
- Participation in *Jum Ghawdex*;
- Partners with Eco-Gozo in various projects and activities;
- Celebration Days in all our schools;
- Active role in the launch and running of the English Speaking Union (Gozo Branch);
- Participation in various radio and TV programmes in Gozo and Malta;
- Maintenance and embellishment of our schools;
- Inauguration of the new Boys' School;
- Co-projects with ETC and other NGOs;
- Participation in various EU and national projects and competitions; including the *Comenius Regio Project* with Sicily,
- Classification exercise for primary and secondary schools;
- Deployment of peripatetic teaching personnel;
- Running of office.

More specific initiatives

- Publication of diary for all students;
- Multilingual festival for all kinder students including church schools;
- Minifest puppet show in all schools with distribution of pedagogical material for preparation and follow-up;
- Sports' Day for primary and secondary schools;
- Foreign language awareness sessions in all primary schools;
- Seminars for Yrs 4, 5, and 6 by PSD peripatetic teachers;
- Co-projects with Arts and Crafts Centre of Ghajnsielem;
- Graduation Day for all Yr 6 pupils;
- Award for Entrepreneurship inter-college competition;
- Participation (and actual winning) in the Enbed e-Learning national competition;
- Swimming sessions for our pupils at ARKA;
- Introduction of the Learning Support Zones in both our Secondary Schools;
- A project by the name of LWIEN in the Girls' School focusing on both students and their parents;
- Launch of vocational education (Engineering and Health and Care) in our Secondary Schools;
- Launch of a debating society in conjunction with ESU;
- Participation in various EU projects;
- Twinning *Comenius-Regio Project* with Palermo (first of its kind in Malta and Gozo), co-partners Victoria Wanderers and the Victoria Local Council;
- Participation in a theatrical representation in Pollina, Sicily.

After school Programmes

- Continuation with Chess Club at GC Victoria Primary for all students;
- ICT lessons in preparation for ECDL for Secondary Schools;
- Various innovative activities by our three animators including trekking, trips to Comino, abseiling, night hikes and the resuscitation of traditional games.

Innovative methodologies and pedagogies

- Mixed-ability teaching in all primary classes;
- Inclusive Celebration Days replacing traditional Prize Days;
- Team-core-subject teaching in all primary schools;
- Graduation Days for all students irrespective of academic ability;
- Pedagogy based on the concept of multiple intelligences;
- Stress on learning to learn and autonomy at all levels;
- Respect for diversity and otherness at all levels;
- Open door policy for all.

EXAMINATIONS CENTRE

The Examinations Centre in Gozo is responsible for the running of all local and external examinations held in Gozo.

Hereunder is a detailed analysis of the work carried out.

- *Applications (Local, Matriculation and External Examinations)* - This section is responsible for all applications that form part of the Examinations Department in Floriana. All Matric, London and AQA applications were done online. Moreover this section catered for other examinations and Boards such as LCCI, EFL, Wireman Lic A and B, Regular Soldiers in the AFM, Foreign University Degrees and Clerks in the MPS. On average, there were over 24,000 examination sittings. Both local and external examination applications were vetted and acknowledged. Since the office is connected with the Examinations Department network in Floriana, all Gozo candidates are being invoiced through this office and there is no need to forward their respective applications to Malta. Through this initiative, the waiting period from application date to payment date has been drastically reduced (from seven to two days).

- *Online applications* - During November, personnel from this section visited Agius de Soldanis Girls Junior Lyceum and Ninu Cremona Boys Junior Lyceum and supervised fifth formers applying for their Sec examinations online. Over 500 students applied for SEC exams and 250 students for Matric (Advanced Certificate and Single Subjects) on line in Gozo – nearly 100% of all students in these categories. Private candidates applied for their session from the offices of this section.
- *Examination sessions* - There were over 460 examination sessions (External, Matriculation and Local Examinations). When the number of candidates was more than 40, outside help was sought by engaging invigilators from other departments to ensure the smooth running of the examinations in session. During the last few years a dramatic increase in the number of special cases that need special considerations such as amanuensis, reader, prompter etc. This entails the need for a lot more classes for accommodation. Up to last session, all students in Sir M' Ang Refalo Post Secondary School.
- *Certificates* - This Section received over 1,300 certificates for distribution to successful students who had sat for the London, ECDL, Degrees and London Chamber of Commerce examinations.
- *Information* - Information is provided regarding the various local, Matsec and external examinations to the hundreds of students who call at the Centre. Examination timetables, syllabuses, results, applications and other related data are also available for ease of reference. In October, various lectures were held in the secondary schools (to Fifth form students and their parents) to familiarise them with examination procedures.
- *ECDL examinations* - For the 9th year running, this Section has also been appointed as coordinators for the European Computer Driving Licence examinations, which are now being held in Gozo.
- *English as a Foreign Language* - One session of this examination was held at the centre

CULTURE SECTION

Administration

During the past year, the following were the principal efforts of the Culture Section:

- following the publication of the National Cultural Policy, holding of discussions on the preparation of the final draft of a Cultural and Regional Strategy for Gozo and a change in the role of the Gozo Cultural Office, in view of the proposals listed in the Eco-Gozo strategy;
- close collaboration with Gozitan local councils and other cultural entities on the island to consolidate an Annual Cultural Calendar for Gozo;
- a full programme of cultural activities at the Cittadella Centre for Culture and the Arts as a means for innovation and to promote creativity as well as a cultural space for artistic expression of all genres.
- keeping contacts and holding regular meetings with foreign embassies in Malta resulting in close collaboration and the hosting of foreign artists and performers in Gozo.

Organisation of Activities

During 2011, the Culture Section was responsible for the organisation of the following activities:

- The commemoration of five annual National Festivities, together with the 30 October 1948 tragedy anniversary and the commemoration of victims of the two world wars in November; the *Jum Ghawdex* celebration was celebrated in collaboration and with full participation of the Gozo College;
- a series of artistic evenings were organised as part of the *Gran Castello Summer Nights* at the Cittadella, Gozo and at Marsalforn and Xlendi Bay between July and September;
- three days of packed activities, coordinated by the Ministry for Gozo as part of the *Notte Gozitana* 2011 organised in June;
- around 40 art exhibitions held in collaboration with Gozitan, Maltese or foreign artists at the exhibition venues at the Ministry for Gozo, the Banca Giuratale foyer and the Cittadella Centre for Culture and Arts;
- a Christmas concert held at the Ministry Hall. The instrumental concert presided by HE the President of the Republic of Malta was conducted by the Harpeggios Trio.
- the Subsidy Scheme for Static and Mechanical cribs which attracted a record participation of 34 participants
- the Gozo's Yesteryear Christmas organised at the Cittadella Centre for Culture and Arts;

- a series of nine cultural tours for Maltese patrons visiting Gozo specifically for cultural purposes.

Carnival 2011

A total of six triumphal floats, King Carnival, two musical bands, two sets of grotesque masks, seven dance groups, eight school companies and fourteen individual costumes took part in the Gozo 2011 Regional Carnival, which was celebrated from 26 February 2011 to 8 March 2011. The regional programme also included all local carnivals organised in Gozitan villages by their respective local councils.

Grants

Grants were distributed by the Gozo Cultural Council to local artists, musicians, actors and crib builders. The Ministry for Gozo kept its annual commitment with the two Gozo opera theatres. A grant of €17,470 was given to each theatre as a subsidy towards the expenses involved in organising the annual opera performances.

Information Office

As from November 2010, the Gozo Information Office became part of the Gozo Culture Office. The aim of this unit in the Culture Office is to provide an effective information link between the public administration and the general public. The unit is responsible for the sale of all government publications, principally the Government Gazette. The decrease in sales of this Gazette continued even during the past year, as it is becoming even more evident that people opt to view the Gazette directly online instead of acquiring a hard copy. This unit has also continued to fulfil another important function, mainly that of serving as a point for the retrieval and submission of E111, E112 and scholarship forms for their eventual transmission for processing to respective ministries.

GOZO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The Gozo Public Library's dual role is to acquire and preserve for prosperity the national collection of printed material and to provide academic books and other related material in printed and electronic form for research. The Gozo Lending Library and the local branch libraries provide educational information and recreational books for home reading.

Computerisation Project

Ten branch libraries went live using the Circulation Module.

Collections

- *Legal Deposits:* The Melitensia collection was enriched with 585 books, besides the local newspapers and periodicals that are received regularly in terms of the Legal Deposit Act of 1925. These are bound in volumes at the bookbinders section of the Gozo Public Library.
- *New acquisitions:* The sum of €5,104.68 was spent on the acquisition of 573 books for the Gozo Public Library and the Gozo Lending Library. The sum of €2,601.49 was spent for the purchase of 461 books for Local Branch Libraries. The sum of €322.26 was spent on subscriptions of foreign magazines, which are made available for consultation at the Gozo Public Library.
- *Donations:* 4,832 books were donated by various persons and entities: 542 to the Gozo Public Library, 106 books to the Gozo Lending Library, and 4,184 to the Local Branch Libraries.

Readers' Services

- *Research service:* 2,352 researchers requested a total number of 6,802 items for their research, as follows: 1,589 newspapers; 2,328 Melitensia books; 897 academic books; 634 periodicals; 5 manuscripts and 1,349 other items (which include government publications, past exam papers and material from the projects' section). The staff also dealt and helped with researchers' queries.
- *Photocopying services:* 1,651 persons requested 24,443 prints from the works consulted at the Gozo Public Library. This yielded an income of €2,944.00. All prints were available on the same day of request.
- *Internet service:* 7,330 persons availed themselves of the Internet Service (Gozo Public Library – 6,241 person; Gozo Lending Library 1,089 persons).
- *New members:* 558 persons requested to be entitled to borrow books for home reading (Gozo Lending Library – 116 adults/130 juniors; Local Branch Libraries – 98 adults/214 juniors).
- *Book loans:* A total number of 105,961 books loans were issued for home reading (Gozo Lending Library – 41,460; Local Branch Libraries – 64,501).

Publicity and Promotion

- *Library orientation visits:* At the beginning of every scholastic year, the Gozo Public Library promotes library orientation visits through the Heads of School. These visits are attended by students accompanied by their respective teachers and on several occasions by their respective parents. The programme generally includes reading of compositions and recital of poems by the students. An exhibition of new books is put on display on each visit. During 2011, 698 students attended for these orientation visits.
- *Community information:* The notice board of the Gozo Public Library which illustrates job vacancies, courses and other related topics of educational and cultural interest continued to be utilised by the general public.

Exhibitions

An annual exhibition of new books was held as part of the activities to commemorate World Book Day 2011. Another exhibition was held to coincide with *Lejlet Lapsi/Notte Gozitana*. For the fifth consecutive year, the Gozo Public Library opened its doors to the general public on Saturday 4 June 2011.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Tasks

The Assistant National Archivist and his assistants carry out the following tasks:

- management of the archives – a most important task for the preservation of the national memory of the Maltese nation;
- carrying out visits to government establishments to make an appraisal of the documents preserved therein. During 2011, on-the-spot checks were carried out at the Law Courts, Gozo General Hospital and at Agius de Soldanis Secondary School in Victoria where a number of registers were identified for transfer from these entities to the National Archives Gozo;
- cataloguing of documents transferred to the Archives, which task takes most of the time as the majority of documents are transferred to the NAG without any pre-established order. The analysis of the oldest section of the Archives, the records of the old *Universitas*, the regional government of Gozo during the rule of the Knights (1530-1798), continues;
- making the general public aware of this written memory of the Maltese nation. In this regard, the Assistant National Archivist proceeded with the publication of a document every month from the registers of the *Universitas*, the oldest section of the NAG. It is serialised in the monthly magazine *Il-Ħajja f'Għawdex*, a Gozitan magazine for local consumption, under the designation *Għawdex erba' mitt sena ilu – Gozo four hundred years ago*. The series will be retained for the 21st consecutive year. Up to December 2011, 198

documents had been transcribed, translated, and published with an explanation. Besides, a large-scale exhibition was held during 2011 to make the general public aware of this heritage.

International Fora

During 2011, the Assistant National Archivist represented the National Archives in various international meetings, namely the Bureau Meeting of CITRA – the *Conférence Internationale de la Table Ronde des Archives* – held at the National Archives of Simancas, Valladolid, Spain; the 1st meeting of the MSEG – Member States' Expert Group – Working Group on Digitisation Statistics; the 8th meeting of Europeana MSEG – Member States' Expert; the 6th meeting of the MSEG – Member States' Expert Group – Working Group on Digitisation Statistics; and the 9th meeting of Europeana MSEG – Member States' Expert Group – specifically, the Europeana Finance and Governance Working Group, held at the Euroforum Building, Luxembourg.

New Deposits

Most of the new deposits are either the result of growth of existing files, or the cataloguing of those already existing at the NAG.

- *AG Archives Gozo (National Archives – Gozo section)* (14 vols): items were added in the following sections: AG/01 – Correspondence (1 vol), AG/04 – Exhibition Catalogues (1 vol), AG/05 – Miscellanea (12 vols)
- *CC Civic Council* (54 items): items were added in sections CC/05 – Administration and Functions – Reports (5 vols) and CC/06 - Miscellanea (10 vols). One new section was created: CC/07 ¹– Miscellanea Loose (19+20 items)
- *CP Circulars and Posters* (1 vol): items were added in section CP/03 - Posters (1 vol)
- *GM Guljana Masini* (88 vols): the fond is new and it was divided into three sections with continuous volume numbering: GM/01 - Baptisms-Marriages-Deaths (44 vols); GM/02 - Family trees - Alberi genealogici (13 vols); GM/03 – Notarial Acts (31 vols)
- *LC Local Councils* (2 vols): items were added in the sections LC/13 - Xewkija (1 vol) and LC/14 - Żebbuġ (1 vol)
- *PA Photographs and albums* (2 vols): items were added in the section PA/01 - Historic Photos (2 vols – 120 new photos)
- *PM Plans and Maps* (1 item): items were added in the sections PM/02 – Village Plans (Large Sketch Plan Victoria and Fontana)
- *PW Public Works* (1 item): items were added in the section PW/05 - Projects (1 vol)
- *SN Street Naming* (6 vols): items were added in the sections SN/03 - Village Files (5 vols) and SN/04 – Miscellaneous (1 vol)
- *SS State Schools*²: 7 new sections were added, but documents are still being processed: SS/36 – Gozo/Secondary Girls – Log Books; SS/37 - Gozo/Secondary Girls – Daily Attendance + Class Registers; SS/38 - Gozo/Secondary Girls – Correspondence; SS/39 - Gozo/Secondary Girls - Staff Papers; SS/40 – Gozo/Secondary Girls – Examinations + Class Assessments; SS/41 – Gozo/Secondary Girls – Misc; SS/42 - Gozo/Secondary Girls – Other Schools
- *ZM Miscellanea* (46 vols): items were added in the section ZM/01 – Misc volumes (46 vols)

During 2011, a total of 215 volumes/items were catalogued or newly deposited at the NAG: 259 (2010), 664 (2009), and 402 (2008).

¹ The new section CC/07 in the fond CC – Civic Council consists of posters donated to the NAG through the Vella-Muskat bequest.

² The new sections SS/36 to SS/42 in the fond SS – States Schools are the result of a transfer of documents from the Agius de Soldanis Secondary School.

Researchers and accessions

The number of researchers at the NAG during 2011 was 228, a decrease from the 303 in 2010. The number of items consulted amounted to 681, a slight decrease over the previous year. The number of research hours amounted to 321, a decrease from the 405 in 2010. The volumes handled throughout the year amounts to about 6% of the NAG holdings.

Exhibitions

During 2011, the NAG-Gozo mounted a large-scale exhibition on the Gozo Civic Council on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its foundation. The exhibition revived the entire story of the Gozo Civic Council from its inception as the Gozo Civic Committee on 30 October 1958, to its formal approval as a Local Government for Gozo on 14 April 1961, up to its official inauguration on 10 July 1961.

The exhibition was divided into two sections. The first consisted of 40 documents related to the foundation and the working of the Committee and the Council. The second complimented the story by a profuse selection of over 100 photos of the protagonists as well as the old and new emblems of all the districts of Gozo with their parish churches – the basis of the 14 electoral districts, in which Gozo was divided for the first Local Government election on 4 June 1961. The exhibition was opened by the Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi on 9 July, eve of the 50th anniversary of the inauguration of the Council.

An exhibition catalogue with detailed information on the exhibits as well as on the NAG was published for the occasion – it is the 11th catalogue published by the NAG. For the occasion, the NAG also issued a set of 20 postcards with the coat-of-arms of the island of Gozo, of the 14 districts, of the three localities, of the island of Comino, and a composite card, with each card including their motto in Latin, in Maltese, and in English. The cards were partly sponsored by the 14 local councils of Gozo.

Webpage

The webpage of the National Archives Gozo Section is hosted by the Ministry for Gozo at <http://www.gozo.gov.mt>. The NAG is now also at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.mt> – the official website of the National Archives launched on 16 November 2009. The website will in future make it possible for browsers to purchase services offered by the NAG online. The webpage is attracting an increasing number of web browsers.

GOZO SPORTS COMPLEX

The main objectives of the Gozo Sports Complex for 2011 were to:

- encourage young athletes to practise sports
- assist sports associations and sports centres in the organisation of sports activities; and
- provide a wide range of services and to develop the venue into a sports centre equipped with high quality facilities.

Sport Activities

During 2011, sporting activities at the Gozo Sports Complex were on a regular basis. Sports disciplines such as Basketball, Volleyball, the five-a-side Football (Futsal), Table and Lawn Tennis, Squash, Karate, Spirit Combat, Kendo, and Aikido were practiced at the Gozo Sports Complex mainly through Gozitan Sports Associations. Dancing sessions, Hip-Hop, Break-dance, Yoga, and Gymnastics were also organised by private tuition throughout the year. Modelling classes and Zumba exercises sessions were introduced during 2011 reaching considerable high attendances. Physical Education teachers in secondary state schools used the Complex for their PE lessons. Annual Sports Day activities by several private and state schools were also held. For these occasions, Gozo's primary school students attended, besides their

parents and distinguished guests. The EF Language school/Malta also made use of the Complex during July and August 2011, bringing foreign students to practise sports at the Sports Complex. Also throughout 2011, sports clubs from Malta including the Sta Venera Football Nursery, the Phoenix Handball (Malta) Club, the Tarxien Rainbows Club, the Luxol Handball Club (Malta), the Badminton (Malta) Club, the Volleyball (Malta) Club, St Ignatius College, and St Albert the Great College, crossed over to Gozo and held training camps and competitions at the Gozo Sports Complex.

Several tournaments and competitions were organised at the Gozo Sports Complex during the year. In August, the Complex was once again used as the home venue for the Football Tournament organised by the SK Victoria Wanderers. In June, the administration of the Gozo Sports Complex organised another edition of the one-day Racket Tournament featuring competitions in four racket sport disciplines, being Table and Lawn Tennis, Squash, and Badminton - 30 athletes participated. The Sports Complex, in collaboration with the Martial Arts Association (Gozo), sponsored the fifth edition of the Martial Arts Festival in July. During this event, several promising young athletes were graded into higher levels. During the year, the Complex was the show case for the organisation of several Martial Arts seminars. These activities climaxed in October when the Tanchi Ryu Karate (Gozo) Club, in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo, organised a National Karate seminar at the Gozo Sports Complex. Special guest for this event was the internationally renowned Head Instructor of Ryukyu Kampo in Slovenia, Master Borut Kincl, 6th Dan Black Belt. The seminar gave the opportunity to Gozitan Martial Artists to receive technical instructions from the best Kempo Karate instructor in Europe and improve their performances in line with foreign competitors. Other seminars were also organised by other martial arts clubs resident at the Gozo Sports Complex during the year. The Taekwondo Club also kept its annual appointment and in October organised its yearly tournament. In April, the Gozo Sports Complex organised for the first time a sports-marathon in aid of Arka Foundation. Another activity, named Punch & Kick for Fun, was organised by the Kick-Boxing (Gozo) Club. All proceeds from this activity were also donated to Arka Foundation.

The initiative taken by the Gozo Sports Complex to organise Fitness Courses in *Pilates*, Aerobics, Body Tonification and Fitness continued during 2011. Three 8-week courses were organised during 2011. Gym sessions for the fitness course participants were introduced. During the Gym sessions, participants were guided by a qualified Gym Instructor giving them first hand instructions on different exercise techniques and a lecture on the benefits of physical exercise. It is the intention of the administration of the Gozo Sports Complex to continue organising these courses and introduce other initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles through sports.

The Sports Complex is the centre for community activities besides its primary sport functions. During 2011, the venue hosted various cultural activities like the Gozo Bird Breeders Bird Show, and *Festa Familja* organised by the Gozo Diocese. In June, the Arka Foundation organised a motor show in the back area of the Gozo Sports Complex.

The year 2011 saw the ending of the 12th edition and the beginning of the 13th edition of *Skolasport*. Besides Kidz Blitz Year 1, 2, and 3, *Skolasport* offers 14 different sport disciplines to school children every Saturday from November to May. Two new sport disciplines, Cricket and Squash, were introduced this year and attendance was very satisfactory. During 2011, the administration of the Gozo Sports Complex in collaboration with the Gozo College and Eco-Gozo within the Ministry for Gozo purchased new equipment to be used by Gozo College students and by students during *Skolasport*. Orientation visits to sports facilities in Gozo for students attending *Skolasport* continued during 2011, with visits to Gozo Yachting Club's premises at Mġarr Gozo where first hand information was given on Yachting and knotting. The visit ended with the students going for a boat trip around Mġarr Harbour organised by the Club. In December, *Skolasport* students went for a recreational excursion to Ramla Bay. In January, *Skolasport* students participated in the launching of the Eco-Gozo Mascot. 180 students attended *Skolasport* during 2011.

Initiatives

Due to the increasing number of gym patrons, the gym facilities were extended by purchasing new equipment and by refurbishing a new area annexed to the existing gym area for Aerobics. During 2011, the human resource capacity at the Gozo Sports Complex was utilised especially in the refurbishment of the new aerobics area. In fact the area was whitewashed, the floor was covered with parquet, the ceiling plastered and covered with gypsum, while a new electricity supply system was installed. During 2011, the Gozo Sports Complex continued to invest in the new gym by purchasing other fitness equipment. By the end of the year, persons enrolled as members of the new gym number 90. Other works were carried out at the shooting range in Żebbuġ and Ta' Xhajma Racetrack. During 2011, in collaboration with the Gozo Horse Racing Association, the amount of €18,000 was spent to facelift the racetrack and the surrounding premises. During 2011, the tender for the maintenance works of the roof of the main hall was awarded to the prospective bidder and the contract signed. Works are targeted to start by mid-2012.

In 2011, the Complex – the venue for the sporting community in Gozo – succeeded to reach its main objectives successfully. During the year, 232 persons registered to become members of the Gozo Sports Complex.

LAND SECTION

The main functions of this Section are serving as cash office for the collection of moneys due on lands owned by the Government and Joint Office, handling customer care queries, at times involving referral to the Government Property Department in Malta and when information is not available in Gozo.

An exercise to collect arrears on a particular village (Victoria) was compiled by this section. This proved to be a useful and successful exercise and it is planned to cover other villages in the same manner.

Gozo residents have also the facility to collect tender forms from this section.

The Agricultural Lease Scheme 2000/2001 is facilitated by the Gozo Office with contracts with tenants being concluded in Gozo. During 2011 there was an increase of 5% contracts signed in connection with the Agricultural Lease Scheme 2000/2001 over those signed during 2010.

	2010	2011
Contracts	411	431
Refusals	15	52

Following the signing of the contracts, the files in question are created on the system and updated accordingly. Payments made by tenants through all local councils (Malta and Gozo) or through the internet are being updated at the Gozo Office. This involves the issue of receipts, updating the system, mailing the receipts and final reconciliation exercise.

SOCIAL HOUSING OFFICE

The objectives of the Social Housing Office – Gozo are to:

- provide social accommodation to needy families;
- assist financially owner-occupiers to upgrade their housing standards; and
- encourage married and engaged couples become owners of their own residence.

During 2011, the number of new applications received, and the subsidies paid, were as follows:

Scheme	Details	Applications	Amount Paid €
-	Alternative Accommodation	16	0
R	Rent Subsidisation	23	23,819
W	Adaptation Works – Government Dwellings (Scheme closed during 2009)	0	870
I	Adaptation Works – Government/Private Dwellings occupied by tenants (New scheme)	7	12,954
GFR	Grant First Residence (V.A.T. Subsidy)*	42	188,006
GALR	Grant Assistance Loan Repayments	1	1,486
A	Adaptation Works on Owner Occupied Residences	0	2,811
-	Adaptation Works on Allocation of Government Premises	8	26,012
	Totals	97	255,958

*Paid by VAT Department

During the year, this office started processing all the GFR applications received in Malta and Gozo. About 340 applications were received during the year under review.

During the same period, the Gozo Section signed 58 deeds/agreements with Gozo Scheme applicants.

PASSPORT OFFICE

The aim of the Passport Office is to provide the necessary services relative to the issue of passports. During the year, 2,466 new passports for adults and children were issued from this Office.

Other services that are offered to the general public include:

- issuing of collective passports;
- issuing of Identity Documents not otherwise provided for in lieu of a passport;
- oaths for a lost passport;
- Arabic Translation on a Maltese Passport;
- applications for an electronic identity card;
- provision of information to persons enquiring about dual citizenship.

Notifications of new births and deaths were also dealt with at this office. During the year, 280 births and 257 deaths were notified. Such notifications are then referred to the Public Registry for registration.

Persons can apply for an emergency passport after normal working hours from this Office with effect from October 2010. This service is being provided on a 24-hour basis.

LICENSING AND TESTING

New Vera System

The Registration Tax and Annual Circulation Licence Reform for both commercial goods carrying and passenger carrying vehicles affected the numerous services offered by this Section during the past year. Registration Tax for used EU-imported commercial vehicles was calculated on the manufacture year of such vehicles and was rated according to EURO classification. A reduced Registration Tax % applied to €4 and €5 vehicles including those manufactured in 2006 onwards. This enhanced environmental friendly measures encouraging importation of newer vehicles with lower CO² emission.

This Section has continued to offer the best quality services possible to its numerous visiting customers on both NEW VERA and DLS systems. Transactions on NEW VERA include:

- Transfers of Ownership
- Transfers by Inheritance
- Garaging and De-Garaging of Self-Drive & Private vehicles

- Conversions from One Public Service Garage to another (PSG to PSG)
- Conversions from Self-Drive to Private & plate re-generation
- Plate re-Issue; Personal VRN, Generic VRN, loss, damaged & stolen plates
- Conversions of all vehicles mainly; from truck to HIAB truck, refrigerated truck, curtain sided, change of colour, seating, change of engines and discrepancies from VRT Stations
- Scrapping of vehicles
- Part 3 Registration for Motor Dealers
- Help-Desk information on both systems for both Police stations and numerous clients including foreigners
- Collection of plates, driving licences and other documentation
- Monthly Inspections at heliport site; conversions, EU importation and VRT monitoring Inspections
- Vehicle valuation for both commercial and private vehicles and First Registration for used EU-Imported vehicles

The following statistics show the total number of yearly transactions on NEW VERA system.

Registration Part 3 - Dealers	17
Conversions	475
Transfers	1,732
Garaging	1,218
De-Garaging	581
Plate Re-Issue	265
Re-Sale/De-Resale Transfers	380
Affidavit /Document Re-print	632
Scrapping	389
Transfers by Inheritance	62
Problem Licences	48
Total	5,799

Driving Licence System

Daily services offered through this system are mainly the booking of new applicants and scheduling test dates for the respective practical weekly tests. A new applicant can sit for his/her practical driving test within three weeks from submission of application at this Section. The following transactions were processed:

Exchange of Licences	79
Inclusions	219
Licence renewals	2,179
New Driving Licences	511
Total	2,985

TRADE OFFICE

This Office offers to the public the same activities which are normally offered at the Commerce Department in Malta. Import and export licences are issued from this office. Trading licences for manufacture activities, wholesale and retail activities, construction services, professional and business services, social and personal services and also street hawker licences are also received at this office and referred to the Commerce Department in Malta. The trading licence fees are fully processed at this office. Trademarks applications received are referred to the Industrial Property Office in Malta.

Additionally, this office deals with MFSA registry of companies. This includes registration of new companies, receiving fees and documents which may be required for the running of a registered company.

Throughout 2011, the following activities were undertaken:

Import Licences	416
Trading Licence applications	219
Trademarks	2
MFSA New companies	22
Annual General Meeting (AGM)	362
Companies update	625

TA' DBIEGI CRAFTS VILLAGE

The works that were carried out in this place included the planting flowers and trees and the re-painting benches. The restrooms are clean and well equipped with all hygienic necessities. The place was well lit during night times with energy saving bulbs. The site was furnished with accessibility facilities for visitors with special needs.

GOZO GENERAL HOSPITAL

Gozo General Hospital has a total bed complement of 291 distributed as follows: Acute Wards – 104 beds; Geriatric Wards – 121 beds; Psychiatric Wards – 54 beds; Nursery cots – 12. The total staff complement at the end of the year consisted of 670 full-time workers, six part-time workers, and a substitute chaplain, making a total of 677. During this year, three Consultant Gynaecologists and a Consultant Surgeon were newly appointed.

Works carried out

- *Set-up of a new Medical Imaging Unit:* The new medical Imaging Unit which was inaugurated in March 2011 now houses the following radiological equipment:
 - Digital Radiology/Fluoroscopy Unit complete with accessories
 - Skeletal Digital X-Ray Unit complete with accessories
 - Spiral CT Scan 64 Slice complete with accessories
 - Ultrasound Unit with Colour Doppler complete with accessories
 - Direct Digital Mammography facility complete with accessories
 - Computed Radiology Digitisation System complete with accessories

All this equipment is now interfaced to the Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) and the Radiology Information System (RIS) at Mater Dei Hospital. Prior to this project, Gozo General Hospital was offering radiology services by means of basic equipment which was old and unsatisfactory for the present needs. Now we are offering a quality and easily accessible imaging service which has resulted in the drastic decrease of patients having to be referred to Malta. Thus, this project was crucial to reduce hardship and related problems associated with inaccessibility issues.

- *Refurbishment and upgrading of Operating Theatre Department:* Civil and other preparatory works in connection with this project have been mostly completed and the entire project is expected to be completed by the second or third quarter of 2012.
- *Removal of remaining asbestos material:* The scope of this project is the removal of asbestos containing material mainly from the hospital corridors. By the end of the year, about 40% of the material was removed. The removal of the remaining material is projected to be completed during 2012 since this has to be coordinated with the project for the upgrading of the corridors.
- *Upgrading of the Electrical Power Supply:* This project consisted of the upgrading of the Enemalta transformer and the installation of a new main distribution panel board. This has resulted in an increased power supply capacity which was required to meet the ever increasing demands of the hospital.
- *Integrated Health Information System (IHIS):* During the year, the IHIS was extended to GGH. The RIS/PACS was introduced in April and the LIS (Laboratory Information system) in June. With these systems radiological images and both radiological and laboratory results are now available both in GGH and MDH.

General Statistical Information (Year 2011)

- The average number of beds occupied was 220.93 or 75.92%.
- The average length of stay in hospital (excluding the chronic ward) was 4.04 days per person.
- The average turnover, that is, the mean number of patients that have occupied any one bed during 2011 was 22.15 patients.
- The average turnover interval, that is, the mean time (in days) that a hospital bed was left empty between successive patients was 2.77 days (when chronic wards are excluded).

	Admissions	Population
Male Ward	2,263	9,386
Female Ward	2,085	9,125
Male Geriatric Ward	0*	12,079
Female Geriatric Ward	1*	29,055
Paediatric Ward	397	892
Maternity Ward	320	997
Coronary Care Unit	443	2,068
Nursing	283	1,883
Gynae Ward	481	765
Long Stay Ward	10	10,967
Short Stay Ward	164	3,422
Total	6,447	80,639

* does not include transfers from other sections/wards at Gozo General Hospital

Attendance of patients

- *Outpatients*: 42,959 outpatients made use of the Outpatient Department during 2011; of these, 11,289 were new cases and 31,670 were follow-ups;
- *Emergency and Admitting Department*: 16,661 patients, of whom 5,195 were eventually admitted to the wards, 19 transferred to Mater Dei, and 11,447 were discharged either to home or to Outpatients;
- *Fresh Trauma clinic*: 1,333 patients (959 new cases, 233 follow-ups, 141 failed to answer);
- *Physiotherapy*: This Department received 915 outpatients and 798 inpatients; 26,522 treatment sessions held (8,239 on out-patients and 18,283 on in-patients);
- *Occupational Therapy*: 7,478 patient sessions; 662 patients made use of service;
- *Speech Therapy*: 3,655 treatment sessions; additionally 42 patients were seen at Sannat Special School and 100 patients seen at Santa Marta Day Centre. The service has been changed to a consultative one where speech therapists instruct and direct the staff at the centre so that the actual intervention is carried out by the latter staff themselves;
- *Obstetrics*: 279 registered deliveries (280 infants born);
- *Renal Unit*: 780 haemodialysis sessions;
- *Podology*: 6,595 patients, of whom 806 were new cases;
- *Blood Donation*: 1,720 (1,152 Males, 568 Females) donors attended;
- *Acupuncture Clinic*: 547 patients, of whom 44 were new cases.
- *Hyperbaric Unit*: Six divers were treated for decompression sickness, 75 Hyperbaric Oxygen treatment sessions carried out on 13 patients.

Operations performed

	Intermediate	Major	Major +	Inter	Major Complex	Total
Surgical	8	1	129	240	364	742
Endoscopies	0	-	9	466	201	676
Ophthalmic	0	-	27	200	3	230
Orthopaedic	0	54	54	125	32	265
Gynae	0	-	164	185	145	494
Pacemaker	0	-	36	1	-	37
Dental	0	-	5	13	1	19
ENT	0	-	-	16	5	21
Total	8	55	424	1,246	751	2,484

Investigations carried out

Total X-Rays	13,655
Ultrasounds general	3,113
Echocardiograms	289
Holter Monitoring	152
Laboratory Tests	466,146 (51,429 were samples sent to Malta)
Stress ECG's	230
Lung function tests	60
Electrocardiograms	8,707
Total X-Rays	13,655

Victoria Health Centre

Primary Health Care services in Gozo are administered mainly from Victoria Health Centre. This Health Centre opens daily from 7.00a.m. to 8.00p.m. After 8.00p.m., the service is continued from the Gozo General Hospital. Besides this, there are also 12 district clinics scattered around the island.

Attendance at Primary Health Care - Gozo	
General Practitioner	43,068
Treatment	22,943
Home Visits	26
Foreigners	467
Immunisation	4611
Bereg (GP)	17,622
Total	88,737

HEALTH INSPECTORATE SERVICES

The Gozo Regional Office is responsible for all the localities and villages in Gozo, including the island of Comino. It provides the services which are normally offered by various units in Malta such as the Drug Control Unit, Food Safety Unit, Burials Administration Unit, and Diving Licences (Cards) Section. In liaison with the Administrative Unit of the Environmental Health Directorate in Malta, this office is responsible for maintaining strict surveillance on the priority communicable diseases, food safety, non-communicable disease, risk factors and environmental hazards and to take the necessary measures to remove or reduce these threats to the health of the population of these islands.

The services provided by this Office are as follows: Health Inspectorate Services; Burials Section (Santa Marija Cemetery); Pest Control; and Diving Permits Section. The region deploys Health Inspectors who are assigned to two sections, namely, Food Control and Environmental Health Control.

This Office is also responsible for monitoring the quality of the public water supply from boreholes, reservoirs, reverse osmosis plants and public swimming pool water. Audit inspections are regularly carried out by this office in order to verify that all provisions contained in the Control of Legionella Regulations 2006 are being implemented and complied with. Moreover, in collaboration with the Environmental Health Unit our office monitors the popular bathing areas in Gozo and Comino by sampling and analysis of sea water during the bathing season.

Inspections performed at food premises by category and grading by Risk Assessment Monitoring Programme

Nature of Food Premises	No of Inspections	Grade %					
		A	B	C	D	E	F
Retail Outlets	201	129	61	8	1	1	1
Food Manufacturing/ Processing/ Canning	77	57	19	1	0	0	0
Catering establishments/ hotels	255	163	69	18	2	3	0
Hawkers/Kiosk	47	36	10	0	0	0	1
Milk Producers	15	11	3	0	0	0	1
Miscellaneous	23	17	6	0	0	0	0

Inspections and samples taken in connection with investigations/follow-up cases of Food Poisoning

Inspections	51
Samples Taken	5
No. of Food Poisoning Cases	42

Miscellaneous

Inspections of premises icw MEPA applications for development permission	44
Inspections of dental x-ray clinics, tattoo/body piercing studios, old people's homes	19

Other inspections of Food Premises

Follow-up inspections re deficiencies/contraventions	34
Product recall	28
Other inspections in connection with:	
a) Sampling programme	60
b) Undertakings	35
c) Emergency Control Orders	1
d) Emergency Prohibition Orders	0
Inspection of premises in connection with licensing	
a) Department of Health	53
b) Department of Trade/MTA	59
Total	270

Contraventions

Food related	3
Environment related	6
Total	9

Destruction of food items

Approximately 75.6 kgs of food items were destroyed.

Pest Control

	No. of Areas	No. of Baits
Localities	495	18,187
Complaints	297	10,657
Sewers	124	2,810
Insect disinfection by spraying	30	-
Cases of Murine Typhus	Nil	-
Packets delivered to the Public	7,520 packets	

Control Cards for Narcotic/Psychotropic Drugs

A total of 1,629 applications for the issuing and renewal of control card for narcotic/psychotropic drugs were processed and issued by this Office.

Samples taken by category

Food	287
Beverages	0
Drinking Water	3
Other Samples	7

Environmental Issues

Service Water – Direct Mains	47
Infiltration Water	45
Bathing Water	551
Other Samples	27

Investigation of Complaints

	Complaints	Inspection s
<i>In connection with Food:</i>		
Unhygienic premises & unhygienic practices	30	45
Food unfit or past durability date	27	30
Labelling	21	28
Other food complaints	10	14
Total	88	117
<i>In connection with Environment:</i>		
Defective drains	19	57
Blockages in drains	4	13
Premises or sites dirty or containing accumulations	8	30
Infiltrations	46	184
Other complaints (rat sightings)	296	296
Others	74	222
Total	447	802

Nuisance reports issued

Defective drains	12
Blockages in drains	2
Premises or sites dirty or containing accumulations	19
Orthers	4
Total	37

Undertakings

Total no. of undertakings	35
Number concluded	33
Still pending	2

Burial Section

This Section is responsible for the administration and management of St Mary Cemetery, Xewkija and Tal-Għonq Cemetery in Victoria, and the application of various laws and regulations related to interments. The number of burials effected at St Mary Cemetery, Xewkija during 2011 was 51 in private graves and 22 in state-owned (government) graves, 17 transfers of remains were effected from one grave to another or from St Mary Cemetery to other cemeteries in Malta and Gozo, while there were also 31 cleaning of graves.

CARE FOR THE ELDERLY

This Section is responsible for a number of support services aimed at enhancing the quality of life of elderly persons and those with special needs. Its aim is to support independent living in the community.

- *Home Help Care Service:* This is the main service offered by this Section, which at the end of December 2011 numbered 844 in 647 households. The number of staff delivering the service was 68 social assistants. Home Help Care Service (Gozo) is allocated by a Board, which in 2011 held 21 sittings, during which all adjustments in hours were decided, together with the policy governing this service. As stipulated in the Quality Service Charter, the Board is meeting regularly every two weeks.
- *Handyman Service:* This Service provides maintenance works and sundry jobs in the homes of the elderly and special needs clients in collaboration with the Construction and Maintenance Unit. During 2011, a total of 55 applications were received, while a total of 48 jobs were carried out. Seven applications were cancelled.
- *Telecare Service:* A care worker is assigned responsibility for this service. During the year, 57 applications were received and 55 were installed. Regular home visits are carried out on a weekly basis following installation, to ensure the correct use of the service.
- *Incontinence Service:* The incontinence service is also the responsibility of this office. During the year, 13 new applications were received under Scheme A, while 79 new applications were received under Scheme B. There are 88 clients benefit regularly from this service under scheme A, while 383 clients benefit under Scheme B.
- *Meals on Wheels:* This service operates as a joint venture between the Ministry for Gozo, the Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali and the Society of the Friends of the Sick and the Elderly in Gozo. The service provides a daily mid-day hot meal delivered to the clients' homes. A total number of 4,961 meals were delivered in 2011.
- *Social Activities:* Mother's Day Mass and Christmas Party.
- *U3E Gozo:* This Section runs the U3E in collaboration with the University Gozo Centre and the Division of Gerontology. Transport is provided and to date 53 persons are attending these courses.
- *Day Centre:* This Centre has been running as a joint venture between the Ministry for Gozo, Caritas and 12 local councils since 1999. The Day Centre is at present on a four-day weekly basis. Overall attendance in 2011 was 4,696 elderly persons. Transport is provided by contributions from the local councils. Older persons who attend benefit from the services of a doctor, nurse, as well as from social and cultural outings both in Malta and Gozo and recreational activities. The Day Centre organised two other outings in connection with Easter and Christmas. During the year, the Centre on several occasions welcomed other elderly from different day centres in Malta.

SANTA MARTA DAY CENTRE

- *Policy:* The Centre's policy is to provide the highest quality service possible for all of our service users, create a relaxed supportive and comfortable atmosphere, where the service user is treated with respect dignity and compassion, by experienced and well trained professionally led staff, who are highly motivated and are aware of their legal, ethical and moral duties.
- *Aims:* As the main supplier of day services for people with disabilities in Gozo, the Centre's aims are: to assess, educate, integrate, supervise, link, support, rehabilitate, enhance and care. The centre also strives towards the ability not the disability. We are responsive to the needs of the individual and give training within European dimensions.

- *Structure:* 33 persons with various disabilities attend the centre regularly. The users are organised in six units with the aim of giving more individual attention to those most in need. Lunch, which is provided from Gozo General Hospital, has been improved for the service users' individual diet daily. Through a structured life skills programme, users are trained for better living. The Centre caters for intellectual, physical and emotional disabilities.
- *Liaison with other agencies:* A healthy coordination exists with most agencies for people with special needs, Resource Centres in Malta, Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabilita` (KNPD), Support Living Division, National Parents Society of Persons with Disability (NPSPD), Inspire Gozo, ESN Sannat, Association for the Deaf Gozo, GAVI, OASI, ARKA, Short Stay Ward at the Gozo General Hospital, Art Gozo College, Enabled Housing Association Derbyshire UK, Gozo Federation Persons with Disabilities. Two service users from the centre visited the UK for 10 days to be assessed for independent living in September. One of them went to the UK again in November for six months in connection with independent living with Enabled Housing Association Derbyshire.
- *Gozo Disability Services:* The Office, situated in the same premises of the Santa Marta Day Centre, serves to liaise with NGOs and other entities working in the field of disability. It also supports and informs the public in general. Santa Marta Day Centre collaborates with this office in the organisation of educational activities. Conferences, seminars and other meetings were all held at the Santa Marta Day Centre: two consultation meetings were held through KNPD (one ILS Gozo outreach and another preparation meeting); one 16+ consultative meeting; two meetings regarding Self Advocacy (one for parents and one for staff members); and a Visual Impaired Meeting - GAVI/Torball Maltese Association, for the visually impaired.
- Other meetings, seminars and conferences held at Santa Maria Day Centre: three-day course organised by ETC Gozo; two-day course organised by Social Work Unit Gozo; ICT course held by FITA once weekly for 12 weeks; and two meetings re Gozo Federation Persons with Disabilities.
- *Services:* Services of Personal Aids were given to seven individuals; physiotherapy (15 sessions); communication therapy (14 sessions); podology (five sessions at Gozo General Hospital); a weekly mass service; dentistry services offered to all members (15 visits); influenza immunisation vaccine to all members; Polyclinic visits (as required); pool sessions at ARKA Foundation (12 sessions); swimming (six sessions during summer period); and horse riding at Xaghra (30 Sessions).
- *Placements:* The following placements took place: four MCAST students; two students from the University of Malta (Social Worker course); one University student; and one Spanish student from ARKA Foundation.
- *Support:* Support was given by parents/guardians and volunteers throughout the year and various entities offered therapeutic work. Support was also given by local councils and other agencies.
- *Outwork:* Work was done for various entities.
- *Cultural Activities:* Members took part in cultural activities both in Malta and Gozo, such as Fun Games, organised by Method Company at Ta' Qali, Crafts Exhibition, Crib Exhibitions. Members went on day outings to various places of interest in Malta. Outings are organised on weekly basis in Gozo.
- *Transport:* Service was given by two minibuses on a contractual basis, and one tail lift van.
- *Achievements:* Together with Enable Housing Association of Derbyshire England, the twinning project EDGE (Enabled Derbyshire Gozo Exchange) was strengthened.
- *Activities:* Groups of students from the Gozo College and sixth form students visited the centre. A group of 30 Germans visited the centre in March. The centre has organised various education and social events during summer, Christmas and Easter time. In collaboration with the Gozo School of Art, the service users are being engaged and instructed into highly therapeutic crafts and arts, including *papier mâché*, drawing, pottery and carpentry.

FAMILY WELFARE (SOCIAL WORK UNIT)

The Gozo Social Work Unit offers social work intervention with a generalist approach. Social work is being delivered on a decentralised basis. Some members of the staff are being assigned to the Gozo General Hospital. Otherwise, social work is delivered from the main Social Work Unit.

Generic Social Work Unit

- *New Cases*: There were 95 new cases dealt with by the Generic Social Work Unit, while 60 new cases were dealt with by the social work staff at the Psychiatric Gozo Hospital, bringing the total of new cases followed by the SW Unit to 155.
- *Follow-up cases*: By the end of 2011, the Generic SW Unit had dealt with 345 cases that required follow-up interventions. These follow-up cases were classified as follows: 121 cases that required weekly intervention and 132 cases that required intervention on a fortnight basis, whilst 53 cases were terminated. 39 cases required other periodical intervention.
- *Psychiatric social work unit*: By the end of 2011, the Psychiatric SW Unit dealt with 17 cases that needed follow-up while 19 cases were considered 'put away' and five cases were terminated due to death.
- *One-time intervention*: 116 cases that required one-time intervention were dealt with by the Intake section. Such cases are not considered as part of the Unit's caseload and therefore are closed/referred immediately.
- *Telephone interventions*: Such service which the Social Work Unit deems very important is delivered daily, and thus it is difficult to record and quantify such interventions.
- *On-call Service*: This service entails the service of a social worker after office hours. 53 calls needed outside intervention.
- *Case conferences*: 62 case conferences were attended by staff members.
- *Supervision*: Individual formal supervision for each social worker at the main unit was carried out on a monthly basis and this by the Unit's Senior Social Worker. Other supervision is carried out as need arises from day-to-day work.
- *University placements*: Four students had their social work practical placements with the Unit during spring/autumn and summer respectively.
- *Gozo General Hospital*: Social work service was delivered at the GGH and Detox, as required.
- *Juvenile Court*: Nine sessions were held.
- *Court appearances*: 87 court appearances by the social work staff were carried out. These included giving evidence, writing up social reports and seeking legal advice.
- *Supervised access visits*: 144 supervised access visits ordered by Court were carried out. Such cases involve weekly visits at the Ċentru Hidma Soċjali/community.
- *Carer's pension*: Seven applications were processed by the Unit. These applications require home and personal assessment followed by written reports.
- *Social administrators*: Four persons benefited from this service every month.
- *Social reports*: 75 written social reports were done by the Unit to various departments, agencies, courts and places of work.
- *In-service training*: during 2011, the staff of the Unit attended several training sessions to enhance their performance as social workers:
 - *Nixtieq Futur ahjar Ghalija . . . Int lest tghinni?*
 - Emotional Intelligence Training – Short Course at University
 - Embark for Life – Supporting Gozitan Youths
 - Disability Awareness Seminar
 - OASI Seminar
- *Psychiatric/Gozo General Hospital*: Social work was delivered to the psychiatric wards at Gozo General Hospital by the social worker who is assigned on a full-time basis there.
- *Community Chest Fund*: 24 applications were submitted to the CCF by the Unit.
- *National Commission of Disabled Persons*: 15 persons benefited from services given by the Commission after the Unit's intervention.
- *Elderly*: Social work interventions were carried out with the elderly and upon request from the 'agencies' concerned or by relatives in the community.
- *Talks*: 65 talks related to social work were delivered by Social Work staff in various localities and on various community radio stations and schools.
- *Sub-committee domestic violence*: A social worker sits on the national sub-committee on domestic violence. Four meetings were held on a bi-monthly basis.
- *Crisis Intervention Centre*: The social work unit manages the Centre. Seven persons benefited from this service. The place was used for 75 nights. It is also used for the benefit of those clients who find it difficult to seek therapeutic help at the main unit due to confidentiality issues. The place is presently being

refurbished and modernised giving it a more professional atmosphere for social work delivery. The Social Work Unit organised a two half day seminar, to prospective workers at the Crisis Intervention Centre.

Hospital Social Work Services

Fifty-five new cases were referred to the psychiatric social work section as follows:

Psychiatric	12
Psycho-Social	21
Dementia	4
Addiction	3
Child Guidance Clinic	8
Police Case	3
Court Case	1
Social Support	3

Five cases (4 Psychiatric and 1 Child Guidance Clinic) were reactivated.

Deceased:	5
Follow-ups:	17
Put away:	19

The following activities were also carried out:

- forming part of a multi-disciplinary team during ward rounds at Short and Long Stay Wards – 60 ward rounds;
- attendance at 26 Psychiatric Outpatient sessions and 12 Child Guidance Clinic sessions;
- four case conferences, six case reviews, three IEPs and two visits at Corradino Facility;
- regular contact with patients who miss consecutively appointments at Psychiatric outpatients;
- home visits to clients who live in the community, as well as a significant number of sessions held at Gozo General Hospital;
- other home visits carried out with the Occupational Therapist;
- attended a three-day Congress in Basel and five local seminars. Two local conferences were also attended by the Social Worker and the Care Worker;
- delivered four talks for the Education sector of which one interactive talk was presented with a power point presentation by the Care Worker;
- organised an awareness activity for the general public to mark the Mental Health Day which was held on 10 October 2011;
- school visits since referrals and follow-ups from Child Guidance Clinic require to liaise with Heads of School, teachers, learning support assistants and guidance teachers, school psychologists, counsellors and Education social workers;
- regular contacts with the Self Help Group service users and liaises with Richmond Foundation for the facilitators' supervision;
- took part in four local radio programmes which were related to provide information regarding the services provided from the Mental Health Sector also to promote awareness;
- launched a Pilot Project *Step Ahead* in March for female community service users. The main aim of this pilot project is to strengthen their abilities and enhance their self-esteem by introducing them to new challenges which includes educational, cultural and social activities. Eight service users were identified and assessed to participate in this project. Since then, the number of service users was increased to 15. The activities held consisted of outings to Malta, several social activities in Gozo, a three-day live-in experience in a local farm house. Also, the Director of MCAST was contacted for a makeover by the hairdressing students. Twelve service users accepted this invitation and were given this service as a Christmas treat. Ten meetings were held with service users with the aim to get feedback so as to improve the service. Such activities involve research work, preparation and several contacts with the required agencies;

- held a meeting in September with the Head of the Wistin Camilleri Art School to introduce the service users to explore new experiences through creativity. Presently ten service users are attending the clay and *papier mâché* classes on a regular basis and are being assisted by the Care Worker;
- the Social Worker forms part of the Hospital Activities Committee which meets on a monthly basis. The aim is to organise social and cultural activities to our in-patients at Gozo General Hospital. Such activities are held on a monthly basis;
- liaison with several government and non-government organisations (Department for Social Security, Employment and Training Corporation, Housing Authority, Public Registry, ID Office, various embassies, the CDAU, Mount Carmel Hospital, Santa Marta Day Centre, YPU, Courts, the Police, Probation Office, social workers at Mount Carmel Hospital, Aġenzija Sapport, Aġenzija Appoġġ, local councils, E4L – Embark for Life, Me too, Malta Community Chest Fund, Richmond Foundation, Mental Health Association Gozo and Malta, Arka Respite Centre, Caritas Gozo, Oasi Foundation, Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Self Help Group in Gozo and Richmond Foundation, Friends for the Sick and the Elderly);
- liaising with the Occupational Therapy Department with respect to therapeutic sessions for the benefit of patients who either are currently at the psychiatric wards or living in the community;
- regular supervision in connection with social work delivery.

SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE

Victoria District Office

This Office deals directly with the general public regarding national insurance pensions, other contributory pensions including foreign pensions and non-contributory social security benefits and assistance. Work carried out at this office mainly comprises of financial investigations; the raising of applications for contributory and non-contributory pensions, benefits and assistance; dealing with customers' queries, and registration under Social Security Act of newly-employed workers.

- *Non-contributory Pensions/Assistance/Benefits* - Deals with applications for non-contributory pensions and assistance, monitoring of new applications, review of current benefits and carries out financial investigations for free medical aid (Pink Form).
- *Contributory/Foreign Pensions* - Deals with applications in connection with pensions for which national insurance contributions have been paid or credited. It is also responsible for the raising of foreign pension applications: Australia, UK, Canada and all EU countries.
- *Children's & Supplementary Allowance/Marriage Grant/Maternity Benefit* - Deals with new applications, declarations and queries for children's allowance and supplementary allowance. It is also responsible for the raising of marriage grant, maternity benefit and energy benefit applications.
- *New Registrants/Medical Certificates* - Responsible for the registration under the Social Security Act of newly employed workers (NI 3). Medical certificates (sickness benefit) are also referred to this section and are daily entered on computer system (Social Assistance and Benefits System).
- *Medical Boards* - Medical Boards in connection with medical assistance, social assistance, disability pension, sickness benefit, injury benefit and Australian pension were held approximately on alternate Thursdays at the Gozo General Hospital.
- *Statistics* - During 2011, the number of claimants who used the above services at Victoria District Office was 23,128. The following table shows the number of persons who called in person or contacted us by telephone; and queries lodged and applications raised; according to the type of benefit:

	Total	Query	Application	Personally	By Telephone
<i>Non-Contributory Pensions</i>					
Age Pension (AP)	401	366	35	300	101
Blind Pension (BLD)	2	2	0	2	0
Carers' Pension (CP)	62	60	2	53	9
Disability Pension (HP)	70	62	8	60	10
<i>Contributory and Foreign Pensions</i>					
Retirement Pension (RP)	3150	2919	231	2602	548
Widows' Pension (WP)	391	354	37	314	77
Invalidity Pension (IP)	1468	1315	153	1001	467
Foreign Pensions (FP)	693	606	87	606	87
<i>Social Assistance</i>					
Social assistance (SA)	880	824	56	654	226
Social Assistance Carers (SAC)	91	88	3	76	15
Drug Addicts (DAD)	180	147	33	93	87
Single Unmarried Parent (SUP)	163	142	21	125	38
Unemployment Assistance (UA)	3247	3073	174	2848	399
Social Assistance Board (SAB)	5	3	2	2	3
<i>Short Term Benefits</i>					
Marriage Grant (MRG)	85	16	69	80	5
Injury Benefit (IB)	47	44	3	41	6
Special/ Unemployment Benefit (SUB/UB)	590	590	0	541	49
Milk Grant (MG)	6	2	4	6	0
Sickness Benefit (SB)	1110	1110	0	967	143
<i>Child Benefits</i>					
Disabled Child Allowance (DCA)	16	12	4	15	1
Children's Allowance (CA)	2250	1865	385	2073	177
Maternity Benefit (MB)	209	59	150	197	12
Foster Care (FC)	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Medical Assistance/Aid</i>					
Tuberculosis Assistance (TA)	0	0	0	0	0
Leprosy Allowance (LA)	0	0	0	0	0
Sickness Allowance (SKA)	538	464	74	416	122
Pink Form/Card (PF)	1737	958	779	1687	50
Supplementary Allowance (SPA)	2344	2022	322	2223	121
Admission to Elderly Homes	0	0	0	0	0
Insurability (NI3)	838	488	350	724	114
Energy Benefit (ENRG)	866	771	95	689	177
SVB Applications	2	0	2	2	0
NI Contributions	956	956	0	738	218
Foreign Bonus	359	69	290	348	11
Exemptions	0	0	0	0	0
Waiving off Exam. Fees	51	0	51	51	0
EU Aid Scheme	321	79	242	313	8
Total	23,128	19,466	3,662	19,847	3,281
Total SB Certificates	20,282				

- *Training:* During the year, training was organised for all personnel at Victoria District Office, in all benefits and pensions including policies, amendments and new procedures of the Department of Social Security. In addition, personnel attended other training courses on various topics such as Overcoming Negativity at Work, Advanced Communication Skills, and Dealing with Difficult People organised by the CDRT. These courses helped all personnel in their job and future development to give professional services to claimants.

Nadur District Office

This District Office is responsible for dealing directly with the public in person or by telephone. The staff helps people to complete forms and deals with their queries in connection with the benefits offered by the Social Security Department.

Work carried out at the Nadur District Office mainly comprises of:

- applications for all types of contributory and non-contributory benefits and assistance. Non-contributory benefits include unemployment assistance, social assistance, medical assistance, social assistance for carers, carer's pension, energy benefit, handicapped pension, etc;
- contributory benefits include retirement pension, invalidity pension, widows pension, injury benefits, sickness benefits and unemployment benefits;
- new applications for children's allowance and supplementary allowances;
- financial investigations to determine whether a person is entitled to free medical aid;
- assisting and guiding clients in filling out applications as regards foreign pensions and benefits such as those falling under reciprocal agreements and EU countries.

The following statistical data show the number of applications, reviews and queries handled, related to the SS benefits during 2011:

	Questions/Reviews	New Applications
Non-contributory Benefits		
Unemployment Assistance	292	66
Social Assistance	144	31
Single Unemployed Parents (SUP)	17	8
SAF (Social Assistance Females)	11	3
Handicapped Pension	3	1
Blindness Pension	33	5
Age Pension	82	8
Carer's Pension	11	5
Sickness Assistance	89	21
Milk Grant	1	6
Energy Benefit	120	81
Supplementary Allowance	1	2
Over 75 Bonus (XM3A/82)	99	512
Contributory Benefits		
Invalidity Pensions	52	7
Retirement Pensions	160	74
Widows Pensions	29	14
Maternity Bonus	2	28
Children's Allowance	145	407
CA Flat Rate	1	24
Direct Credit Applications	31	50
Foreign Pensions (Canada, Australia, UK & EU countries)	4	20
Injury Benefit	38	0
Sickness/Special/Unemployment Benefit (UB & SUB & SB)	3	16
Marriage Bonus	3	59
Direct Credit Applications	0	20
SMS notifications	0	14
Power of Attorney (<i>Prokura</i>)	0	26
Stop Payments	54	0
NI 64	32	0
Issue of new NI Numbers	23	0
Checking of NI contributions	82	44

This Section is also responsible for financial investigations for free medicines. During 2011, the number of financial investigations was 285, of which 163 were issued as Free, 117 were issued against GGH 451 SLH145 DH 360 (Diabetic), two qualified for Food for the Deprived Scheme and another three did not qualify. 93 Pink Cards (DH 128) were issued for free medicine.

As in previous years, refunds being made by individuals who were overpaid were also being collected at this area office. The amount of refunds for this period was €31,732.54.

The total number of medical certificates registered at this office for this period was 2,054.

INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

During this year, this Section carried out 93 routine inspections which covered 384 employees. During these inspections, 191 employees were interviewed and nine irregularities were detected. Action from this end was taken to rectify these irregularities. 54 follow-up/special visits were undertaken.

The Office issued 48 claims, amounting to €85,580 in respect of arrears in wages, wages below the WRO/NSO, vacation leave, bonuses, overtime remuneration, and weekly allowance not granted. Two officers from this section attended 31 court sittings/*perizia*.

Centre for Non-governmental Organisations

During this period, the number of non-governmental organisations and voluntary groups making use of the service offered kept increasing. The number of registered members with the NGO Association amounted to 320, which among them held 424 meetings. All registered organisations benefited from almost 9,151 photocopies at a heavily subsidised rate. The tribunals for wardens and for underage children's rights as well as the ADT (for driving test) used the premises. Moreover, the Centre co-ordinated also the respective Annual Subsidy Scheme within the Ministry for Gozo for all Gozitan NGOs.

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA GOZO CAMPUS

Completed Courses and Graduations

In 2011, the following courses came to an end:

- Three students graduated in Master of Art in Islands and Small States;
- Two students graduated in Master of Arts in Hospitaller Studies

New Degree/Diploma/Certificate Courses

In October, the University of Malta opened two courses at its campus in Gozo - the Diploma in Commerce and Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education. Eight students are attending the Diploma in Commerce while the Diploma in Facilitating Inclusive Education is being followed by 85 students. The other ongoing courses during 2011 are: Diploma in Commerce (Course Group: 2010-2012); Bachelor of Commerce (2010-2013); Bachelor of Commerce (2009-2012); Bachelor of Arts (2009-2012); Bachelor of Arts in Criminology (2009-2014); Master of Arts in Islands and Small States (2010-2012); MA in Translation Studies (2009-2012); and Executive Master of Business Administration (2009-2012).

Another course leading to the Higher Diploma in Public Accounting and Finance, which is being offered at the University, has also been followed from the Gozo Campus through the video-conferencing system. The University of Malta's Institute for Sustainable Energy has also offered three different courses through video conferencing. These courses are aimed at training solar installers, engineers and architects in the fields of solar heating and solar photovoltaic (PV) system installations (single and three phase systems).

Short Courses and Public Lectures

During 2011, the following short courses were offered at the Campus: The Military Religious Order of St John – A General History; Inclusive Education: Transforming Schools into Communities; *L'Importanza di Insegnare ed Apprendere l'Italiano del XXI Secolo - Metodologie Attuali*; and Emotional Intelligence: Listening to Children and Young People's Needs. On 1 and 2 April, Prof David E Cooper, until recently Professor of Philosophy at the University of Durham, gave two highly interesting philosophy sessions at the University Gozo Campus under the title Meaning, Language and the Understanding of Cultures.

These courses and seminars, which are intended to offer the possibilities for life-long education, attracted participants of various ages and background.

Extracurricular Activities

- On 17 March, the University Gozo Campus organised a photo exhibition to mark the commemoration of the opening of two new lecture halls. The event formed part of the *Discover University! Open Week 2011* held by the University of Malta during the third week of March.
- The Gozo Lace Day 2011 – On 10 April, the Lace-Making Programme of the University Gozo Campus, organised its annual event *Gozo Lace Day* for the 15th consecutive year. The event consisted of a number of exhibitions and demonstrations of Gozo lace and talks on matters related to lace-making. Present for the event were the Hon Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, Mr Anton Tabone, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ms Consiglia Azzopardi, coordinator of the Lace Making Programme and Dr Raymond C Xerri as the guest speaker.
- On 26 August, the Campus organised its annual summer activity entitled *An Evening with Chasing Pandora*. The central courtyard of the Gozo Campus provided an excellent venue for this activity. An audience of about 200 persons attended the event.

Publications

The 24th and 25th editions of the *Gozo Observer* were published in June and December 2011 respectively. The magazine, which is published twice a year, contains a number of researched articles with a focus on Gozo.

Works at the Campus

In February, works on the rebuilding of two new lecture halls were completed. These lecture rooms are now accommodating the increasing number of students following university courses in Gozo. This project was funded by the University of Malta.

The main roof of the Gozo Campus premises was waterproofed by the application of a screed and a layer of insulation material. This project was funded by the Ministry for Gozo.

Preparations for the installation of a photovoltaic system on the main roof of the premises are underway. The aim of this project is to contribute towards the reduction of 30 tonnes of CO² emissions at the Gozo Campus with consequent environmental benefits to society. This project also contributes directly to the Eco-Gozo objective of the Government through a reduction in the use of grid-connected renewable energy, as well as the RES policy, by contributing to the Government's aim of establishing a decentralised system of power generation with small and medium-scale, environmentally-friendly RE facilities. The project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the Cohesion Policy Programme 2007-2013. It is planned that the project will be completed in March 2012.

INSTITUTE OF TOURISM STUDIES

- *Full-time course Hospitality*: Extended Skills Training Scheme – This is a two-year full-time course. In October 2011, 17 students commenced their first year, and 11 students continued their second year and final year.
- *Short courses in Food Hygiene*: During 2011, 50 students attended a short course in Food Hygiene.
- *Part-time Courses*: Food and Beverage Service – 1 student; Food Preparation & Culinary Arts Level 1 – 12 students; Food Preparation & Culinary Arts Level 2 – 12 students; Pastry & Baking Course – Level 1 – 11 students; Pastry & Baking Course – Level 2 – 7 students; WSET – 21 students.
- *ITS Restaurant*: The ITS Restaurant was open to the public two times weekly for Lunch and two times weekly for Dinner during the Academic year 2011. The restaurant was closed during the summer holidays.
- *Hostel Accommodation*: 154 guests availed themselves of the hostel accommodation.
- *Other Activities*: Yep Activity held in November; *Notte Gozitana* Activity held in June; Careers Week held in May.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT (GOZO BRANCH)

General

The Inland Revenue Department (Gozo Branch) is responsible to the Government for the administration of the Income Tax and Capital Transfer Duty Acts and the enforcement of social security contributions under the direction of the Ministry of Finance. The Gozo Branch deals specifically with Gozitan individual taxpayers as well as bodies of persons and it offers assistance and information to the general public in complying with their fiscal obligations. Moreover, the call centre processes all telephone calls, emails and other correspondence received by the whole Department.

FSS and Provisional Tax

FSS deductions, as well as Provisional Tax paid during 2011 are as a rule first set off against tax assessed for the year of assessment 2012; any balance remaining is then credited against outstanding tax for earlier years, if any, or else refunded. During 2011, the number of employers who submitted the FSS annual reconciliation documents manually for 2010 amounted to 868. The FSS division captured and reconciled manual data covering 3,380 employees for 2010. A further 46 employers submitted electronic data for 4,332 employees. FSS collected by the Gozo Cash Office amounted to €1,894,236 as against the €1,630,683 collected in 2010. Provisional Tax collected during 2011 amounted to €2,615,259 as against the €2,731,316 in 2010. Provisional Capital Gains Tax and Sale of Property Withholding Tax withheld on deeds of sales increased from €4,294,295 (2010) to €4,807,828.

Revenue

The revenue from Income Tax collected during the financial year ending 31 December 2011 amounted to €11,774,057. The following schedule is a breakdown of revenue by system of collection as received through the Gozo Office.

	2011	2010
	€	€
PAYE/FSS (Private Employees only)	1,894,236	1,630,683
Provisional Tax	2,615,259	2,731,316
Provisional Tax (Capital Gains Tax)	4,807,828	4,294,295
Provisional Tax (Self-Assessment)	1,392,616	1,231,233
Part-Time Self-Employed	154,403	159,380
Penalties	32,047	16,928
Agricultural Scheme	41,774	29,468
Miscellaneous	78	295
Settlement Tax	835,816	2,310,801
Total Income Tax Receipts	11,774,057	12,404,399
Social Security Contributions	8,132,390	7,680,546
Total IT & SSC	19,906,447	20,084,945
Duty on Documents Act	5,093,182	4,508,713
Death & Donation Duty	6,229	13,428
Miscellaneous	3,330	1243
Total Capital Transfer Duty	5,102,741	4,523,384
Grand Total	25,009,188	24,608,329

Social Security Contributions are received at the Gozo Cash Office on behalf of the Social Security Department in respect of Gozitan self-employed persons and Gozitan private employees. The number of receipts performed by the Cash Office in respect of Income Tax and Social Security Contributions was as follows:

	2011	2010
Income Tax	8,368	8,706
Social Security	14,135	13,661
Total Receipts	22,503	22,367

Collection of Tax

As part of the Department's drive to collect outstanding tax balances, a 0.75 % per month additional tax is being imposed on any outstanding balances. Settlement tax receipts amounted to €835,816 however tax withheld by means of the FSS system vis-à-vis Gozitan government and parastatal employees is paid in Malta and is not included with receipts recorded by the Gozo Branch.

Tax and Other Clearances

During 2011, the Branch processed 186 authorisations for tax clearances in connection with the repatriation of funds from Malta. It also processed 20 requests for the exemption or reduction of the 7% Capital Gains Tax rate on deeds of sale. These requests are submitted prior to deeds of sale and approvals are given in those cases where a rate lesser than the statutory 7% tax will be enough to cover any ensuing capital gains tax. 101 pension scheme applications were issued to the Department for Social Security.

Self-Assessments and Declarations

The Branch acknowledged electronically 5,141 Self-Assessment returns during 2011 (357 of which were for previous years) whereas 13,112 automatic assessments were raised vis-à-vis Gozitan taxpayers under the Free-Filers System. 370 Correction/Adjustment Forms were raised against Self-Assessments.

Agricultural Scheme

This scheme which was introduced during 2005 enabled farmers to opt to be charged at source a Final Withholding Tax of 3% when selling their products to registered payers. During 2011, the Branch acknowledged electronically 341 Part-timer and 192 Full-timer Agricultural Scheme returns.

Duty on Documents – Transfers *Inter vivos*

During 2011, this Branch examined 1,594 deeds of sales and other transfers of immovable property, out of which 895 cases were inspected by the Department's Engineers. As a result 323 original claims were raised. Stamp-duty on such transfers amounted to €3,143,988. During 2011, 48 new objections were registered and 65 cases were concluded. Besides duty on transfer of immovable property, €2,828 was collected in respect of share transfers. Duty collected from additional claims issued amounted to €82,373. Additional duty on such claim's amounted to €35,187. Outstanding balance of assessed duty, including disputed duty amounted to €1,572,519. During the period under review, 536 Promises of Sales were registered with the Department. Provisional Stamp-Duty paid on these promises of sales amounted to €428,702 (€687,730 during 2010).

Duty on documents – Transfers *Causa Mortis*

420 returns *causa mortis* were filed during 2011, out of which 181 cases were inspected by the Department's engineers. 388 original claims were raised during the year. Stamp duty on such declarations amounted to €1,288,672. 16 new objections were registered and 18 cases were concluded during 2011. Revenue collected from additional claims issued amounted to €96,495. Additional duty on such claims amounted to €5,954. Outstanding balance of assessed duty, including disputed duty, amounted to €197,488.

Death and Donation Duty

20 additional returns were filed during 2011. 10 assessments were raised, whilst 10 transmissions were found to be exempt from tax. Duty claimed during the period was €1,894, and revenue collected totalled €6,228 (including €3,114 interest). Outstanding balance of assessed duty, including disputed duty up to and including 31 December 2011 amounted to €197,481.

VAT OFFICE

- *New Applications:* The VAT Office received and processed 202 applications for a new VAT registration number. The number of applications decreased due to the change in Value Added Tax Act (Chapter 406).
- *Returns:* VAT returns from Gozo taxpayers were received regularly throughout the year. These returns amounted to 10,303.
- *Fiscal Receipt Books:* 4,502 Personalised Fiscal Receipt Books were distributed to VAT registered holders. 9,523 personalised and 202 non-personalised were collected from taxpayers.
- *Cancellations:* 99 taxpayers applied for de-registration of their VAT number.
- Besides the work mentioned above, the officers of this section helped taxpayers in filling the returns and authorised 86 fiscal cash register transfers.
- This Section also received 256 applications for grants on funerals, 109 on weddings, 10 applications on musical instruments and 59 on bicycles.

ELECTORAL OFFICE (GOZO)

The Electoral Office (Gozo Section) receives applications for the registration of voters, transfer of residence, change of status, or other required corrections to be included in the revised Electoral Register which is published in two formats twice a year.

In conjunction with the Commissioner of Police, the Office also deals with the issue, renewal and distribution of identity cards.

The Electoral Office in Gozo regularly carries out street inspections in connection with naming/renaming of streets so as to ensure that the names of voters listed under old street names are correctly registered under the new street names in the Electoral Register. The Office also provides a service to housebound and bed-ridden patients in hospitals and institutions for the aged and in many private residences where the sick and aged persons residing there request new identity cards and voting registrations.

A national referendum regarding the divorce issue was held on 28 May.. Preparations for such referendum included the setting up of polling places. During the referendum, staff from the Gozo Electoral Office, together with Commissioners, inspected such places on a regular basis. On polling day, the Commission sent its representatives in Gozo to supervise and to ensure the smooth running of the referendum.

The number of transactions carried out in connection with the Electoral Register and ID cards were:

New Registrations	(Electoral Register April 2011)	244
	(Electoral Register Oct. 2011)	237
Change of address		752
Change of status (due to marriage)		185
Corrections		160
Replacement of lost and damaged ID cards		581
Issuing of ID cards for foreigners (Aliens)		410

JOYCE DIMECH

Director (Customer Services)

Directorate General (Strategy and Support)

FUNCTIONS

The overall objectives of the Directorate General (Strategy and Support) DGSA are to:

- develop a motivated and multi-skilled workforce through a variety of measures;
- contribute to the protection of the environment including the cultural heritage of the island;
- concentrate on the execution and delivery of government commitments ensuring that such implementation is carried out in a timely manner;
- ensure synergy between regional and national policies;
- ensure the timely implementation of the Eco-Gozo strategy;
- develop and sustain the tourism industry, in connection with the Director Tourism and Economic Development;
- optimise the use of EU funds for the region of Gozo;
- ensure the compilation of regional statistics for Gozo;
- participate actively in the development and implementation of the Ministry's strategic and operational plans and cooperate and collaborate with senior staff towards the achievement of the Ministry's goals;
- provide direction to Heads of directorates in the preparation of operational plans to support the Ministry in the implementation of policy directives;
- in liaison with the respective Heads of directorates, plan, develop and ensure the implementation of work standards within the Directorate General (Strategy and Support) to ensure quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of results.

POLICY

The Directorate General (Strategy and Support) has worked in close collaboration with the Permanent Secretary and the Directorate General (Operations) on policies as well as on EU policy issues of relevance to the Ministry's portfolio, in particular ensuring synergy between regional and national policies. It has also contributed to the development and monitoring of the initiatives under the Ministry's Public Service Agreement.

SUPPORT TO LINE DIRECTORATES

The Directorate General has provided direction and the necessary support to the EU Affairs Directorate, Eco Gozo Regional Development Directorate and the Tourism and Economic Development Directorate. It has stimulated debate and intervened actively on policy issues of relevance to Gozo, in particular, assisting the development of the Ministry's position on EU policy proposals and initiatives of a strategic nature to ensure that these address the distinct requirements and challenges faced by the island. It has also provided guidance and assistance to these Directorates in the conceptualisation and preparation of project applications as well as involvement in projects financed under Life +, Interreg IVC, Italia Malta and MED, nationally-funded projects and initiatives under the Eco Gozo action plan for 2010-2012, as well as activities to promote Gozo as a unique tourism destination. The Directorate General also assisted interested parties, including local councils, NGOs, private sector organisations and individuals in the application for EU funds under different funding instruments.

EU PROJECTS

The Directorate General has sourced opportunities for the funding of projects and initiatives that contribute to the island's socio-economic development including its eco island vision. In particular, it was successful in securing co-financing for a project under the European Social Fund as well as for the financing of additional activities on existing projects under the European Regional Development Fund. These endeavours have enabled the Directorate General to attract €3,016,064 (exclusive of VAT).

Throughout the past year, the Directorate General coordinated the implementation of the projects under the 2007 – 2013 programming period for which the Ministry is final beneficiary, namely, four projects co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), three under the European Social Fund (ESF) and one under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). These are:

- Upgrading of Villa Rundle Gardens;
- Reconstruction of part of Xlendi and Ta' Pinu roads;
- Upgrading of the Operating Theatre and Setting up of a Radiology Unit at the Gozo General Hospital;
- Upgrading of Żewwieqa Waterfront;
- Walks and Trails on Rural Gozo;
- Training Courses to Enhance the Employability and Adaptability of the Workforce;
- Higher Education Courses to Address Skill Mismatches in Gozo;
- Skills upgrading for the Tourism Sector in Gozo.

In order to coordinate the implementation of the Ministry's programmes and projects, the Directorate held regular meetings with the relevant officials and stakeholders to ensure effective implementation. In addition, it worked closely with the project leaders leading the implementation of EU co-financed projects, provided guidance and support on an ongoing basis and ensured that funds are utilised in an effective manner and disbursed in accordance with regulations and established procedures.

The Directorate has been instrumental in the identification of infrastructural projects for which EU co-financing has been sought. During the period under review, the Directorate General has prepared and submitted three project applications for potential co-financing under the European Regional Development Fund. These are:

- Implementation of the Cittadella Masterplan Recommendations;
- Carbon Footprint Reduction at the Gozo General Hospital;
- Renewable Energy Facilities in Educational and Vocational Institutions in Gozo.

Furthermore, the Directorate General has worked on the conceptualisation and development of other project proposals that will be submitted for potential EU co-financing under ESF in partnership with the Malta Qualifications Council, the University of Malta, the Gozo Business Chamber and the Gozo Tourism Association.

CUSTOMER CARE

Service Standards

This Directorate continued to monitor the implementation of the service standards introduced in 2006. It continued to maintain ongoing contact with the officials responsible for service standards in each directorate to ensure their effective implementation.

Queries/Complaints Handling

During 2011, the Directorate General handled 450 queries, complaints and requests for assistance of a generic as well as of a specific nature, received through the electronic system, via e-mail, telephones and walk-ins. Most of these queries/complaints were dealt with expeditiously with responses provided either

through the Customer Care System (CCS) or through e-mail. In most cases responses were supplemented by direct telephone contact. The majority of the walk-ins were provided with immediate response.

The Directorate General continued to carry out an in-depth analysis of the queries, complaints and requests forwarded to it and subsequently took the following initiatives to improve upon the existing system:

- Continued to maintain ongoing coordination with local councils in Gozo. This has led to improved efficiency and effectiveness in the complaints forwarded to the Ministry; and
- Maintained contact and held meetings as necessary with the line directorates of the Ministry to help improve the effectiveness of the responses provided to customers.

RITA CUTAJAR

Director General (Strategy & Support)

Eco-Gozo Regional Development Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The Eco-Gozo Regional Development Directorate was established in July 2010 with the aim of implementing Government's eco-island vision - a Local Sustainable Development strategy for Gozo, while also promoting the dimension of regional development for the island. The Directorate provides the Ministry and other stakeholders in Gozo with technical support on matters related to the environment and sustainability. It also acts as a liaison between the Ministry for Gozo and national organisations on the same themes.

The Directorate exerts two main functions. It coordinates the implementation of the projects and measures which constitute the Eco-Gozo Action Plan, often in collaboration with stakeholders. The Directorate is also responsible for the development and promotion of strategies and policies related to its remit, and their implementation. The ultimate aim of the Directorate is to foster the improvement of the environmental milieu on the island and to support Gozitan society in the achievement of higher standards of sustainability, addressing all the facets of sustainable development, namely the economy, society, the environment, culture and identity.

In 2011, the Directorate continued with the implementation of the Eco-Gozo Short-term Action Plan (2010-2012). It also succeeded in attracting a direct investment of €650,000 from two multinational companies to the benefit of the Eco-Gozo project.

GENERAL RESULTS

The activity of the Directorate throughout the year resulted among others in:

- an investment of €2 million in 52 Eco-Gozo projects by local councils, administrative committees and non-governmental organisations;
- the planting of 3,000 trees on the island;
- an investment of €1.2 million for the new Centre for Innovation in the Rural Sciences and Environmental Management at the former Government Experimental Farm in Xewkija;
- the distribution of 13,000 water saving kits to families and businesses on the island;
- 45 million litres of increased rainwater harvesting capacity on the island;
- an investment of €130,000 for the promotion of Gozo as a unique diving destination;
- the commissioning of 13 works of art for public spaces within the context of the Public Art in Gozo scheme;
- the investment of €700,000 by private enterprise and international organisations in the Eco-Gozo project.

ENVIRONMENT

The Afforestation and Restoration Ecology project overlying Mgarr Harbour, which resulted in the extension of Pope John XXIII Grove by around 11,000m², was concluded during this year. This project has resulted in the planting of 2,300 new trees. Apart from the environmental benefit it will bring about, this project will also help to improve on the visual amenity of the approach towards Gozo in what is essentially the first impression of Gozo which the tourist perceives. This grove, which now extends for circa 45,000m², is expected to be transformed into a family park in due course.

The Directorate also continued with preparatory work (including obtaining MEPA permits) for other afforestation cum family park projects, among which at Il-Qortin ta' Isopu in Nadur, where a disused quarry will be rehabilitated to complement the area of high ecological importance in its surroundings, and the transformation of Ulysses Grove in Xewkija into a family recreational area.

The Directorate secured an investment of \$800,000 towards a Water Stewardship Project in Gozo from the Coca-Cola Foundation (USA) through collaboration between the Ministry for Gozo, Global Water Partnership – MED and the General Soft Drinks Co Ltd (the Coca Cola Company local bottling partner). This project will include the installation and repair of rainwater harvesting systems and non-conventional water systems, awareness in schools and in the community and technology transfer in water conservation.

Through the support of the EU Affairs Directorate and the Projects and Development Directorate, works on the development of a new garden at Marsalforn progressed steadily during 2011, and by the end of the year, all civil works on site were nearing completion. The garden is expected to be completed during 2012.

The Programme for the Cleaning of Water Harvesting facilities in valleys entered its second year in 2011, with extensive works being conducted in another two valley systems – at Ramla valley and at il-Wied tal-Grazzja (adjacent to the Capuchin Friary in Victoria). Works at Tal-Ort valley in Ghasri were also initiated. Cleaning works at Marsalforn valley which were launched in the previous year were also concluded during this year. This work resulted in the removal of around 24,455m³ of silted material from these facilities. The majority of this material was found to be of good quality and was stored for later use in the various afforestation and restoration ecology projects which the Directorate is currently planning. It is estimated that this cleaning programme has increased the rainwater harvesting potential in Gozo by about 43 million litres. Other projects for the increase of rainwater harvesting capacity in Gozo included the construction of new reservoirs and the restoration of existing ones both on public and private property. A number of new reservoirs were also funded through the Eco-Gozo projects schemes for local councils and voluntary organisations.

The project for the setting up of the new Centre for Innovation in the Rural Sciences and Environmental Management at the site of the former Government Experimental Farm in Xewkija progressed steadily during the year. This project is being developed in partnership with the University of Malta (Institute of Earth Systems). A planned investment of €1.2 million in the development of new facilities and the refurbishment of existing infrastructure was rolled out in 2011 and is expected to be concluded by 2012. The formal launch of the Centre is also expected to occur during 2012. Works carried out during 2011 included the replacement of old greenhouses with new greenhouses with a total area of 1,824m² which may be utilised for scientific research, the installation of a computerised irrigation system which opens up the possibility of holding research on the use of water in agriculture, refurbishment of various compounds within the facility, the restoration and reinstatement of a massive reservoir which was previously disused, the creation of three new laboratories, the refurbishment of husbandry facilities, a new electrical supply and data network. Various research projects which were piloted during the previous year were also continued, among which work on the Maltese Black Hen. Other research on local fodder varieties and local summer fruit varieties was also initiated.

In 2011, the Centre also benefited from an agreement which resulted in the acquisition of a large collection of fig varieties from different regions in the Mediterranean. This project will result in the creation of a fig genetic reserve at the Centre which will be available for researchers.

The Environment Landscape Consortium (ELC) continued with the expansion of its workings in Gozo with the assignment of various new sites which are now under the management of the consortium.

The recommendations received through the energy audits conducted on all major government properties in Gozo during the previous year started to be implemented. Works which were spearheaded by the Ministry's Green Leader and ministry engineers focused on increasing energy efficiency through the

installation of energy saving lighting, the installation of energy-efficient air conditioning systems and the proliferation of renewable energy systems on government buildings.

The Directorate also concluded successfully the project for the extension of the photovoltaic system at the Ministry for Gozo through the installation of a new 40.32 kWp system. This renewable energy infrastructure at the Ministry now has a total size of 50.32kWp and generates energy which is equivalent to the average consumption of 20 families.

The new second class water mains which will be used to distribute treated sewage effluent across various areas of Gozo continued to be laid in the stretches of the Mgarr-Victoria road which is being renovated through an EU-funded project being implemented by Transport Malta.

Discussions with MEPA continued on the installation of a Wind Data Monitoring Mast on the Northern shoreline of the island. This mast is expected to be installed during 2012.

Through collaboration with the Institute of Sustainable Energy of the University of Malta, the Directorate embarked on a project which will result in the holding of house visits to every Gozitan household by trained personnel who will provide free advice to families on ways to save on electricity and water consumption, energy efficiency and renewable energy, and waste management. During 2011, an agreement for the holding of this project – which has been branded *Naqqas u Ffranka (Reduce and Save)* – was reached, and 50 trainers were provided with the necessary training to hold these home visits. This project, which is expected to take around 12 months, will be launched in the first quarter of 2012.

During 2011, the Directorate also distributed 13,000 water saving kits to Gozitan households and businesses. This project provided a simple apparatus which can help families reduce their water consumption. It is estimated that if all these kits are used, they would lead to an estimated annual water conservation equivalent to 30 million litres of water on the island.

The Directorate also participated in various EU-funded projects. These include SIMBIOTIC (funded under the Italia-Malta Programme) which focuses on restoration ecology, creation of semi-natural woodlands and the creation of ecological corridors, AGRISLES (funded under the MED Programme) which focuses on non-technological innovation and the creation of networks of expertise in the agricultural sector on Mediterranean Islands and SWMED (funded under the ENPI CBC MED Programme) which focuses on increased sustainable water use in Mediterranean islands. The Directorate also holds observer status on two EU-funded projects related to increasing the feasibility of use of electric vehicles and to research on the harvesting of renewable energy through wave power.

ECONOMY

The Directorate continued to assist the Tourism and Economic Development Directorate in the development of a Human Resources Strategy for Gozo which was concluded.

The Directorate also continued participating in the INTERREG IVC-funded project ICER which focuses on the development of eco-accommodation and the facilitation of private investment in rural regions. This project intends to disseminate best practices in different regions of the EU with the aim of fostering the development of European regions in rural destinations of excellence, particularly through the development of an authentic product and the provision of sustainable ‘eco-accommodation’. Through this initiative the Directorate is also in the process of developing a set of recommendations for the adoption of a Rural Tourism Policy for Gozo.

The Directorate also supported the Tourism and Economic Development Directorate on a number of initiatives, among which, the increase of facilities for waste separation around Gozo, the development and procurement of equipment, the preparation of Gozo’s bid for the Quality Coast Awards and the branding of Gozo on the Eco-Gozo ethos in the tourism promotion efforts spearheaded by the Ministry for Gozo.

Through the Eco-Gozo Projects funding scheme, the Directorate assisted the Gozo Business Chamber in developing an ICT platform in Gozo. This project is intended to integrate efforts in the ICT sector in Gozo in order to facilitate international collaboration and the increase in R&D activity in the sector in Gozo.

SOCIETY

The Directorate continued to support the Gozo Mental Health Association in its workings and also assisted in the setting up of a new Health Promotion capacity within the Customer Services Directorate. Both these organisations, together with other government organisations and NGOs continued to be supported in their work to the benefit of the Gozitan community.

Discussions on the setting up of a Regional Youth Council for Gozo continued and this council is expected to be constituted early in 2012.

The development permits for the construction of a new child care centre in Victoria were obtained. This project is expected to take off in 2012 and is expected to be developed into an innovative and holistic Child Development Centre. Another child care centre was funded under the Eco-Gozo Projects Scheme for Local Councils to the Gharb Local Council. Malta Enterprise is in the process of developing another child care centre in the Xewkija Industrial Estate.

A study on Young People in Gozo, funded through one of the Eco-Gozo schemes, was concluded and published by the OASI Foundation of Gozo

Discussions were concluded for the launch of the International Home Start Programme in Gozo. This programme offers support and stewardship to families in need and vulnerable children. This programme is expected to start offering its services in Gozo through a local NGO early in 2012.

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

The selection process related to the Public Art in Gozo Scheme was concluded during 2011 and by the end of the year 13 sculptures were commissioned. These works of art will be located in various public spaces around Gozo.

Through the Eco-Gozo projects scheme, the Directorate also assisted various NGOs in developing their potential to become stronger players in the cultural tourism niche which the island enjoys. In some instances, the Directorate also funded foreign marketing campaigns of festivals and cultural events of high repute.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Education and awareness-raising continued to be a very strong component of the workings of the Directorate throughout 2011. Among the initiatives taken in this sector are mentioned below:

- The most significant development in this sector in 2011 was the launch of the mascot Kikku which has been branded as the children's voice for Eco-Gozo. This mascot, which was very well received by children, is the result of two-year collaboration between a multi-disciplinary team composed of Education experts, designers, costume producers and computer graphics experts. The launch of Kikku was combined with an exhibition on children's views on Eco-Gozo and the future of the island. This exhibition was based on the feedback provided by Gozitan children in the public consultation process related to Eco-Gozo and launched the children's vision on Eco-Gozo.
- The Healthy Eating Campaign, first conducted in 2010, was repeated in 2011 through a collaborative project with the Institute of Tourism Studies in Gozo. All students in form IV (400 in number) were hosted in this programme in which they were provided with teaching and practical experience on healthy

diets. At the same time, they were introduced to the course offerings of the ITS, thus promoting the take-up of careers in the tourism and hospitality industry.

- The Directorate assisted the Sannat Special School in a renovation project with a grant of €50,000.
- The Directorate also collaborated in a series of TV programmes for children entitled *Eco-Kids*. Through a special arrangement with the producers, the programme material was made available to complement the collection of educational audio-visual material which is available on the Eco-Gozo official website.
- To mark World Environment Day, the Directorate organised a Marine Wildlife Roadshow, with the participation of an internationally-sought educator on marine life. The roadshow was first presented to students in schools, but it was also presented to the general public as part of the *Lejlet Lapsi* programme.
- Schools in Gozo continued to be equipped with environment-friendly equipment, among which composting bins and waste separation bins.
- A set of three different calendars for 2011 were published for children, adolescents and adults. These media were used to convey a variety of educational messages on different themes related to sustainable development, among which, the environment, healthy eating and lifestyles, culture, traditions and tourism. Around 10,000 were distributed among these different groups with the assistance of school authorities and the libraries in Gozo.
- A collection of 700 books on subjects related to sustainable development and the environment were distributed to all schools and public libraries in Gozo.
- In 2011, the Ministry for Gozo joined formally the management of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) Programme in the Maltese Islands, which is coordinated locally by Nature Trust Malta. Through this programme, students are offered the Eco-Schools programme, Young Reporters for the Environment and Learning about Forests. Other partners include the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and the Environment and the HSBC Malta Foundation.

OTHERS ACTIVITIES

During 2011, the Directorate continued with the implementation of the two major funding schemes for Eco-Gozo projects by local councils, administrative committees and NGOs. These two schemes resulted in the funding of 53 Eco-Gozo projects in the community, carrying an investment of around €2 million. A second scheme for Eco-Gozo projects by local councils was published during 2011, in the course of which an additional eight projects carrying an investment of around €400,000 were approved.

A new Eco-Gozo website was developed during 2011, with the aim of providing a more efficient tool in educating for sustainable development, and simultaneously providing a permanent presence on the Internet for the Eco-Gozo project. Activity on the other social media, chief among them Facebook, was also developed further.

The Directorate supported the central ministry committee entrusted with the organisation of the *Lejlet Lapsi Notte Gozitana* event. During his activity, the Directorate organised a number of activities focusing on environmental education, among which the Reduce 5 Tons of CO₂ Campaign, which experienced a significant take-up by the public.

For 2012, the Directorate's main task will continue to focus on the implementation of the Eco-Gozo short-term action plan recommendations. Education, activities in schools and awareness-raising will also continue to be key priorities of the Eco-Gozo team. The Directorate will continue in its commitment towards the achievement of higher sustainability standards on the island.

ANTHONY ZAMMIT

Director (Eco-Gozo Regional Development)

EU Affairs Directorate

The EU Affairs Directorate (EUAD) incorporates the management of aspects relating to EU affairs. The overall objectives of the Directorate are:

- managing the Ministry’s participation in EU structures and processes as well as ensuring effective coordination of EU-related matters at a domestic level and with other EU stakeholders;
- coordinating the formulation of the Ministry’s position on domestic policies and those proposed by the EU;
- initiating, developing and coordinating policy options;
- facilitating the implementation of the Ministry’s policies and strategies; and
- managing the Ministry’s Change Management Programme, including facilitating the implementation of the Ministry’s endorsed policies, strategies and change management programmes; the setting of objectives-related performance measures; and monitoring the implementation of the required programs and activities to ensure the efficient delivery of the Ministry Business Plan.

EU Policy Coordination

During 2011, the Directorate continued to manage the Ministry’s participation in EU structures and processes as well as ensuring effective coordination of EU-related matters at a domestic level and with other EU stakeholders. It provided input on 131 EU proposals, European Commission and other entities’ communications that were of relevance to the Ministry’s portfolio. The Directorate also attended inter-Ministerial Meetings concerning EU Affairs and the Integrated Maritime Policy.

The Directorate reported on the National Reform Programme (NRP) measures that fall within the Ministry’s remit.

PAT ATTARD
Director (EU Affairs)

Tourism and Economic Development Directorate

The Tourism and Economic Development Directorate was established on 16 July 2010. With respect to tourism, the remit of the Directorate relates to its contribution towards the economic progress in Gozo. Apart from tourism, the Directorate is also responsible for technical support linked to the wider context of enterprise and regional economic development. The overriding objective of the Directorate is to support and enable business development and employment generation in Gozo.

One of the core functions of the Directorate is to establish a regional set-up within the Ministry for Gozo specifically responsible for developing and sustaining the tourism industry in Gozo. Such responsibilities comprise the development of strategies for approval by the Minister, the Permanent Secretary and the Director General (Support and Strategy) and the subsequent translating of such strategies into action. Furthermore, this sphere of activity entails the managing and controlling of the Directorate to ensure that it carries out its tasks effectively and efficiently in accordance with policy directives and the strategic plan. Another function of the Directorate is to foster economic development in Gozo, thus contributing to greater efficiency in resource use.

At the end of 2010, the Directorate also took under its responsibility the Public Cleansing section, previously forming part of the Projects and Development Directorate. This section is responsible for the proper upkeep of those roads and areas falling under the responsibility of central government. This also includes the upkeep of all the beaches around Gozo and Comino.

Tourism

The Directorate has continued to develop local and international contacts with leading organisations and publications, such as *Taucher.Net*, *Unterwasser*, *Plongee*, *FFrandonnee*, *Responsible Travel* and *International Airports Advertising Limited*. These have enabled the promotion of business opportunities corresponding with the true potential of the Gozo tourism product. These are also enabling it to address some of the challenges with which the industry is characterised.

Regional Promotion

An important function that the Directorate has been working on relates to tourism promotion aimed to position Gozo as a distinct destination. The Directorate is working to ensure that the content included in the promotion of the island continues to be faithful to Gozo's true characteristics. This is particularly important in promoting Gozo among niche markets such as cultural tourism, diving, climbing, rambling and rural tourism in general. This was also possible through a strong collaborative relationship which was developed with the Malta Tourism Authority and the Gozo Tourism Association.

On the international front, substantial effort has been directed to particular tourism segments, creating a portfolio of niches which Gozo can tap into. In the cruise liner segment, the Directorate represented the Ministry for Gozo in the Cruise Shipping Miami Fair. This was instrumental in augmenting the number of cruise liners which will be visiting Gozo in 2012 and 2013. Promotion has also been carried out in the *Seatrade Cruise* magazine and the *Cruise Industry News* online portal, both specialised in this niche.

Within the diving sector efforts were intensified in the French, German and United Kingdom market. Whilst efforts in the UK market were targeted toward the general public, a different approach was adopted for the other markets. In the French market, a guide for French divers was published in collaboration with the *Plongee* magazine which has a nationwide circulation in France. In the German Market an extensive feature was also published in the *Unterwasser* magazine, which has a wide circulation in Germany and which is also an esteemed specialised publication in the sector. A chronicle of experience by German journalists was also developed in collaboration with *Taucher.Net*. This is going to be published in 2012.

The Directorate has also represented the Ministry for Gozo in the World Travel Market that was held in November 2011 in London. The Directorate has also supported the Gozo Tourism Association to participate in fairs abroad, which the Directorate deemed beneficial for the continued promotion of Gozo as a specific tourism destination.

With respect to rural/sustainable tourism, an online guide was developed in collaboration with the responsible travel website. This was very important in view of the fact that this niche is steadily gaining in importance.

Preparatory work has also been undertaken for Gozo to start tapping in the international meetings, incentives, conferences and events (MICE) sector. This is being done in collaboration with the Malta Tourism Authority, the Gozo Tourism Association and local industry stakeholders.

An advertising campaign through a permanent fixture about Gozo in the arrivals lounge of the Malta International Airport is also set to continue during 2012. Through the same campaign, Gozo was also promoted in the Larnaca and Paphos airports. This promotion will also continue in 2012.

On the local front, various cultural activities were advertised through billboards and publications in Malta and Gozo. The Directorate was also instrumental in the support granted by the Ministry to the Gozo Tourism Association for the publication of the *Lets Gozo* magazine, which besides being distributed with a national English language newspaper is also featured online on the following site: www.letsgozo.com.mt.

Besides these efforts, the Directorate has continued to probe new niche markets that could be tapped for Gozo. Such efforts are set to continue during this year.

Product upkeep and maintenance

Since product upkeep and maintenance are closely linked to the local tourism product, the Directorate has undertaken initiatives to ensure that the employees within the Public Cleansing Section operate flexibly to ensure the proper upkeep of the general environment including the rural areas. In collaboration with the respective local councils, the Directorate is already addressing the rural zones as these are crucial for promoting Gozo as a rural destination in line with the National Tourism Policy and the Eco-Gozo strategy.

During 2011, the Directorate has also tendered for the services of a mechanical sweeper, and developed a schedule whereby certain arterial and distributor roads were cleaned with this sweeper according to a pre-agreed work plan. Better practices have also been introduced in the Beach Cleaning Section through the setting up of a unit responsible for the upkeep of already installed beach furniture and the design, production and installation of new beach furniture. Concrete evidence to the work of this unit was the production and installation of galvanised ladders and railings on all the beaches around Gozo. These have substantially improved accessibility in these areas.

With respect to the issue of accessibility, mobile toilets were also installed in areas frequented by divers and swimmers. The facilities in Dwejra were also improved to accommodate new showers for the use of divers and swimmers in this area.

With respect to beach management, in collaboration with the Malta Tourism Authority and the Emergency Response and Rescue Corps (ERRC), life guarding and first aid services were provided in Ramla and Comino during the summer months.

Economic Development

The Directorate has continued to establish and strengthen linkages through thematic meetings with Malta Enterprise, the Employment Training Corporation and the National Statistics Office. In collaboration with the Eco-Gozo Regional Development Directorate, the Directorate has developed a Human Resource Strategy for the Island of Gozo. This strategy is set to be launched by the Ministry for Gozo in 2012.

Human Resource Strategy for Gozo

The Human Resource Strategy for the Island of Gozo has been completed. This strategy focuses both on the supply side as well as on the demand side of the equation. It presents an analysis of the human resource capabilities, potentials and needs which the Island Region of Gozo can tap into. Twenty strategic recommendations to optimise the use and development of human resources within the framework of the Eco-Gozo plan (as the formulation of this strategy fulfils three measures of the Eco-Gozo action plan 2010-12) have been formulated. This is intended to be used as a tool to help devise employment and investment schemes with the potential to attract investment prospects to Gozo.

Regional Statistics

Another function of the Directorate is linked to the compilation of regional statistics. The Directorate has held meetings with the National Statistics office and the Employment and Training Corporation with the aim of devising proper socio-economic statistics for Gozo aimed to provide indicators that can scientifically measure and compare the island's specificities and development. The discussions have focused on income and employment statistics, inter-island transport as well as occupancy statistics in private accommodation amongst others. This function is set to be strengthened during 2012 through the engagement of economics officers to properly fulfil the statistical function of the Directorate.

MANUEL TABONE

Director (Tourism and Economic Development)

**Ministry for Infrastructure,
Transport & Communications**

Permanent Secretariat

OVERVIEW

The Office of the Permanent Secretary plays a crucial role in the implementation of Government's agenda for the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications (MITC) by ensuring the provision of relevant, effective and timely policy advice and general management support and policy implementation capabilities for purposes of enabling the fulfilment of such agenda. Within this context, the Office of the Permanent Secretary provides leadership and general coordination of the operation of the following MITC departments and entities:

- Departments/Directorates - Corporate Services Directorate, Policy Development Directorate, Programme Implementation Directorate, EU Affairs Directorate, Information Management Unit, Legal Affairs Unit, TV Licensing Unit, and Land and Public Registry Department.
- Entities - Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA), Malta Freeport Corporation, Malta Transport Authority, Malta Communications Authority, Malta Government Technology Investments Ltd and the Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation.

The Ministry's remit also includes the coordination of road building, maintenance and landscaping, as well as the coordination of urban development projects: the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett Regeneration and Smart City.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

The Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS) monitors, corrects and approves all draft replies to parliamentary questions raised in Parliament concerning the various departments and entities falling within the Ministry's portfolio. During 2011, no less than 1,266 PQs were examined, and where necessary corrected, before being forwarded to the Minister for final approval. During 2011, a conscious drive was maintained, in conjunction with the Ministry's secretariat, to ensure speedier response to parliamentary questions.

LEGAL AFFAIRS UNIT

The legal office within the Permanent Secretariat provides legal assistance to the administration and departments falling under MITC as well, whenever required, to other entities and to the Ministry of Finance on matters relating to motor vehicle registration tax and exemptions under the Registration and Licensing of Motor Vehicles Act. This assistance is given in various forms such as legal advice, drafting of both primary and subsidiary legislation where requested, legal and linguistic clearance of EU related documents, vetting of draft legislation prepared by entities within the Ministry's remit, and advice on agreements and contracts. Furthermore, the legal office follows and assists in court cases initiated against the Ministry, handles legal/court matters together with the Office of the Attorney General, provides legal advisers and officials concerned with all legal documents received, and follows up each case to ensure that the appropriate action is being taken. It also implements other tasks as and when required.

The Unit drafted or contributed to the drafting of the following primary subsidiary legislation which was published throughout 2011:

- Act No IV of 2011 entitled the Budget Measures Implementation Act, 2011
- Act No V of 2011 entitled the Various Laws (Amendment) Act, 2011
- Bill No 94 entitled the Budget Measures Implementation Act, 2012
- Taxi Services (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- New Roads and Road Works (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Transfer of Property to Maltapost plc Order, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Registration and Licensing of Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Traffic Signs and Carriageway Markings (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Tariff of Fares) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Civil Aviation (Restriction of Flying) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- New Roads and Road Works (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Aircraft Registration (Approved Jurisdictions) Regulations, 2011
- Passenger Transport Services (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Registration and Licensing of Motor Vehicles (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Weights, Dimensions and Equipment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Passenger Transport Services (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Traffic Signs and Carriageway Markings (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Route Buses (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Scheduled Public Transport Services (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Gozo Services Motor Route Buses (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Tariff of Fares) (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Authority for Transport in Malta (Enforcement Officers) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicle (Wearing of Seat Belts) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Clamping and Removal of Motor Vehicles and Encumbering Objects (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Weights, Dimensions and Equipment) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Procedure of the Traffic Control Board (Revocation) Rules, 2011
- Time Table for the Malta/Gozo Hydrofoil Boats Passenger Service (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Time-Table for the Comino Passenger Service (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Time Table for the Gozo Mail and Passenger Service (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Fees payable for the Filing of Judicial Acts (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Carriage of Schoolchildren (Tariffs) (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Motor Vehicles (Carriage of Goods by Road) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Passenger Transport Services (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations, 2011
- Cleaner and More Energy-Efficient Road Transport Vehicles Regulations, 2011

Furthermore, it drafted or contributed to the drafting of several other regulations which still have to be published, including draft regulations on the use of animal-drawn vehicles on the road, the draft of which was published for public consultation early in 2011, new regulations about traffic offences, new regulations on vehicle hire services, regulations amending the roadworthiness tests regulations, regulations on exemption from arrears on motor vehicle licences under a scheme announced in the Budget Speech and regulations on the investigation of air accidents and incidents in line with Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation. It also proposed amendments to the Utilities and Services (Regulation of Certain Works) Act and gave its input on draft regulations about waste management in respect of end-of-life vehicles and Government second vehicle grants scheme.

Apart from the above mentioned legislation, the Ministry also published the following regulations or orders in respect of sectors falling within its merit:

- Civil Aviation (Route Charges for Navigation Services) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Port State Control) Regulations, 2011

- Revocation of the Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2010
- Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Mooring Services Regulations, 2011
- Yachting Centres Regulations, 2011
- Passport (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Mooring Services (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Airport Economic (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Civil Aviation (Restriction of Flying) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping Act (Substitution of First Schedule) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Pollution by Sewage) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Flag State Requirements) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Ship Inspection and Survey Organisations) Regulations, 2011
- General Authorisations (Radio-communications Apparatus) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Fees (Radio-communications) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) Regulations, 2011
- Single European Emergency Call Service ('112' number) and the European Harmonised Services of Social Value ('116' numbering range) Regulations, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Accident and Incident Safety Investigation) Regulations, 2011
- Civil Aviation (Denied Boarding Compensation and Assistance to Passenger) (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Civil Aviation (Denied Boarding Compensation and Assistance to Passenger) (Designation of Competent Authority) (Revocation) Regulations, 2011
- Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Authorisation of Frequency Use (Provision of 2GHz Mobile Satellite Services) Regulations, 2011
- Maltapost p.l.c. Licence (Modification) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- General Authorisations (Radio-communications Apparatus) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Reporting Requirements (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Dangerous Cargo Ships, Marine Terminals and Facilities and Bunkering (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Air Navigation (Amendment) Order, 2011
- Civil Aviation Joint Aviation Requirements (Amendment) Order, 2011
- Merchant Shipping (Insurance for Maritime Claims) Regulations, 2011
- Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations, 2011
- Civil Aviation (Aerodrome Licensing) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011
- Maritime Pilotage (Amendment) Regulations, 2011

The Unit throughout 2011 also cleared both legally and linguistically on behalf of the EU Affairs Directorate within the same Ministry, no less than 125 EU related documents, mainly proposals for new directives or regulations.

JOHN GATT

Permanent Secretary MITC

Corporate Services Directorate

OVERVIEW

The role of the Corporate Services Directorate (CSD) is that of providing essential support services to departments and entities falling within the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications (MITC) across a range of corporate functions including finance and administration (accounts, procurement, and asset management), human resources, registry services and health and safety. The PQ Section remained posted under this Directorate so as to enhance and ensure timely and comprehensive response to the questions tabled in respect to the Ministry and its portfolio. The CSD is, in terms of the Radiocommunications Act, also assigned responsibility for broadcast receiving apparatus which mainly relates to the licensing of televisions as managed by the Television Licensing Unit.

The Directorate also provides support services to the various secretariats, directorates, authorities, corporations and other entities falling within the MITC's portfolio in matters related to financial planning, public procurement, travel abroad on official business, and recruitment.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

To the extent that finances are needed to secure the successful implementation of the various activities within the MITC's portfolio of responsibilities, it can be said that management of the Ministry's finances is the most important role of the CSD. The Directorate handles all financial matters related to the Minister's Secretariat, the Office of the Permanent Secretary, EU Affairs Directorate, the Programme Implementation Directorate, the Policy Development Directorate and also the Project Development and Coordination Unit. During 2011, the CSD also offered support services to the Land and Public Registry. In this context, as in previous years, the CSD coordinated the Ministry's 2011 Revised Estimates exercise as well as the preparation of the Business and Financial Plans for 2012.

During 2011, the CSD also managed requests for the release of approved capital and recurrent budgetary subventions and other financial allocations submitted by Ministry entities including Malta Freeport Corporation, Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation, the Malta Communications Authority, the Authority for Transport in Malta, Malta Government Technology Investments Ltd, MARSEC-XL and Malta Information Technology Agency.

During 2011, the Directorate was also involved in:

- leading and enhancing the process of awarding tenders and direct orders;
- compiling information related to the drafting of replies to Parliamentary Questions;
- coordinating replies to several requests and queries from OPM, Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, The Treasury, National Audit Office and the Internal Audit and Investigations Department;
- assisting in the preparation of travel documents required by the Ministry's officials when travelling abroad on official business;
- monitoring expenditure from capital, recurrent and other approved financial allocations to ensure full compliance with financial regulations;
- starting a process with the aim to reduce its carbon foot-print, where class A lighting was introduced and measures were taken to decrease the use of printing through the installation of multi-functional printers, thus reducing waste and gaining on savings. Another process was also aimed at grouped telephony with a view to decrease the costs involved in such technology;

- assisting the Private Secretariat and the Permanent Secretariat in the complex exercise that saw them being relocated to new premises in Valletta, an exercise that required substantial effort in terms of planning of all logistics, transfer of all office equipment and ensuring business continuity;
- assisting the Permanent Secretary and the Director General as well as contributing to the collective management of the Ministry by providing personnel to serve as chairmen or members in several interviewing boards, tender evaluation committees and carrying out the role of financial controller for the Blue-Med EU Programme.

HUMAN RESOURCES

During 2011, the CSD continued to liaise with the various MITC departments and entities for purposes of ensuring the effective implementation of corporate human resource policies, systems and procedures as set by Government. The Human Resources Section also provided the necessary support for the recruitment of new personnel at the MITC's departments and entities by compiling and issuing calls for applications as appropriate or otherwise by channelling requests to the apposite approving authorities.

During 2011, the HR Section was also responsible for ensuring that all paperwork necessary for staff progressions was completed on time apart from following-up the compilation of staff performance management reports and plans.

Training

In 2011, several employees were encouraged and offered the chance to attend training seminars organised by the Centre for Development, Research and Training and other private training institutions. The Directorate also supported members of staff in undertaking diploma courses by providing part-financing. On-the-job training was also encouraged through the involvement of several officers in the various ministry initiatives including those related to gender equality and occupational health and safety issues. One has also to mention the training in public procurement, whereby officers were provided with relevant training, first to strengthen the operational aspect of the subject, and second, in anticipation of the changes to the Public Procurement Regulations, whereby the role of the Ministry became more sensitive and important during the awarding stage of public tenders, in particular through the Departmental Contracts Committee.

During 2011, the Corporate Services Directorate approved the participation of 35 officers to attend 47 courses, amounting to 796 hours. Apart from this, the Ministry was also engaged in the Employee Support Training Programme, in which, with the support of the Corporate Services Directorate, the following training sessions were effected:

- a 32 hour training (eight half day sessions) for 16 participants (Management)
- three half day training sessions for Middle Management with 39 participants
- 13 awareness raising sessions for employees in general (2.5hrs each session) for 284 participants

REGISTRY SERVICES

Registry services are another core function of the CSD in that it ensures the proper recording, tracking and retrieval of all correspondence received at MITC head office and its directorates. Without such registry services, operational functions would be seriously disrupted. The Registry Section utilises a corporate computerised Document Registry System to acknowledge and track correspondence and files throughout the whole operational system. During 2011, the section handled no less than 4,800 incoming correspondence that was duly acknowledged, inserted in appropriate file and forwarded to the appropriate service delivery desk. A total of 833 new files were also created, besides several other sub-files.

It is also pertinent to point out that the two Registry Sections were amalgamated into one section, leading to more efficiency and the eventual reduction of two officers, whereby one was authorised to join an NGO on unpaid leave and the other re-deployed within the Ministry.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

During 2011, the Corporate Services Directorate continued to improve on health and safety issues and proceeded to have fire drills on a regular basis, apart from carrying out several tests and checks on the Ministry's equipment and buildings so as to ensure proper adherence to the regulations and legislation and a safer environment for staff. Action was also taken to ensure that the lifts within the Ministry's precincts were serviced to standards and regulations.

TELEVISION LICENSING UNIT

The Television Licensing Unit (TLU) is the only non-corporate function falling within the CSD in that it performs a line department role and more specifically the issuance of licences and collection of relative annual fees for broadcast receiving apparatus (mainly televisions).

The TLU manages over 120,000 television licences and collects an average of €4.0 million yearly in licensing fees. For this purpose, the TLU operates a fee collection service that has been sub-contracted to Maltapost so as to ensure an easier and more convenient licence payment facility to customers. Subsequent to the general elections and in view of Government's electoral promise to do away with television licences, during 2011 the TLU continued to experience a considerable increase in defaulters and concomitant reduction in fees collected, since many persons holding a license assumed that the fee was no longer payable. To counter this downward movement and enhance revenue collection, the TLU undertook an arrears collection drive during which no less than 35,000 reminders were sent to defaulting drivers. The TLU also affected several telephone calls to its clients, whereby the Unit managed to increase the revenue by way of flexible repayments arrangements.

It is envisaged that, due to the inherent action-response lag, the results of the foregoing efforts by the TLU will spill over into 2012. Nonetheless, the revenue collected in 2011 was nearly €3,100,000. The TLU embarked also on a plan to delete obsolete licences pertaining to radio communications and will be taking legal action in 2012 against defaulters.

STAFF RATIONALISATION EXERCISE

During 2011, the Corporate Services Directorate continued to examine business requirements with a view to reducing the number of human resources. As a result, staff was reduced by 18, resulting in savings of around approximately €265,000.

EFFICIENCY GAINS

During 2011, the Corporate Services Directorate strived to affect reasonable efficiency gains. Eventually, the Ministry managed to save an overall amount of €187,000 mainly related to:

- staff relocation leading to savings,
- improving service quality,
- lower energy usage and use of energy-saving techniques,
- better usage of CdB in order to reduce administrative burdens;
- the introduction of a new telephony system which reduced drastically calls expenditure;
- the introduction of multi-functional printers which led to less electricity and consumables usage;
- better use of available IT systems which led to less usage of paper.

DENNIS ATTARD

Director (Corporate Services)

Information Management Unit

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The National ICT Strategy remains the Information Management Unit's (IMU) main focus for the year 2011. The National ICT strategy formulates the road-map for Government's priorities and targets within the ICT arena. It also addresses the European Digital Agenda while presenting an aggressive determination of Government for Malta to become one of the leading information societies in the world.

The IMU is the ministerial central ICT office, providing advice and support to departments and authorities within MITC. The main IMU business functions include: drawing up of MITC ICT plans, the management of ICT project design, ICT procurement and financing, management of information systems policy; application development product research, management of hardware inventories; authorisation and provision of information services, liaison with suppliers providing information technology services including services rendered by MITA, management of data centre facilities, and providing first-hand operational support on infrastructure.

CORE SERVICES CONTRACT

The Core Services Contract (CSC) is a contractual obligation for the delivery of core ICT services between MITC, on behalf of the Government, and the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA). This is an annual rolling contract that is calendar-year based and was initiated on 1 January 2006, covering the period ending December 2015. The contract places MITA as the core technology and operational driver responsible for the provision of core services to all line ministries and public entities as well as for the management, development and compliance monitoring of the ICT governance function, besides being the primary technology and ICT operations adviser.

USER AND DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT

IMU provided general technical and operational support to the Ministry and its users. Most of the desktop support is being carried out by the PC leasing contractor while IMU still received additional requests of a different nature. The support provided consisted mainly of the:

- provision of minor IT equipment such as peripherals, printing and scanning devices etc;
- transferring of IT equipment, set up of network and telephones following office moves;
- coordinating new users or terminated employee set-ups;
- communications and e-mails support such as offline mail, backups, archiving etc;
- provision of video conferencing and teleconference facilities;
- servicing requests for teleworking including provision of ICT equipment and Internet service at home;
- attendance verification operational support and systems implementation;
- participation in boards to identify unserviceable equipment;
- assisting users in handling files in unsupported formats;
- installation of non standard software.

IMU also offered governance and support to a number of departments within the Ministry, related to diverse aspects of ICT ranging from project management to consultancy, advice and technical support.

EXEMPTIONS AND WAIVERS

IMU received a number of ICT requests which due to GM ICT policies required a formal exemption from the MITA ICT Compliance Department in order to be implemented. The process for the submission and eventual processing of exemptions by MITA was fully coordinated by the ICT Governance Officer within the IMU. During 2011, the IMU processed a total of 73 exemptions.

E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES

During the year, MITC carried out various initiatives to enhance its e-Government services and thus keep abreast with the WEB evolvments while servicing the citizen in a more efficient and effective manner. MITC utilised its WEB engine which consists of a resourceful Content Management System (CMS) and its templates system which provides a rapid web-assisted development mechanism. Furthermore, MITC enhanced its main website while improving further its secondary sites in order to create an effective web presence.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2011, with the collaboration of MITA, the MITC IMU supported two non-governmental organisations in developing a new portal which replaced their forerunner with a more interactive and feature-rich site. These two organisations are Puttinu Cares Cancer Foundation at Mater Dei Rainbow Ward and *Dar tal-Providenza* located at the limits of Siggiewi.

Amongst the usual news articles, events and information pages, the new site invites its audience to communicate with these NGOs through polls and also allows direct interaction with the organisation through specific enquiry forms and online appointment requests. An online donation application was introduced in each respective website. The fresh and dynamic design makes it easier for the public to find its way through the website which is populated with rich media resources including videos, images and documents to provide all the information required by the site's audience.

Setting up of MITC as a DIMIC

The Internal Market Information (IMI) system was set up by the European Commission in collaboration with Member States to facilitate communication between Competent Authorities of the 30 EEA countries. The Commerce Department is the National Co-ordinator of IMI in Malta and has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the IMI application as required by the Services Directive.

The Office of the CIO was delegated with the responsibility to act as a Delegated IMI Co-ordinator (DIMIC) for services falling within the Ministry's respective area/s of responsibility. DIMICs and subsequently the IMU has the responsibility to register competent authorities in the system, manage their data, monitor progress of requests and assist in case of problems.

PC LEASING FOR PUBLIC SERVICE AND STATE SCHOOLS

During 2008, the Government of Malta, through MITC, embarked on the implementation of a PC leasing framework within the Public Service and government schools. The objective was to have a more efficient and effective ICT service by implementing a programme entailing the replacement of the previous equipment through the deployment, under title of lease, of personal computers and laptops as well as the provision of maintenance and support services to all workstations across the Public Service and schools. MITC sustains and monitor this agreement with the support of MITA and the respective Ministry CIOs.

A Desk-Top Service Operational Booklet has been prepared in order to set out the standard framework to be used internally and externally to MITA by the CIOs when upgrades and the movement of leased and

non-leased workstations across Government take place. The booklet also explains the procedure to be adopted for damaged workstations and provides for an exit clause.

	Replacements		Additional	
	<i>Laptops</i>	<i>PCs</i>	<i>Laptops</i>	<i>PCs</i>
OPM	155	656	86	82
MRRA	118	740	32	40
MSOC	234	1,581	109	357
MHEC-MDH	52	499	8	28
MOG	72	591	8	11
MITC	61	153	33	19
MEDC	152	607	44	19
MFEI	125	1,069	51	57
MFA	25	156	5	21
MJHA	124	939	9	62
Schools	3,890	6,827	0	0
Totals	5,008	13,818	385	696

LAND REGISTRY SEARCHES UNIT

As a result of a Cabinet decision for Government to take over the services from Eureka Service Ltd and integrate same within its Land Registry (LR) system, the LR searches unit now owns two applications, namely the Eureka Administration and Search System and the PR-Online System which is a WEB enabled system utilised by the Notaries. The MITC IMU is responsible for maintaining and servicing these applications and is also carrying out periodic system administration.

In view of the above, IMU was requested to set up a Service Level Agreement with the application developer who will continue to support the application. A second service agreement was put in place with MITA for the up-keep of the applications and the database which will be hosted at MITA within a secure environment. Furthermore, the IMU started to negotiate the set-up of a Virtual Environment in order to create a more robust set-up, ensuring business continuity.

IMU continues to provide both contract management and application support on behalf of the Department.

EU REGULATORY DATABASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

National authorities and entities within the structures of MITC carry the responsibility for implementing Community legislation. Therefore, they must gear up to improve their ability in responding to the EU demands and in the systematic identification of best practice. In line with the MITC Guidelines on the EU Process, there is need to persevere in our endeavour to aid in the simplification of the process taking place at both national and EU level.

Therefore it was paramount to establish a modus operandi that will streamline the internal process horizontally across all of MITC's sectors. Each of these EU sections is to be fully aware of their obligations that transpire both through the various treaties of the EU as well as the ongoing legislative process.

The aim of the EU RDMS is therefore that of enabling the proper enactment of the procedures while also adhering to the various obligations that Malta has agreed to when signing up for EU membership and thus allow for a better integration of the Ministry in the European process.

To this end, a Regulatory Database was put in place in order to provide the EU Affairs Directorate and the entities/authorities with quick and easy access to all of the necessary information, for:

- the monitoring of EU legislation;
- the controlling of Ministry obligations;

- the follow-up on transpositions; and
- for a better awareness of EU timelines.

All of the above is now supporting the Ministry to avoid missing important deadlines and lagging behind other Member States in the country's delivery.

PARTICIPATION IN BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Project	Initiator	Role
NIDMS Project Review Board	MITC Permanent Secretary	Chairing
Digital Switchover Steering Committee	MITC Permanent Secretary	Member
CIO Forum	CIOs	Chairing
CIO Council	CEO MITA	Member
Puttinu Cares Initiative	Chairperson MITA	Member
Dar tal-Providenza Initiative	Chairperson MITA	Member
MITC Management Committee	MITC Permanent Secretary	Member
Open Source Policy Setting	MITA work groups	Member
ICT Contracts Officer Selection Board	PSC	Member
Central Registry Act	DG Land Registry	Member
IMU Review Board (IRC)	CIO MITC	Chairing
Tender evaluation/adjudication	On request by MITC or CIOs	Member

JOE MAMO

Chief Information Officer

Programme Implementation Directorate

OVERVIEW

The main responsibility of the Programme Implementation Directorate (DPI) is the provision of effective management oversight of the implementation of the Ministry's programme plans and for the institution of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of endorsed policies, strategies, projects and other horizontal change management initiatives instituted across the public sector, leveraging greater impact for the Ministry.

EU FUNDING UNIT

The EU Funding Unit (EUFU) monitors and coordinates EU funded projects which are being implemented by the entities and departments falling under the remit of MITC. The Unit provides assistance to the entities at the initial project-funding application stage, through all project cycle and eventual closure of the project. EUFU ensures that desired project deliverables are consistent with EU guidelines and objectives.

During the year under review, entities were actively supported by EUFU, and a number of issues arising from management and audit checks were effectively resolved. For this purpose, the EUFU organised and facilitated a number of meetings between this Ministry, project leaders and regulatory bodies so as to ensure smoother project implementation. The Unit's officials regularly carried out on-spot checks so as to ensure that EU funded projects fully comply with national and EU regulations.

In 2011, EUFU also actively participated in the evaluation of a number of tenders that are part-financed under Operational Programmes I and II. In this respect, EUFU's officials acted as evaluators and secretaries within various evaluation committees.

In addition, the EUFU continued to assume responsibility for the organisation of periodic Ministerial Project Steering Committee meetings. This Committee monitors the progress of projects approved for EU co-funding under the Cohesion Policy and Operational Programmes for 2007-2013. During the year, three MPSC meetings were held in February, July and September 2011.

During 2011, the EUFU was monitoring the following projects:

Operational Programme I

- CF 117 - The upgrading of four sections of the Trans European Transport Network Phase I;
- CF 124 - Refurbishment of the Marsaxlokk and Valletta Breakwaters;
- CF 125 - Upgrading of the Coast Road and Kappara junction;
- CF 198 - Cirkewwa Ferry Terminal;
- ERDF 104 - Stronger Cottonera Communities;
- ERDF 114 - Maltese Text to Speech Synthesis;
- ERDF 183- Vertical Connection; and
- ERDF 159- eServices: Accessibility4All (ex4All).

Operational Programme II

- ESF 2.12.- Second Step; and
- ESF 2.72 Epitome: Empowerment Programme for IT use-Outreach for Micro-Entrepreneurships.

During 2011, the EUFU assisted entities on the following project proposals:

- ICT specialisation for inclusive up skilling/re skilling of women and disadvantaged groups;
- Fort St Elmo Heritage Experience;
- Upgrading of DEEP Water Quay;
- MODUS – Encouraging Modal Shift in land transportation; and
- OIL/HNS Spill Response Capacity Building for the protection of Malta’s seas.

The EUFU also attended information sessions with respect to the Operational programme I and II, Italia-Malta Programme, EEA/Norwegian Financial Mechanism and INTERREG IVC. EUFU disseminated all relevant information to the departments and entities concerned, and also participated in a number of bilateral meetings organised by the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division (PPCD) within the Office of the Prime Minister, together with the relevant entities’ project leaders and other officials.

Moreover, the EUFU assisted the Malta Communications Authority and Transport Malta to enable them to benefit from JASPERS Assistance: this scheme, operated by the European Investment Bank in collaboration with the European Commission and EBRD, provides assistance by external experts in the preparation of major project applications and other related studies such as Environmental Impact Assessments and Cost Benefit Assessments. In this regard, the Unit drafted the Ministry’s position paper containing various requests by the Ministry’s entities and then submitted same to the PPCD - the national focal point for this scheme.

EUFU also followed the development in the TEN-T policy, participated in the bilateral meetings with the Commission on the TEN-T and attended horizontal meetings and discussion between Commission, Council and the Member States all throughout the year and updated accordingly the Transport Malta on the subject.

This Unit also represented the Maltese Government by participating abroad in the following EU Committee Meetings:

- TEN-T Financial Assistance Committee;
- TEN-T Guidelines Committee;
- TEN-T Horizontal Working Council Group;
- MARCO POLO;
- Working Group on Regulatory Issues and Infrastructure in Trans Mediterranean Transport Network; and
- CETMO 5+5 Group.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

During 2011, the Directorate continued to ensure that the Ministry and all entities falling under its portfolio are prepared for the coming into force of the FOIA. During the year, officials from within the Directorate attended further meetings convened by the MJHA in order to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the FOI Act, and its implementation.

DATA PROTECTION

The Directorate strived to ensure that personal data was processed fairly and lawfully throughout the Ministry at all times. The Directorate continued to liaise with the OPM Data Protection Unit, MITA and the Commissioner of Police to provide online Police Conduct Certificates through the e-Government services. The European Data Protection Day Conference held in January 2011 was also attended.

GREEN LEADER

Through the Green Leader, the Directorate aimed to promote and implement environmentally-friendly initiatives, with the cooperation of all Ministry stakeholders. The results of the energy audits (which were conducted during 2010) were studied in order to establish whether another photovoltaic (PV) system could

be installed on the roofs of the premises housing the MITC offices. A 1.7 kWp PV system was subsequently installed at the Land Registry Directorate, Casa Bolino, Valletta.

The Directorate assisted the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs (MRRA) to collect information on the disposal of empty toners and printer cartridges in Public Service entities in order to help manage waste in a more responsible manner. Moreover, data as regards the number of water heaters and hot water dispensers, and the number of water heaters which could be permanently switched off within the Ministry, was collated in order to study the viability of permanently switching off some water heaters, and installing timers on the remaining water heaters and hot water dispensers. The said timers are to be installed within the Ministry in 2012.

CUSTOMER CARE

Customer care reflects heavily on the Ministry's image. The Directorate thus endeavoured to maintain good customer relations with its clients, through appropriate customer care mechanisms. During 2011, the Directorate received and processed 172 complaints with the close collaboration of the various other contact points within the entities falling under the Ministry's portfolio.

OMBUDSMAN CASES

The Office of the Ombudsman continued to refer to the Programme Implementation Directorate a number of cases lodged at his office, which concern entities falling under the remit of the MITC. Such cases were mainly related to the responsibilities of Transport Malta. The Directorate, with the assistance of officials from the entities involved, furnished prompt and effective replies to the Ombudsman at all times.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Directorate helped the Corporate Services Directorate to enhance health and safety issues within the Ministry.

Officials from within the Directorate also represented the Ministry in various Court cases, under the constant guidance of the Office of the Attorney General.

Furthermore, officials attended various conferences and seminars organised by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE).

Finally, officials from the Directorate also took an active part in various evaluation committees, and served as Chairpersons and Members on a variety of internal boards appointed by the Ministry like, for example, the disposal of obsolete items and defective passport booklets.

PAUL FARRUGIA

Director (Programme Implementation)

EU Affairs Directorate

OVERVIEW

The role of the EU Affairs Directorate is to manage the Ministry's participation in EU meetings, to coordinate all EU-related issues between the Ministry's departments, entities and authorities as well as other stakeholders, including other ministries, the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU and the EU Secretariat within the Office of the Prime Minister.

By disseminating documents received from EU institutions and other information at its disposal, the Directorate strives to ensure that MITC's entities and officials are kept up to date about EU initiatives and action in policy areas falling within the Ministry's remit. Internal discussion is spearheaded and coordinated by the Directorate in an effort to formulate recommendations for national positions. Attendance and active participation in the relevant fora is vital and the Directorate ensures and coordinates such participation and follow-up action.

The Director (EU Affairs) also represents MITC in various EU-related committees, both locally and abroad.

PARTICIPATION IN WORKING GROUPS

EUAD ensured preparation and attendance of meetings to be attended by officials either from the Permanent Representation or from locally based officers. In the latter cases, EUD alerted officials of meetings, provided relevant information and ensured that positions were taken in line with government policy and consultations undertaken as necessary. In the case of ad hoc meetings and in other cases as applicable, EUAD made recommendations as to attendance.

EU Affairs Directorate ensured that committee and expert group meetings as well as council working groups were always attended. In all cases, the Directorate ensured that instruction and briefing notes were prepared and cleared as per standard procedure prior to the meeting and reports drawn up and distributed for timely follow up action after the meeting. During 2011, the Directorate prepared, at times internally drafting and at other times reviewing and coordinating the preparation of briefs for six informal ministerial meetings, three high-level groups, nine conferences, 41 committee and expert group meetings and 161 working parties.

CONSULTATIONS AND EU DECISION-MAKING

The EU Affairs Directorate ensured that proposals referred for consultation were brought to the attention of the entities concerned. Likewise, it was ensured that where proposals required consultation with other ministries this was undertaken and the position factored in the results of these consultations. Such proposals and communications included the White Paper on the Roadmap to a Single European Area-Towards a Competitive and Resource Efficient Transport System, the Proposal for a regulation on guidelines for trans European telecommunications networks, the Proposal establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, the Proposal for a directive amending Directive 2008/106/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the minimum level of training of seafarers, and the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council facilitating cross border enforcement in the field of road safety.

In collaboration with various counterpart directorates, EUAD MITC also contributed to positions on other proposals within the remit of other ministries. Such cases included the Directive 1999/32/EC related to the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels and on further pollutant emission reduction from maritime transport and others such as the Communication - A Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050, Single Market Act.

Collaboration with MEUSAC was ongoing and included assistance in providing a one day programme for an internship to a delegation from Kosovo relating to Malta's accession preparation, a presentation to the Core Group on the White Paper on the Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system and a public debate on the implementation process of Directive 2010/65/EU on reporting formalities for ships arriving and/or departing from ports of the Member States and repealing Directive 2001/6/EC. During the year, a presentation on the Digital Agenda for Europe was delivered to the Committee of Permanent Representatives. EUAD participated in various public consultations initiated by the Commission, coordinating or contributing to the replies following internal discussions and consultations. These concerned a number of areas including possible revision of Directive 2003/42/EC on occurrence reporting in civil aviation and of its implementing rules, Clean Transport System (CTS) Initiative, revision of Directive 2000/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2000 on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues; Revision of the Guidelines on public funding to broadband networks', personal data breach notifications under the ePrivacy Directive; Public Consultation concerning Enforcement of the International Labour Organisation Maritime Labour Convention, Review of the Community Guidelines on Financing of Airports and start-up aid to airlines departing from regional airports.

HARMONISATION WITH THE EU ACQUIS

A number of Directives and Regulations had to be transposed and/or implemented during 2011. The EUAD undertook various actions to assist entities in these tasks in an effort to ensure that action was taken in a timely manner, thereby ensuring that Malta adhered to its obligations as a Member State in time, thereby reaping the benefits of the measures concerned and avoiding infringement proceedings. As a result, various amendments and measures were enacted in local legislation.

Such was the case for the Telecommunications Package, which was transposed through Act IX of 2011 to amend various laws relating to communications and to make provision with respect to matters ancillary thereto or connected therewith, LN 273/2011 Electronic Communications (Regulations) Act (Cap. 399) Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) Regulations, 2011, LN274/2011 Electronic Communications (Regulations) Act (Cap. 399) Single European Emergency Call Service ('112' number) and the European Harmonised Services of Social Value ('116' numbering range) Regulations, 2011 and LN 239/2011 Data Protection Act (Cap. 440), Processing of Personal Data (Electronic Communications Sector) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011.

Various directives relating to the third maritime safety package were also transposed during 2011, LN220/2011 - Merchant Shipping (Ship Inspection and Survey Organisations) Regulations, 2011 updated our regulations to ensure transposition of Directive 2009/15/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on common rules and standards for ship inspection and survey organisations and for the relevant activities of maritime administrations. While Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009, establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector and amending Council Directive 1999/35/EC and Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, was transposed through LN 275 of 2011. LN 219 - Merchant Shipping (Flag State Requirements) Regulations, 2011 transposed Directive 2009/21/EC on compliance with flag State requirements. Commission Directive 2010/36/EU of 1 June 2010 amending Directive 2009/45/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on safety rules and standards for passenger ships has been fully transposed by virtue of Subsidiary Legislation 234.30

Merchant Shipping (Safety Convention) Rules and Subsidiary Legislation 499.23 Commercial Vessels Regulations.

In the sector of road transport, Commission Directive 2010/61/EU of 2 September 2010 adapting for the first time the Annexes to Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the inland transport of dangerous goods to scientific and technical progress is now transposed through by LN 226 of 2011 Motor Vehicles (Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011.

The Airport Economic Regulations were also amended in order to transpose Directive 2009/12/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on airport charges.

LUCIENNE MEILAK
Director (EU Affairs)

Policy Development Directorate

OVERVIEW

The Policy Development Directorate facilitates the effective development of policy options related to the MITC portfolio of responsibilities; coordinates the preparation and formulation of Malta's position on the National Reform Programme and on Better Regulation projects by the different entities falling under the remit of the Ministry, and oversees their effective implementation. The Directorate also helps formulate the Ministry's position on issues related to Malta's international and economic relations, particularly with third countries.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

During the year under review, through background research, synthesis of information and consultation with MITC stakeholders, the Directorate provided support and advice to the Permanent Secretary and to the Director General (Operations) on a variety of policy issues. By keeping abreast with developments taking place in the areas of infrastructural development, transport and communications, the Directorate contributed to the development of long-term strategic plans in support of approved domestic policies, and actively collaborated with the Ministry's core strategists in the updating of policies pertaining to the Ministry's portfolio of responsibilities.

NATIONAL REFORM PROGRAMME

The Director (Policy Development) is the Ministry's National Reform Programme designated Co-ordinator.

In July 2010, the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications had submitted no fewer than 19 new ICT-related project proposals for implementation in terms of the Digital Agenda flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 Strategy. However, in March 2011, the European Council invited Member States to provide new, short-term tangible commitments that would contribute towards national competitiveness, in terms of the Euro Plus Pact agreed upon by Heads of State. Thus, in April 2011, Malta submitted its final NRP document containing nine concrete proposals under the Euro Plus Pact, and these include four measures for implementation by the Malta Communications Authority, namely: (i) the full liberalisation of the Postal sector; (ii) Telecommunications Market (the introduction of amendments to the Electronic Communications (Regulation) Act in order to further drive the competitiveness of this market and to strengthen the underlying infrastructure); (iii) the roll-out of Next Generation Networks; and (iv) Telecommunications Regulatory Measures (aimed at lowering inter-operator termination rates, at encouraging and facilitating the entry of new players in the broadband market, at the reassignment of rights of use of spectrum in bands, etc).

During the year, the Directorate closely monitored the progress achieved on the aforementioned NRP measures through constant liaison with the relevant MITC entities, and actively pursued their timely implementation. Regular and comprehensive reports were drawn up and submitted to the NRP Unit at MFEI, which include updates on CION documents concerning Malta's competitiveness performance and policies. Throughout 2011, the Directorate moreover actively participated in various meetings and briefing sessions with the NRP Unit, MFEI and other stakeholders, including ad hoc meetings held with Malta's

Permanent Representative to the EU and with an EU Commission technical delegation on industrial competitiveness. By year-end, various stages of implementation (including full completion) were achieved by the MCA on the aforementioned four Euro Plus Pact measures.

BETTER REGULATION

The Director (Policy Development) is also MITC's Better Regulation Ministry Coordinator (BRMC), and has direct responsibility to coordinate and oversee the implementation of measures formulated by the Ministry and its entities under the Action Plan for Simplification. Better Regulation remains a key priority for the public administration, and the reduction or simplification of current administrative burdens has been identified as an important tool to support businesses in their endeavours to grow and create jobs while retaining their competitiveness.

Over the last three years, the departments and entities falling under the responsibility of this Ministry implemented various relevant measures of better regulation which have significantly contributed towards the simplification of certain government processes and the reduction of unnecessary administrative burdens hitherto imposed on the local business community as well as on the Maltese citizen. These measures include: (a) full responsibility for the Common Database (CdB) by the Director (Passports and Civil Registration); (b) the general authorisation regime adopted by the Malta Communications Authority; and (c) the new vehicle registration system introduced by Transport Malta. The Directorate thus actively monitored and closely followed the progress of these projects, but on an ongoing basis also played an instrumental role in the identification of further burden reducing measures.

Throughout the year, the Directorate extended full cooperation to the Better Regulation Unit, OPM, primarily through the constant provision of feedback, various reports and other data, as required by the BRU or as requested by the EU Commission. During the first semester of 2011, Director (Policy Development) proactively participated in the BRMC meetings that were regularly convened at the Management Efficiency Unit. The Directorate also participated in the EU-funded intensive training programme on the Standard Cost Model (SCM) tool that is used to measure administrative burdens resulting from information obligations.

Further collaboration was moreover provided to the BRU when in June 2011, the MEU launched the three-phase ESF project aimed at developing the Public Sector's capacity to implement better regulation and to enable Government to achieve, by end-2012, the 15% burden reduction target committed by Malta with the EU. For this purpose, the Directorate participated in a Legal Notice Checklist training programme and in a mentorship programme designed to support the Ministry in identifying and implementing a number of BR initiatives. Subsequently, the Directorate was actively engaged in the identification and classification of over 830 information obligations (IOs) emanating from local, EU and international legislation relating to MITC's portfolio: these form part of an extensive compendium of all primary and secondary legislation encompassing all IOs applicable nationally, compiled in preparation for Phases 2 and 3 of the project.

RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

The Policy Development Directorate works in close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, as well as with the Economic Policy Department, in order to ensure that MITC's input on matters concerning relations of a bilateral nature with third countries is delivered efficiently and effectively at all times.

During 2011, the Directorate formulated the Ministry's position on a substantial number of issues, including merchant shipping and other maritime-related agreements, air services agreements (ASA), partnership and cooperation agreements (PCA), and on various memoranda of understanding (MOU).

Assisted by officials from within MITC entities, the Directorate also participated in several meetings with MFA and MFEI officials, and other stakeholders, in order to discuss terms of bilateral agreements, to

establish the appropriate lines of action to be adopted so as to achieve progress, and to prepare for the next level of discussions with the foreign counterparts. The Policy Development Directorate thus represented the Ministry in high-level group meetings led by MFA or MFEI officials, and attended by foreign ministers and delegates, such as the 9th Session of the Maltese-Tunisian Joint Commission held in June 2011, wherein agreement was reached on proposals for bilateral cooperation in a number of MITC-related areas.

Throughout the year, the Directorate moreover liaised with its entities, the EU Affairs Directorate and the EU Secretariat at OPM, as well as with other stakeholders, to pursue the continuation, revision or conclusion of bilateral negotiations with other third countries, such as the People's Republic of China, Libya, Qatar, Bulgaria, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates. In 2011, mutual agreement was reached upon an MOU on cooperation in the development and implementation of transport policy, particularly in the maritime field: this was signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his Bulgarian counterpart.

The Directorate also provided Hon Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs, the Maltese Mission to the UN, and others, with position papers and speaking notes on MITC-specific topics (ICT, maritime security, law of the sea, maritime piracy and urban transport). The Directorate constantly liaised with the Ministry's entities and facilitated arrangements for the identification of experts (a) for participation in meetings, conferences and other specialised *fora* abroad, and (b) for their nomination and eventual appointment on important international bodies (e.g. the candidature of a Maltese Judge on ITLOS in 2011).

Other Activities

During the year under review, the Directorate assumed other important responsibilities, such as:

- In his capacity as MITC's representative on the Sanctions Monitoring Board, Director (Policy Development) forwarded various forms of feedback on an incessant flow of queries emanating from UNSC Resolutions and EU Directives recommending sanctions and other restrictive measures on a wide array of foreign nationals and entities. After consulting Permanent Secretary's Office, Minister's Secretariat, Attorney General and others, he regularly provided Chairman SMB with advice as well as with MITC's position on vital issues, often affecting the Ministry's own entities. He participated in regular board meetings, including high-level briefing sessions with United Nations Security Council experts. DPD moreover coordinated the carrying out of asset searches by the Land and Public Registries and Transport Malta, and provided further assistance to the SMB by carrying out the close scrutiny of shipping documents and then making relevant recommendations on the appropriate lines of action to be taken.
- In his capacity as Member of the European Railway Agency (ERA) Administrative Board, Director (Policy Development) represented the Ministry by participating in three Administrative Board meetings held at ERA headquarters in Lille, France.
- The Directorate also handled numerous requests for feedback on a wide range of notifications forwarded by the Malta Standards Authority, in relation to the consultation process required in terms of Directive 98/34/EC, for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and of rules governing Information Society Services: the relevant MITC stakeholders were duly consulted, and then the MSA was promptly notified of the Ministry's position on the various topics under review.

JOSEPH TONG

Director (Policy Development)

Land and Public Registry

GENERAL

In view of the planned Central Registry Act, whose main aim is the establishment of one Central Registry through an amalgamation of the Land and Public Registries, it has become essential to ensure that the Land and Public Registry has the necessary administrative capacity to provide nation-wide databases both in terms of trained human resources as well as technological capacity.

An exercise which included the vetting of a draft version of Central Registry Act for any inconsistencies, contradictions or irregularities; drafting of subsidiary legislation and of forms as stipulated in the draft Act itself; and identification of other pieces of Maltese legislation which will be affected by the entry into force of the Central Registry Act commenced in 2009. A consultation process with the main stakeholders continued since then and work on this Act was protracted during 2010 due to legal complexities and technical issues. During 2011, following further consultations, a draft bill was finalised and is expected to be brought into force during 2012.

LAND REGISTRY

The number of applications lodged at the Land Registry during 2011 totalled 8,823, thus exceeding the number of applications received during 2010 by 12%.

During the year, 11,653 search applications were received and 25,529 Land Registry Plans were issued. This is an increase of 47% and 6.5% respectively when compared to 2010.

LAND REGISTRY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM (LRCS)

Performance issues with regard to the system were resolved following discussions with MITA. Following a short-term project aimed at enhancing the LRCS which was finalised during 2010, further enhancements during 2011 were required and these were successfully implemented. The updated version of the LRCS basemap was successfully integrated into the system in June 2011.

CONDOMINIUM ACT (CHAPTER 398 LAWS OF MALTA)

The Land Registry receives applications for the appointment of administrators and the registration of rules regulating the common parts of buildings co-owned by different owners. By the end of December 2011, the total number of applications received amounted to 665, of which 125 were received during 2011.

LAND REGISTRY QUALITY SERVICE

The Land Registry has a Quality Service Charter which was one of the first introduced by Government way back in 1999. Commitments featuring in the Quality Service Charter offer a service that aims at responding to customers' requests sometimes within a few minutes: clients coming to the Registry for a Land Registry Plan, for example, are guaranteed service within ten minutes of their request. A generic e-mail account for the Land Registry - land.registry@gov.mt - which enables clients to make comments or complaints electronically was created and queries are dealt with on a daily basis. Random checking on all

types of applications lodged at the Registry revealed that targets and deadlines set out in the Charter are rigorously being observed.

DATA PROTECTION

The Land Registry continued to scrutinise and implement as necessary recommendations emerging from a data protection full audit carried out within the department.

PREŻENTATA AND SEARCHES UNIT

The *Preżentata* and Search Sections, which were transferred from the Public Registry to the Land Registry during 2002, in order to enhance the one stop shop concept in so far as property registration is concerned, have now become an integral part of the Land Registry. During 2009, the Land and Public Registry also commenced activities leading to the taking over of the functions and operations that were being carried out by a private contractor that carried out personal searches.

During 2010, Government successfully took over the carrying out of personal searches from the company, thus increasing its revenue. This takeover was completed smoothly and is fully operational. During 2011, enhancements were made to the IT system which improved the quality of service given to clients.

VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION SCHEME

In conjunction with the Rehabilitation Project Office and the local councils, a voluntary scheme of registration was launched in November 2001 for property situated within Valletta, Floriana, Senglea, Cospicua and Vittoriosa. By virtue of this scheme, owners of immovable property within these areas are entitled to benefit from certain subsidies. These include the preparation of the registration plan by government employees at the expense of €23.29 and subsequently the actual registration of property at the cost of €23.29 rather than €46.59.

During 2011, an extensive exercise was prepared to draft a strategy to deal with the remaining applications. In fact 106 applications were processed. Out of 2,182 applications received, 1,682 applications or 77% have been finalised and work on 500 applications is ongoing. The applications were divided as follows:

Council	Applications	Finalised	Ongoing
Valletta	469	384	85
Birgu	326	286	40
Bormla	673	488	185
Isla	379	282	97
Floriana	335	242	93

PUBLIC REGISTRY

The main functions and responsibilities of the Public Registry emanate from the Public Registry Act, Cap 56; the Marriage Act, Cap 255; Cap 16 (Civil Code) and the Housing (Decontrol) Ordinance, 1959, Cap 158.

The Public Registry deals with the registration and issuance of copies of Acts of Birth, Marriage and Death as well as all annotations to these Acts. Besides registering all births, marriages and deaths occurring in Malta, the Department registers, on request, certificates of births, marriages and deaths of Maltese citizens where the event occurred abroad. During 2011, a total of 1,613 such registrations were made which included 1,145 births, 446 marriages and 22 deaths. There were also 272 annotations of nullity of marriage and divorces. Statistical data is regularly forwarded to government departments, particularly the National Statistics Authority.

REGISTRATIONS SECTION

The total number of Acts of Civil Status registered in 2011, as compared with 2010, is shown in the following table:

	Registrations	
	2010	2011
Births	4,141	5,230
Marriages	2,401	2,745
Deaths	2,687	2,984
Total	9,229	10,959

CIVIL STATUS SECTION

During 2011, a total of 65,819 Acts of Civil Status were issued and a total of 16,607 Civil Status certificates issued were ordered online.

	Extracts Issued		Full Copies Issued	
	2010	2011	2010	2011
Adoptions	n/a	n/a	122	98
Births	40,617	36,494	4,491	4,376
Marriages	9,983	7,699	3,084	3,146
Deaths	14,398	12,766	1,220	1,240
Total	64,998	56,959	8,917	8,860

The Department issues Free Status Certificates which attest that no registration of an act of marriage exists in the Civil Status Records against a particular individual. The number of these certificates issued in 2011 was 209.

ANNOTATIONS SECTION

Any person, who may have an interest, can bring an action before a competent court in Malta for (a) the correction of any registered Civil Status Act, (b) the legitimation *per subsequens matrimonium* of a person born out of wedlock, and (c) the acknowledgement of the paternity of a person born out of wedlock. Legitimation *per subsequens matrimonium* may also be effected by applying to the Director, Public Registry.

Moreover divorces and nullities of marriage obtained abroad in a competent court may be registered at the Public Registry after ascertaining that they conform to the relative requisites of Maltese law. Nullities of marriage obtained in Malta are also registered at the Department. All changes emanating from the above instances are recorded in the Annotations column of the relative Civil Status Act. Comparative figures for annotations entered in the registers of Civil Status in 2010 and 2011 are:

Types of Annotations	2010	2011
Corrections	131	161
Legitimations or Acknowledgements	341	322
Nullity of marriage	113	162
Foreign Divorces	47	70
Local Divorces	n/a	40
Total	632	755

ADOPTIONS

The number of adoptions entered in the Adopted Persons Register in terms of the Civil Code (Amendment) Ordinance 1962 during 2011 was 60.

MARRIAGE REGISTRY

The number of marriages in respect of which formalities were completed by the Marriage Registry during the year under review, as compared to the preceding year, was as follows:

Marriages in Malta	2010	2011
Religious	1,536	1,436
Other Religious	8	7
Civil	723	824
Total	2,267*	2,267*

* Registered as at 31.12.11

The number of marriages (Religious and Civil) between foreign couples who in 2011 opted to contract their marriage in Malta amounted to 617, of which 527 were civil marriages, 86 catholic marriages and 4 other religious. These couples hailed from a wide diversity of countries. During the year, 122 Maltese men and 123 Maltese women were married to foreigners.

The number of religious marriages between Maltese couples was 1,281 while 123 opted for a civil marriage. Civil marriages may be celebrated at the Department and also outside the Public Registry premises upon request by the spouses.

PASSPORT AND CIVIL REGISTRATION DIRECTORATE

The main function of the Passport Office and Civil Registration Directorate is the issuance of Maltese passports to Maltese citizens. The Passport Office also provides assistance to Maltese embassies, high commissions, consuls, and the Passport Office in Gozo. Other functions of the Civil Registration Directorate include: acting as the Registration Authority for the e-ID, maintaining, enhancing and developing Government's corporate database known as the Common Database (CdB) and notifying the Public Registry of births and deaths that occur in Malta.

PASSPORTS OFFICE

The first Maltese biometric passport was issued in September 2008 and this event brought Malta in line with EU legislation. It also enabled it to become part of the US Visa Waiver Program. Fingerprints started being captured as from 28 June 2010 in accordance with Regulation (EC) 444/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 May 2009 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004 on standards for security features and biometric in passports and travel documents issued by Member States.

In December, the Passport Office introduced the Emergency Travel Document (ETD). These travelling documents are being issued in accordance with Decision 96/409/CSFP of the European Union. Embassies and consulates will issue these documents to European Union citizens for a single journey back to the EU country of which they are a national, to their country of permanent residence or, in exceptional cases, to another destination (inside or outside the Union) in cases where the citizen's passport or travel document has been lost, stolen or destroyed or is temporary unavailable.

ANCILLARY SERVICES

- The Passport Office accepts applications for the issuance of a second passport in special circumstances and when considered necessary. During the year, 99 such passports were authorised and issued.
- Convention Travel Documents are also issued by the Passport Office. A total of 77 Convention Travel Documents were issued during 2011.
- 2,285 Aliens Passports were issued during 2011 to persons holding subsidiary protection.
- To further enhance the one-stop-shop concept, Passport Office officials are also appointed as Commissioners for Oaths to administer oaths when necessary. A total of 526 oaths were taken in 2011.

- The Directorate also offers an all inclusive round-the-clock emergency service to clients needing an urgent passport during silent hours: 52 such cases were processed in 2011.
- During 2011, a total of 1,087 urgent passports (issuance within four hours of application) were issued.
- The Passport Office also offers the services of an Arabic translation of passports to those persons who request this service. A total of 287 translations were carried out during 2011.

<i>Total Number of Passports issued in 2010-2011</i>				
	Passports Issued		Revenue	
	2010 €	2011 €	2010 €	2011 €
Malta	33,908	35,031	1,882,986	1,971,205
Gozo	2,312	2,466	128,061	137,668
Missions	2,895	2,963	230,568	236,956
Diplomatic	82	76	2,870	2,660
Total	39,197	40,536	2,244,485	2,348,489

THE COMMON DATABASE

The Common Database (CdB) is a corporate initiative aimed at providing commonly used information that falls under the public domain and serves to achieve information consistency across government departments. The CdB processes person data which forms the main area of information, and all other areas of information, such as person relationships, addresses and organisations associated with it. The Data Protection Act has put greater responsibility on the Public Service and Public Sector to ensure that the CdB is used appropriately and only when really needed to assist in the business process of a department.

The primary objectives of the Common Database are basically to produce a repository for commonly used information which is in the public domain to be shared among government departments, and to facilitate the one-stop-shop concept in government departments.

Thus the Common Database System integrates public domain information that is commonly used amongst government departments and which is available in computerised systems. Established security and audit procedures are in place to ensure proper use of the available data, particularly in conformity with Data Protection legislation.

The information contained in the CdB concerns persons and their addresses and furthermore an Organisations Area of Information is gathered from the Public Registry, the Electoral Office and the VAT Department. This is validated against predefined rules so as to ensure data integrity and quality. Those transactions that pass the validation rules update the respective records inside the CdB. The source department verifies transactions that fail the validation process. Government departments run the query module to conduct searches as required. Therefore they can view information that is current, consistent, and correct on daily basis. A mechanism is also provided so that feedback on the integrity and quality of the data is obtained from different users. Action is taken accordingly to rectify the information after investigations are carried out.

NOTIFICATION SECTION

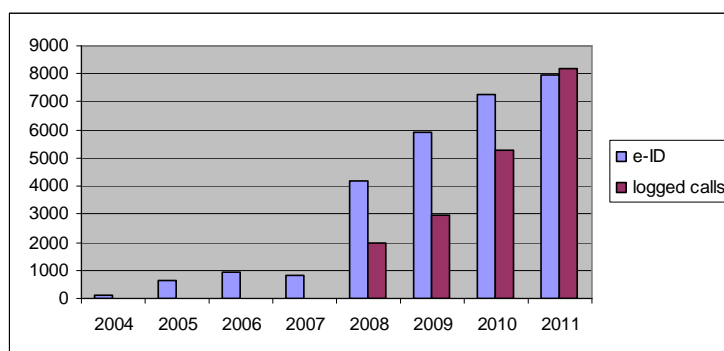
This Section may be considered as the front office for the registration of all births and deaths occurring in Malta. Following notification, the relative Acts are drawn up and checked before being delivered to the Public Registry for registration.

Total Number of Notifications received in 2010 - 2011				
	Births		Deaths	
	2010	2011	2010	2011
Malta	3,744	3,991	2,628	2,693
Gozo	287	280	264	257
Total	4,031	4,271	2,892	2,950

E-ID OFFICE

The Office continued experiencing an increase in registrations during this year with the number of new citizen e-ID registrations reaching 7,940. Throughout the past twelve months a total of 897 organisation applications have been received, processed and approved.

The e-ID Office continued to offer support services through its Help Desk. Such services were extended during different periods of the year to mainly provide increased support to the business community. The Help Desk serviced a total of 8,216 requests during 2011.



The e-ID Office carried out identity verification and authentication checks of national identity card holders applying for an e-Passport. During 2011, the Office carried out a total of 25,114 identity verifications.

Enhancements to the e-ID system were aimed at improving 'myGov.mt' - the public interface to the e-ID system, and 'id.gov.mt' (the eGovernment Framework) which forms the backend of the e-ID system. The Work Order included enhancements to cater for specific requirements along with ongoing developments in relation to the e-ID system with the aim to provide an improved structural system and friendly functionalities to both end users and the administrators of the applications.

A number of meetings were held with eService providers to establish and strengthen an information sharing network with organisations offering eServices enabled by the e-ID.

GREEN INITIATIVES AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Land and Public Registry actively supports and promotes green initiatives. In 2011, PV panels were installed at Land Registry and at the Public Registry Searches Unit. More infrared motion sensors will be introduced in 2012 to further reduce electricity costs. Paper, carton and plastic are collected for recycling and appropriate bins were procured for this purpose. Spent batteries are collected for proper disposal. Staff is committed to save as much as possible on paper and envelopes by using email facilities as a means of communication where appropriate. Light bulbs are also consistently replaced with energy-saving ones.

DR STEPHANIE PAPPALARDO
Director General (Land & Public Registry)

**Ministry for Resources & Rural
Affairs**

Information Management Unit

Mission Statement

To enable the Ministry develop policies that will help integrate information technologies into the activities of its stakeholders and the society in general, and also to harness the full potential for effective development driven by appropriate technological innovations and providing data management support.

ICT BUDGETING AND BUSINESS PLAN

The Information Management Unit (IMU) was responsible for the planning and provision of ICT services to assist the Ministry to function effectively and efficiently in line with Government ICT vision and policy. The Chief Information Officer (CIO) consolidated the ICT planning within the Ministry and managed the overall ICT capital and operational budgets. The Ministry's overall IT allocation for 2011 was €550,000. While core services were funded centrally, the CIO administered and managed the contract with the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) for the rest of the maintenance and support facilities and software applications. In the course of its activities, the IMU most of the time liaised closely with MITA.

The IMU continued with its efforts to implement a software application holistic approach across all the Ministry business areas. The main development that absorbed a lot of resources was the Fisheries Information System, which is being mostly financed by the European Union and was awarded in December 2010. A huge chunk of the allocated funds were utilised by the support and maintenance of the Paying Agency System developed by ABACO Srl under an EU Twinning Agreement.

Following feedback gathered from the Directors and Heads of sections, the ICT Capital and Operational Budgeting Plan for 2012 was drawn up and presented to MITA.

During 2011, the CIO chaired the CIO Forum that meets every other Wednesday. During the course of the year, staff from the office chaired or were members on various adjudication boards relating to the acquisition/disposal of hardware and software by the Ministry and its departments. The IMU was continuously involved in the ICT consolidation drive for government entities that fall under the Ministry, namely WasteServ Ltd, the Malta Resources Authority and the Building Industry Consultative Council.

IT PROJECTS

After the audit carried out in 2010 on user access for network shared folders in MJHA, steps were taken to ensure the most effective use of the space available in a secure, centralised environment, minimising the scattering of data on several external storage devices. A huge concern for the Ministry was the urgent need of a robust backup solution for users' offline mail. MITA were not in a position to provide such a solution. The IMU, still in liaison with MITA, installed a Network Attached Storage (NAS) solution to cater for this critical requirement. Implementation was completely carried out by IMU staff. This storage device is currently handling very effectively over 800Gb of shared data and 400Gb of e-mail offline backup.

The Office coordinated a number of projects related to new local area networks and several extensions to existing ones.

IT AUDITS

The IMU is continuously involved in various ICT audits. In the major part of these audits, the Unit assists and collaborates with the Internal Audit and Investigations Department and other audit companies.

Cost Cutting Exercises

The IMU identified two costly priorities where valid cost savings could be undertaken without sacrificing the quality of our services, namely telephony and printing.

All PBXs at MRRA were replaced with remote shelves at practically zero initial outlay cost. Once this work was completed, all offices under the remit of MRRA were able to call one another internally at no cost. Once the system was unified and centrally driven, the results were less maintenance costs and more control and auditability. The expected annual savings would definitely exceed the €120,000 figure. The IMU will also be carrying out an in-depth audit on the use of direct lines throughout MRRA. Already, the removal of over 60 direct lines meant considerable savings in bills for fixed telephony rentals.

Some time back, the Ministry had adopted a policy aimed at reducing the overall costs of procurement and maintenance of printers and having more feasible and better distributed printing solutions. All offices were instructed that all toner/ink had to be procured through the central stores. Hence, through the control/approval of this procurement by the IMU, a valid corporate visibility of all printers at the Ministry was obtained, with the resultant tangible control on the use of toners and ink. The daily average usage cost of toner/ink went down from €320 in 2010 to €269 in 2011.

Several random and other audits were carried out on the use of internet and other ICT services at MRRA. The usage of public WiFi installations was also monitored from reports received from the Malta Communications Authority (MCA).

In the last years, the Ministry benefited also from considerable savings, in the range of €26,000 annually, after the CIO took a calculated but ‘unpopular’ decision to refrain from updating CAD software to the latest version each year. This decision did not have any negative effects on the business.

WEBSITES

The IMU strives continually to keep the various websites appealing and updated. While most of the content management is carried out in-house, there is a maintenance and support agreement for a better and cheaper service with the main web developers. A couple of new sites were created. Various other sites were extensively updated or revamped.

IT TRAINING AND CONFERENCES

IMU staff attended a number of short courses/seminars, mostly CDRT-organised, related to their line of duty. However, late in the year, the staff started also participating in international conferences under the EU-funded ESF 4.98 project *Strengthening IMUs and other Related Functions through Specialist Training Programmes*. Under this project, in November the ICT Governance Officer attended *The Premier Conference for Information Security and Risk Management* held in Barcelona, and the *Info Security Solutions Europe* conference held in Prague. The Management Information Systems Officer attended the *Farm Advisory System in the EU: Proposals for Improvement* in Warsaw in February and the *Meeting of the Fisheries Control Experts Group – ERS (Electronic Recording and Reporting System) and Data Management Working Group* held in Copenhagen in November.

GEORGE FALZON
Chief Information Officer

Programme Implementation Directorate

Mission Statement

To enable the effective implementation of programmes and projects which fall within the remit of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs

PROJECT MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The objectives of the Directorate include the effective monitoring of the implementation of projects, policies and strategies, and progress reporting amongst other tasks. This Ministry has a number of major projects which are earmarked for co-financing by the European Union. One project, which is now completed, was co-financed under the European Social Fund while the rest fall under the Structural and Cohesion Funds. The total net value is of approximately €200M, and the projects fit into the co-financing ratio of 85 % (EU Funds): 15% (MT Funds) and within the 2007 – 2013 programming period.

In full cooperation with each project leader by way of scheduled regular meetings, the Directorate strives towards the effective management of each project. This also with a view towards the timely disbursement of funds in line with projections laid out in the Grant agreement. Adopting an integrated approach as the praxis, project leaders are introduced to active assistance and guidance by the Directorate to reach the expected goals and bring the project to fruition. By enhancing effective channels of communication in both the vertical and the horizontal direction, for example between the Project Leader, MRRA as the line ministry, and the Managing Authority within OPM, the Directorate aims to involve all stakeholders thus maximising coordination towards successful realisation. It also liaises with the Department of Contracts to expedite the tender processes in an effort to shorten the time component whenever possible.

During 2011, the Directorate provided active assistance to WasteServ Malta to finalise a project under Operational Programme II. Another project closed off during the same year was co-financed under the EEA/Norway scheme: the Xrobb l-Ghagin Nature Park and Sustainable Development Centre. MRRA provided active assistance over a number of months to Nature Trust Malta in their implementation of this project, in which process this Directorate was actively involved.

Apart from the projects that were up and running during 2011, MRRA has several others that are in the pipeline and targeted to start off during the coming year. These projects are also included in the same monitoring stream carried out by the Directorate as part of the routine process. It is also the objective of the Directorate to facilitate the proposal submission of these projects in line with good and timely practice with the aim for them to be accepted for co-financing.

Another objective is to disseminate information to all relevant stakeholders within the Ministry with a view to enable all to explore and tap into the possibilities of acquiring funding for projects or programmes. This is being done on an ongoing basis via electronic means, as each and every funding opportunity becomes available under the plethora of funding schemes that arise from time to time. Within the framework of its limited resources, the Directorate also extends hands-on assistance at line level to the project leaders in a collective effort to successfully meet targets and deadlines such as in compiling statutory reports, and other functions that include the uploading of documentation into the Structural Funds Database (SFD) system.

COMMITTEES

The Directorate regularly monitors the appointment of committees that fall under the Ministry's portfolio regarding the evaluation of tenders. This work is carried out in coordination with the respective entities and the Department of Contracts. The Director is also a member of the Departmental Contracts Committee (DCC) set up to monitor the evaluation process of all departmental tenders within the Ministry.

The Directorate is also responsible for organising meetings of the Ministerial Projects Steering Committee (MPSC) several times annually. This Committee is chaired by the Permanent Secretary while the Director DPI holds the position of Deputy Chair. Its objective is to analyse the state of play of each project within the remit of MRRA while exploring possibilities to steer it successfully towards fruition. During 2011, three such committee meetings were held: in April, June and December.

The Director Programme Implementation also attends monthly bilateral meetings chaired by the Principal Permanent Secretary. During these meetings the Managing Authority (the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division, OPM) meets up directly with project leaders in the presence of the Director DPI (as representative of the Line Ministry) and other stakeholders. The aim of these bilateral meetings is to monitor closely the progress of projects in hand.

The Director also participates in a number of meetings of the Monitoring Committees for OP I and OP II.

CUSTOMER CARE

The Customer Care System is a corporate initiative with a twofold aim: the need to improve accessibility to public institutions, and to consolidate the application of current technological systems available across the public sector. The aim is to facilitate the line of communication between the customers and the public institutions through a single point of access. During the year in review, the Unit received 138 requests via different means including electronic media and the telephone.

Type of Request	Received
Enquiries/requests for information	15
Requests for services by MRRA	57
Registration to public lectures/tours by MRRA	20
Complaints	39
Suggestions	5
Congratulations	2
Total	138

CARBON FOOTPRINT COMPLIANCE FOR EU FUNDED PROJECTS ERDF/CF 2007-2013

MRRA is responsible for the overall role of scrutinising any project/tender that is funded under Operational Programme I for 2007-2013 envisaged to have special effects on the environment. More specifically, the project leader of a specific project/tender is duty bound to inform MRRA what measures will be taken with regard to carbon footprint compliance and environmental sustainability (energy and water conservation as well as other measures that may be taken to mitigate any environmental/carbon offsetting). The Carbon Footprint Compliance exercise is undertaken in consideration that the Operational Programme must be carbon neutral by 2013.

As part of the application process of any project, certain criteria such as performance indicators need to be respected. In achieving the carbon indicator, the project proponent binds him/herself to implement measures in reducing the impact of the project as a whole on the environment. Such measures can include the installation of solar water heaters, PV panels, and the re-use and recycling of construction material.

Carbon Footprint Compliance requests - 2011	
Ministry/Beneficiary	Projects
Gozo	4
Industry and Competitiveness	5
Environment and Agriculture	24
Education, Youth and Culture	5
Total	38

JOHN VELLA

Director (Programme Implementation)

People Management and Support Services Directorate

The People Management and Support Services Directorate is the administrative service provider of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. The Directorate supports all line departments in human resources matters and renders its service to all Ministry employees from the day of their engagement to that of their retirement. The Security services of the Ministry also form part of this Directorate.

STAFF RECRUITMENT, APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

At the end of 2010 the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs had a staff complement of 3,245. The capacity building exercise of 2010 had been drawn up to determine the deployment of staff needed for 2011. On the strength of the necessary approval by the Office of the Prime Minister, the Recruitment Section processed 58 calls for applications during 2011 in order to fill 142 vacancies (posts and positions) within the Ministry. During this year the Directorate engaged 15 new recruits from outside the Public Service, and one employee was reinstated. The Recruitment Section processed 79 new appointments, 41 new contracts, 11 promotions, and 148 confirmations of appointment. The Employee Relations Section on its part vetted the transfers of 35 employees from this Ministry to other ministries, whilst 16 employees joined this Ministry having been transferred from other ministries.

At the end of 2011 the total number of MRRA staff stood at 3,116, a decrease of 129 over the previous year's figure. The decreasing number of the Ministry's employees reflects government policy for the past two years, which is that of recruiting only one person for every two who retire.

DATA MANAGEMENT

The Data Management Unit of the Directorate, which is responsible for keeping an updated staff list of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, continued during 2011 to sift daily through employee information so as to ensure real time updates. Records of redeployments, transfers and other staff movements continued to be recorded so that the Unit could furnish the correct statistics when they were needed for reasons of internal policy decisions, and staff planning such as the capacity building exercise, the compilation of the budget estimates and speech, as well as the annual report.

TIME AND ATTENDANCE

The Notification System is a system whereby the daily attendances/absences in each work place are recorded on a notification form which is then e-mailed to the Directorate on a daily basis. A total of 255 Notification Forms are received daily and are subsequently scrutinised for verification purposes. The relevant attendance and leave records are then inputted into the HRIMS software system.

The Public Administration HR Office within the Office of the Prime Minister issued a contractual tender to install Automatic Verification Systems (AVSs) across the entire Public Service. This tender was awarded and the AVSs will be installed in the various directorates within MRRA during 2012. By way of enhancing the process of installation and testing of the 'new' system, MRRA has volunteered for the installation of a pilot project at one of its sites of work. Two sites have been earmarked for the purpose of this project. This system will cater for around 100 employees.

The new data management system which will be running on the DAKAR HR software includes a new Payroll system which was introduced in the Ministry during 2011.

SECURITY SERVICES

The Security and Watchmen Section within the Directorate is entrusted with 24-hour surveillance of buildings, public recreational areas and works in progress on projects being undertaken by the Ministry. This Section is responsible for ensuring that precautionary measures are taken in order to prevent unauthorised entry as well as to curb the incidence of vandalism in the sites that are under surveillance. The recreational areas and parks are heavily frequented by the public during the weekends, thus requiring additional security presence.

Security staff, which in 2011 numbered 257, are also responsible for carrying out random inspections on employees at the various work sites and work stations. As part of a disciplinary effort targeted to deter absence without authority, throughout 2011, the security staff carried out 226 inspections and 258 spot checks on employees who perform either office or outside duties, in order to verify their attendance.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT/RETIREMENTS

The People Management and Support Services Directorate processes papers covering all services rendered in the area of conditions of employment. In this regard, there were 45 reports of cases where workers were injured while on duty during 2011, a decrease of 10 cases on the previous year's figure. The Directorate also vetted 13 cases of employees who were medically boarded out, after being recommended for this purpose. Retirement age was reached by 142 employees and their respective pension papers were processed. The Directorate continued to liaise with OPM and ETC in this area, particularly with respect to commencement and termination forms. There were 13 resignations and eight deaths while still in service.

During 2011 the Directorate also undertook an exercise whereby approvals for the practice of private work by MRRA employees was reviewed across the board. The aim of this exercise was to establish equity in the handling of applications for the performance of private work, since the existing database at the end of 2010 comprised approvals that were handed down within two different ministries which form the present MRRA. As a result of this exercise, the Employee Relations Section processed no less than 165 applications for private work during 2011. It should be noted that at the end of 2010 there were 197 employees with permission to perform private work, meaning that a number of these employees did not re apply for permission to do so.

OMBUDSMAN CASES

During 2011 the Directorate also continued to liaise with the Office of the Ombudsman regarding cases drawn to its attention by employees of this Ministry. Only one case was referred to the Directorate by the Office of the Ombudsman. This was settled after the necessary steps were taken on the part of MRRA, to implement the Ombudsman's suggestion. Another case that was referred to the Ministry in December is still being investigated.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

During 2011 the Directorate handled the global amount of 449 Performance Management Plans. These PMP's are used in order to keep track of the general performance of MRRA employees. Particularly during the processing of their increments, progressions and promotions. This performance management programme is in turn overseen by the Public Administration HR Office. At the same time, the year 2011 saw the Directorate handling of 455 Increments, as well as 106 Progressions.

TRAINING

External Training

Courses attended at external training bodies

During 2011 the Directorate organised the sponsorships of eight MRRA employees in order to attend university courses. Three of these employees were reading for a Diploma in Agriculture at the Institute of Earth Systems at the University of Malta. Another three were reading for a BSc (Hons) in Mediterranean Agro-Ecosystems Management in the same institute. An employee was reading for his Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at the University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Kosice, Slovakia.

Since the University of Malta does not offer the course of Veterinary Studies, during 2011, this Ministry sought to sponsor students who were already reading or were about to begin reading for their Doctorates in Veterinary Medicine. This sponsorship exercise was aimed at binding these students to employment within MRRA. Following an extensive selection process, 10 students were chosen and their sponsorship by MRRA was formalised in December.

In-house Training

Between May and August 2011, the Training Unit within the Directorate was responsible for coordinating, on behalf of the Employee Support Unit (OPM), a mapping exercise based on 285 questionnaires, eight focus groups and 36 one-to-one meetings with key experts, in order to analyse the psycho-social and disability needs at MRRA with a view to identifying training needs for this Ministry aimed at increasing the quality of work practice and ambience at MRRA. The two reports based on this exercise are dated November 2011 and the training sessions for the Ministry were earmarked to start off in January 2012.

During 2011 the Training Unit also continued to promote internal training within MRRA. This was done through encouraging MRRA employees to attend CDRT training courses and offering its support to the Plant Health, Parks and Initiatives, and Restoration Directorates to organise their own Away Days for their staff. The Training Unit was responsible for the organisation of the following four main training events for the Ministry.

- *Training for Secretaries and Personal Assistants at MRRA*: a half-day interactive seminar entitled, *Getting the Best..., Doing a fantastic job and staying happy*, was organised on 23 February at the Ministry's training rooms for 55 MRRA secretaries and personal assistants. The training in best practice in these roles was aimed at creating synergy between the participants, and giving them the opportunity to network on a professional level. This was the first time that such a seminar was held and it was spearheaded by this Directorate. That the training event was a success was evident in the evaluation exercise that was subsequently held to assess the occasion, whereby the participants reacted overwhelmingly to suggest that such a training session should be held on a regular level and that it would treat as many different subjects as were relevant to these roles.
- *Away Day for People Management and Support Services Staff*: an Away Day held on 5 April for HR staff at the Directorate for the third consecutive year. The theme chosen for the day was *Dynamics of Togetherness* and the overall objective was to promote synergy in team building among employees on a collective level. This Away Day, which was held in an informal atmosphere at a relaxed venue, was attended by 42 participants and was once more a huge success. Away Days are appreciated because of the positive team spirit with which they impact participants.
- *Away Day for Top Management*: an Away Day for top management organised on 26 October by the Training Unit of the Directorate for the fourth consecutive year. It was a full-day event held at Xrobb l-Ghagin Nature Park and the theme chosen for this year was *Synergy*. Both the Minister as well as the Principal Permanent Secretary joined the 19 participants for the day which was appreciated mostly for the relaxed atmosphere and ambience in which it was held, the interactive features of the inputs organised by the trainer, as well as the shared insights on the theme of Synergy. A presentation featuring the role played

by each participant within the Ministry's corporate structure formed a good part of the programme. Once more the evaluation exercise reflected the success of the event.

- *Induction Course for MRRA new recruits and newly joined:* A second edition of the MRRA Induction Course for new recruits, newly joined and HR contact persons across MRRA, was organised on 1 December, the first one having been held in 2009. A total of 125 participants attended this half-day programme which was aimed at informing these employees about the Public Service at large, the general set-up of the Ministry and the various services offered by the People Management and Support Services Directorate. A presentation about the implications of the Code of Ethics was also included.

DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary Action under Regulation 19 and Regulation 20

This Directorate is responsible for coordinating the disciplinary effort of the Ministry, in terms of the Public Service Commission (Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations 1999. During 2011, it has kept up its disciplinary procedures under Regulation 19 and Regulation 20 as the first two steps of disciplinary action that is taken by the head of department of an employee committing an offence. This year the disciplinary effort by the Directorate under these two regulations consisted of 414 new discipline cases regarding offences occurring at the place of work, of which 225 landed a guilty verdict. These cases comprised 295 summary disciplines which led to a total of 203 Written Warnings (under Regulation 19) being issued; and 83 Boards of Discipline (under Regulation 20) which resulted in a total of 35 guilty verdicts.

The majority of offences committed by MRRA employees (484 cases) regarded absence without authority, (314 cases, ie 76%) which is apprehended during random inspections. From these 484 cases, there resulted 314 incidences of employees not found at their place of work, and who were duly charged as such. Of those charged, a total of 181, or 58% were found guilty and issued with the due penalty.

Other offences for which disciplinary action was taken during 2011, included mainly malingering, closely followed by insubordination, disobeying superior orders, and negligence. During the year, no employees were dismissed as a result of disciplinary action under these Regulations.

Criminal Cases

On the strength of the same Public Service Commission (Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations 1999, throughout 2011 the Directorate continued to process disciplinary action in regard to criminal cases involving MRRA staff. At the end of 2011, MRRA had a total of 31 pending criminal cases involving MRRA employees who were arraigned at the criminal Law Courts of Malta. Thirteen of these MRRA employees involved in criminal charges were newly opened during 2011. Out of the 31 MRRA employees involved in criminal procedures, 19 were still interdicted on half pay by the end of the year. The PSC, with whom the Ministry collaborates in order to meet the requirements of the Public Service Commission (Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations 1999 that include the handling of criminal cases, this year did not recommend any dismissal of employees as a result of guilty verdicts at the Criminal Courts of Malta.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY MEASURES

During the year, several MRRA employees benefitted from various family-friendly measures. These employees, mostly females, included employees who were already benefitting from the measures, as well as new applicants whose applications were approved during this year.

Flexi Hours

The flexi-hour system within the Directorate was consolidated during 2011. Under this system the Directorate guarantees its service between 7.00 am and 5.15 pm in winter, and between 7:00 am and 3.15 pm in summer. The Directorate also continued to facilitate the implementation of flexi-time schedules for other line departments with the objective of providing its employees with a positive alternative to having to resort to reduced hours or periods of special unpaid leave. At the same time, line departments are not losing the services of experienced employees or having to replace them and re-train other employees.

Telework

During 2011, the number of MRRA teleworkers increased to 86: 74 females (86%) and 12 males (or 14%). This involved 67 reviews and 28 renewals of existing telework agreements. At the People Management and Support Services Directorate, there are presently 22 employees (or 52% of the total HR workforce) who work on a teleworking schedule, 16 (or 72%) of whom are females. The teleworking exercise within the Directorate is being closely monitored and it has been observed that teleworking has increased the motivation of the employees who undertake it.

JOHN BORG

Director (People Management and Support Services)

Financial Management Directorate

FINANCE BRANCH

The Financial Management Directorate continued with its role of providing the various departments within the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs with the necessary, and essentially effective, assistance in matters relating to finance and procurement of supplies and services, whilst providing management with the necessary financial monitoring by means of the Financial Control Unit. The Finance Branch handles all financial transactions pertaining to the Ministry, Permanent Secretariat, four Directors General including the Head Paying Agency, seventeen directorates and three government entities namely WasteServ Malta Ltd, Malta Resources Authority and the Building Industry Consultative Council. The Directorate is also responsible for the administration of the Main Registry.

Accounts Section

During 2011, the Accounts Section continued with the restructuring programme being undertaken at this section – a programme that has now been running for a number of years. The programme *Management Efficiency Programme* (MEP) is giving the Accounts Section a proactive role, whilst integrating concepts such as ‘accountability’ and ‘value for money’ within all its structures and work processes.

The MEP sets out the clear objectives of the Accounts Section and implements a whole re-engineering of all the work processes, transforming the Accounting Officers role from a passive to an active and dynamic one. Thanks to this programme, a new and innovative structure was set up within the Accounts Section aimed towards increasing efficiency and cost effectiveness in accounting processes, particularly the early settlement of dues to the Department’s suppliers.

Through the MEP, several initiatives and new comprehensive financial reports were introduced within all the departments and the Ministry. One such report is a detailed financial report regarding Capital Projects. This report is issued monthly and within five days of the following month for which period it covers. This comprehensive report presents a detailed and clear financial status position on each capital project being undertaken by the Ministry – from the early soft commitment stage throughout the whole life-cycle of the project until it is fully paid up.

The MEP introduced the Project Management Programme (PMP) with the view of implementing new concepts in managing finances more efficiently and effectively. A PMP report is generated by all Account Keepers and is then compiled into one report, which is submitted to the MFEI on a monthly basis. The PMP served as a valuable management tool whereby senior officers from the Accounts Section set up monthly meetings with every Project Manager responsible for each Capital project being undertaken by the Ministry. These project management meetings serve to establish expenditure targets for each project and to regularly monitor the progress in the implementation of these projects. The outcomes of this Project Management Programme are to better manage our Capital Vote through clear projected expenditure and to step up project implementation.

The following table is a summary of all DAS transactions that were carried out by the Accounts Section:

Summary of Transactions - 2011						
Batches	Payment Vouchers	Multi Payments	Transfer & Adjustment	Petty Cash	Total	Rejects
1,122	19,992	4,986	317	12	25,307	218

Revenue Section

The Revenue Section is organised in two units: the Cash Office and the Collection Unit. In collaboration with the Contracts and Procurement Section, the Cash Office within the Revenue Section is a one-stop shop regarding tendering/payment procedures.

The Revenue Section was responsible for the collation and coordination of efficiency gains propositions by all the divisions of this Ministry so as to identify sources and implement a collective efficiency gain of 2% as directed by MFEI. All submissions were monitored throughout the year and reports published accordingly.

Every effort has been made to reduce outstanding arrears of revenue by 10% by year-end. All dues by third parties were re-examined so as to ascertain whether these were collectible or alternatively eligible for write-off. New systems and structures were introduced in order to step up the control and monitoring processes regarding the collection of dues and the proper registration of new claims.

FINANCIAL CONTROL UNIT

The main role of the Financial Control Unit (FCU) is:

- to exercise financial control over the expenditure being incurred by the various departments and units throughout the Ministry;
- to investigate, formulate and initiate cost-cutting measures and structures; and
- to assess the financial viability of the Ministry's initiatives.

The FCU strives to implement effective control and monitoring on the commitments raised and the relative outstanding payments. Through various structures that have been set up and co-ordinated by the FCU, commitments, and their respective settlement, are being more effectively managed. Allotted funds are being utilised more efficiently and effectively, whilst expenditure wastage and excess is continually being identified and rectified. Moreover, the formulation of business plans and projections is much more realistic.

The FCU is engaged in the introduction of various programmes and exercises that are directed towards effective control and monitoring of the expenditure being generated, both relating to the operations in general (e.g. overheads) of all the departments within the Ministry, as also to capital infrastructural projects that the Ministry is undertaking. The main focal thrust exercised by the FCU is to create or regenerate a 'value for money' concept within all operations/structures throughout the Ministry and also to establish itself as a catalyst in curbing government expenditure.

Utilities Programme

During the year under review a full and comprehensive inventory of all telephone lines and water and electricity accounts was again undertaken. As a result of this inventory compilation, all telephone billings and all water and electricity accounts are now being handled by the FCU. Besides maintaining and updating this comprehensive inventory, the FCU is also responsible for the monitoring of the operational cost of each account. The outcome of this programme is aimed towards the identification of the true cost

of each individual account, thus highlighting all those cases where unjustified excessive expenditure is being incurred.

Salaries Support Unit

The Salaries Support Unit is responsible for the flow of information that is transmitted from the Directorate in Malta to the Gozo-based Salaries Section that caters for the computation of all salaries of this Ministry. This Unit serves as the liaison office through which all information relating to the correct computation of all salaries is channelled, besides acting as a customer-care unit for our employees.

All salaries pertaining to all the departments within this Ministry are being processed by the Ministry for Gozo employees under our direct management. This Unit closely monitors the operations of this back-office work being done in Gozo with a view to maintaining the high efficiency levels expected from this Section.

During 2011 particular attention has been given to the effective management of overtime work. Following consultations with the Office of the Permanent Secretary, a revision of existing arrangements for the planning and control of overtime work were reviewed. This Directorate carried out a reassessment of the parameters that were in force for the payment of overtime, giving due consideration to mechanisms that will control and curb excessive overtime, whilst providing a more structured system for the approval of overtime work.

Travel Support Unit

The Travel Support Unit has been established to take full responsibility of the travel arrangements required by this Ministry's officials requiring overseas travel abroad. During the year under review, this Directorate has updated written guidelines and procedures, based on standing financial regulations, whereby a complete overhaul of the Ministry's travel system was introduced.

The aim of this exercise was to standardise procedures for the request and granting of approval to proceed abroad on official business, besides safeguarding that all official meetings abroad are properly represented by this Ministry's delegations and all expenditure incurred during such visits is accounted for.

CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT SECTION

Responsibilities

- Procurement of all the needs of the Ministry, as well as for the issue of all contracts that are required to implement the various projects undertaken by the departments falling within MRRA portfolio.
- Processing of requisitions for the procurement of all types of material, equipment, stationery, the purchase and repairs of machinery and equipment, and other stores through the nominated period contractors and from the open market.
- Dealing with the disposal of various unserviceable and obsolete items from various departments either by selling the items *tale quale* following calls for tenders or, if found unserviceable, by dumping such items at appropriate dumping sites following the standard procedure through appointed boards of survey.
- Compilation and management of the Ministry's inventory.

Activities

During 2011, the Contracts and Procurement Section issued a total of 277 calls for tenders and quotations resulting in the award of 171 contracts for works, supplies and services for a total amount of €5,048,873. In line with the Financial Regulations, 40 direct orders for supplies or services were placed during the year for a total amount of €943,361.

	Calls for tenders	Awarded Contracts	Value (€)
Contracts Department Tenders	7	2	904,480
Departmental Tenders	160	92	3,861,391
Departmental Quotations	108	76	281,704
Departmental Hand Quotations	2	1	1,298
Departmental Direct Orders	40	40	843,361
Total	317	211	5,992,234

Purchase of material from contractors holding period contracts with the MRRA amounted to €951,113. For the procurement of this material, a total of 839 GSPOs were processed. Further GSPOs raised by the Floriana and Mriehel stores for the purchase of stationery and other items, other than period contract material, amounted to 3,701 for a total sum of €1,104,658.

The total number of tender and quotation documents sold during the year was 1,078 with a global income of €25,659.

Besides the ongoing contracts for supplies and services continuously required, the CPS issued a number of contracts connected with the Ministry's main projects for 2011, namely:

- upgrading and restoration works for the War memorial Roundabout, Floriana;
- landscaping, construction and embellishment works for Bahar ic-Caghaq Recreational Area;
- continuation works for the embellishment works for Ta' Qali Adventure Park;
- construction works for the Mellieha Recreational Park;
- continuation of embellishment works for Bisazza Street, as regards the installation of display boards, bins and bollards and the planting of trees and drip irrigation.;
- construction of a Patting Farm at Ta' Qali;
- paving works of core streets at Sliema;
- embellishment of church parvises, namely M'Xlokk, Żebbuġ and Safi;
- upgrading works for Sliema Ferries and for Ta' Xbiex Promenade.

In connection with the above, the following is worth mentioning:

- repairs works to various government properties such as masonry works, repair of dangerous structures and fixing of ceilings;
- consultancy services;
- civil works for the construction of a Water Park at St Paul's Bay;
- embellishment works for Cospicua Public Garden and Meditation Garden, Siġġiewi;
- archaeological Investigation Services for the Restoration of Historic Fortifications;
- supply and installation of photovoltaic system at various government entities.

Other contracts awarded during 2011 included works and services connected with projects required by various ministries and departments. Details of such contracts follow:

- refurbishment of ITS kitchen, laundry and gym: 4 contracts amounting to €494,218;
- construction works for the New Policy Academy at Ta' Kandja: 2 contracts amounting to €135,844;
- AFM: one contract amounting to €67,297;
- refurbishment of Custom Office, Kalafra: one contract amounting to €23,184;
- refurbishment works at Valletta Border Inspection Post, Marsa: one contract amounting to €9,589.

This information excludes tenders co-financed by the EU regarding restoration of fortifications in Malta and Gozo., details of which appear in the report of the Restoration Unit of the Project Design and Implementation Department.

During 2010 three bidders submitted objections regarding recommendations of tenders no 127, 142 and 160 and 174. The Public Contracts Appeals Board heard these cases during 2011 and decided as follows:

- Tender 127 - two objections submitted; one objection upheld and the other rejected;
- Tender 142 - objection upheld and tender declared cancelled;
- Tender 160 - objection upheld and appellant's offer re-considered;

- Tender 174 - objection not upheld.

During 2011 appeals to the Tender Evaluation Committee's recommendations were lodged with respect to tenders number 1, 7, 13, 16, 32, 51, 67, 90, 94 and 101. The Public Contracts Review Board took the following decisions:

- Tender 1 – Board decided against appellant. Board however recommended reimbursement of deposit.
- Tender 7 – Two appeals were lodged. The Board upheld one appeal and rejected the other.
- Tenders 13, 16, 32, 51 and 94 – Board found against appellants.
- Tender 90 – Board found in favour of appellant. Declared, however, that recommended offer was more financially competitive.
- Tender 101 – Board found in favour of appellant and all offers were to be re-assessed.
- Tender 67 – Still pending hearing.

In July 2011 a Contracts and Procurement section was introduced on the MRRA website. The first stage of development of this site included full information of calls for tenders and quotations issued by CPS on behalf of MRRA. Prospective bidder and other interested person have been given the opportunity to view tenders and quotations and even download a copy of the tender or quotation document in pdf format. Other details available are the publication and closing dates and status of tender up to award or cancellation.

MAIN REGISTRY

The following table indicates all the transactions carried within the Section during 2011:

Files	Total
Movements	40,851
BU	829
PA	4,520
From PA	1,760
<i>Opened</i>	
Main	1,671
Part	1,809
For	5
Part of	0
Volume	70
Memos	294
Insertion	1,437
Letters	714
GOVT Mail	2,680
<i>Mail</i>	
In	14,710
Maltapost	22,707
Distributed	22,069
Insertion	559
Registered	1,060

All sections within the MRRA are in direct contact with the Main Registry as it is responsible for the undertaking of various functions.

The Main Registry deals with various tasks such as opening of files, their movement, mail, insertions and many others. In order to distinguish their respective field, files are opened in different categories. Movement of files is one of the most important duties since it must be made promptly and efficiently. Opened files and their movement are recorded in the system so that an up-to-date movement history can be kept.

The amalgamation of the Docreg system is reaping the desired benefit. The migration of the Agri Docreg is expected to be finalised in 2012, leaving two other Docreg's to be amalgamated in the near future, thus continuing to improve the efficiency of MRRA registry operations.

ANNA DEBATTISTA

Director (Financial Management)

EU Affairs Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The EU Affairs Directorate is responsible for managing the Ministry's participation in EU structures, processes and procedures. It also ensures effective coordination of all EU related matters at a domestic level and with other EU stakeholders, including other ministries, the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EU Secretariat within the Office of the Prime Minister.

It is also responsible for coordinating the Ministry's participation in other international fora such as the United Nation, UNFCCC, FAO etc as well as in bilateral relations with third countries. In particular, it acts as the Ministry's focal point on EU and international matters and provides guidance on EU policies and other related matters and financial programmes.

Till the end of 2011, it continued to serve as the Managing Authority of the European Fisheries Fund.

MAJOR FUNCTIONS

- Facilitate the Ministry's proactive participation in EU affairs taking into consideration issues of strategic importance to Malta within the Ministry's remit. In particular, keep in line with policies of the European Union which have a direct or indirect effect on Malta and assess policies that are being proposed or discussed by the European Union;
- Facilitate tapping by the Ministry into EU Funds available under different programmes;
- Coordinate as necessary between different stakeholders, governmental and external, to ensure that all interests relevant to any policy issue partake in decisions, policy formulations, reports, etc. In particular, coordinate with line departments, other ministries and the EU Secretariat of OPM with regard to participation in council meetings, working parties and EU Comitology;
- Participate as necessary in council meetings and other EU meetings on matters related to the Ministry's responsibilities;
- Monitor and facilitate the timely and correct implementation of the EU acquis;
- Ensure timely transposition of directives and delivery of reports by liaising with the relevant stakeholders as necessary.

Policy Unit – AGRIFISH

The Directorate continuously followed issues being discussed on AGRIFISH issues. A number of exchanges were held with other governmental stakeholders, in particular Malta's Permanent Representation in Brussels, the OPM EU Secretariat, line departments and other ministerial stakeholders in relation to the position to be adopted by Malta on various policy issues.

The EU Affairs Directorate facilitates various Ministerial Council Meetings, Working Parties, Management Committee Meetings, COREPER Meetings and Special Committee on Agriculture. Briefing notes together with instruction notes are submitted for these meetings on a regular basis. Amongst others, with regard to AGRIFISH issues, the Directorate facilitated participation in around 80 Management Committee and COREPER Meetings, 25 Special Committee on Agriculture, 12 CVO meetings, seven Plant Health Rosendal Meetings, 36 Horizontal Agricultural Questions meetings, two Chief Plant Health Officers meetings, two Animal Products, Milk and Milk Products meetings, 22 Foodstuffs meetings, 11 AGRIFIN meetings, 16 Codex Alimentarius meetings, ten Rural Development and Agricultural Structures

meetings, four Plant Health – Protection and Inspection meetings, nine FAO Coordination meetings, 11 Forestry meetings, three Plant Breeders Rights meetings, ten meetings of the Standing Committee on Organic Farming, two aromatised wines and alcohol meetings, two wines and alcohol meetings, two Agricultural Products meetings, and one meeting on Seeds and propagating material. Also, the Directorate liaised with the Fisheries Control Directorate for the drafting of instruction notes to be used for 40 working parties on Internal and External Policy and papers for other meetings related to Fisheries which include bilateral meetings with the Commission, Fisheries Control Expert Group meetings, meetings on Maritime Spatial Planning as well as meetings related to Bluefin tuna issues.

The Directorate also facilitated participation in various weekly/fortnightly meetings related to the veterinary services by ensuring adequate Malta positions and instruction notes to be used for nine Chief Veterinary Officers meetings, seven Veterinary Experts Animal Health meetings, five Veterinary Experts Postdam Group meetings and one Veterinary Attachés meeting.

During 2011, this Directorate held various meetings in preparation for the CIHEAM 50th anniversary meeting being hosted by the Maltese Government during 2012.

Plant Health Directorate

During the past year, this Directorate had to deal with a number of issues related to the Plant Health Directorate, in particular in connection with the spread of pests such as the Tuta Absoluta, Peppino Mosaic Virus in tomato fruit and Red Palm Weevil. The EU Affairs Directorate facilitated reporting and liaised with the State Aid Board to ensure that assistance provided to farmers was within the limits allowed by Malta's international commitments. EU Solidarity funds in this respect have been granted by the EU to alleviate this issue.

Paying Agency

The Directorate for European Affairs at this Ministry performs the function of Competent Authority for the Paying Agency.

Veterinary

The EU Affairs Directorate participated in the three Food Veterinary Office audit missions carried out throughout 2011 and followed up replies to the official reports and relative comments to two reports already received:

- FVO general follow-up audit to Malta;
- Mission to evaluate the monitoring of residues and contaminants in live animals and animal products, including controls on veterinary medicinal products;
- Mission to evaluate the follow up actions taken by the Competent Authority with regard to import/transit control system on animals and food of animal origin and border inspection posts (BIP).

The Directorate also monitored closely the implementation of action plans through which the Maltese authorities are working to improve the implementation of the EU *acquis* in this sector, as well as meetings attended by experts in the field.

Fisheries

The Directorate closely monitored various issues related to the fisheries *acquis*. The Directorate also facilitated participation in the discussions pertaining to Fisheries issues. These were directly related to the CFP reform of 13 July, 2011. The main objectives discussed incorporated the MSY, the Discard Ban, the Precautionary approach and the External Dimension.

Under the EFF Framework, EUAD implemented the Permanent Cessation of Fishing Activities issued for vessels with the aim of reducing the Maltese fishing fleet overcapacity. Under this scheme, fishermen were compensated for the withdrawal of their fishing licence. A total budget of €600,000 was made available with six fishermen benefiting from this scheme.

Towards the end of 2011, due to a number of issues raised by the Fishermen Cooperatives, the EU Affairs Directorate in conjunction with the Fisheries Control Directorate were faced with concerns raised by Maltese fishermen as a result of the EU obligations which include the regulations imposed on Swordfish, the BFT quota and Lampuki FADs. Both the EU Affairs Directorate and Fisheries Control Directorate attempted at recognising these difficulties and suggested possible alternatives that would cater for and meet, as far as possible, the needs of fishermen.

Visit by Environment Commissioner

On 14-16 September 2011, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Mr Janez Potocnik paid a brief visit to Malta, during which the issue of sustainable and efficient use of fish stocks was on the agenda for discussion. The EUAD facilitated the drafting of the brief for the said visit.

Agriculture

The EU Commission continued working on the alignment of EU legislation with the Lisbon Treaty. Most of these amendments concern the Agriculture *acquis*, and include in particular the Single CMO (Common Market Organisation), the School Fruit and Vegetable scheme, the School Milk scheme and the scheme for the most Deprived Persons in the Union, the Single Payment Scheme, Rural Development Measures, Less Favoured Areas, Aid to Beekeepers, Aid to Producer Organisations and Producer Groups and Promotion Programmes for Agriculture.

The Directorate also followed closely and coordinated the articulation of Malta's policy with regard to the dairy sector which is undergoing major changes with the EU in connection with the elimination of the milk quotas.

This Directorate followed closely the progress achieved during 2011 regarding the current reform of the Common Agricultural Policy – CAP in order to respond to the future challenges for agricultural and rural areas to meet the objectives set for the CAP.

Director EU Affairs participated, together with the Office of the Permanent Secretary, to the workings of the Nitrates Committee which includes representatives of the Agriculture Directorate, the MRA, OPM/MEPA and other stakeholders, and which seeks to implement Malta's obligations under the EU *acquis*, in particular the Nitrates Directive. The Committee has also initiated work on the assessment of the impact on the agricultural community, an education/information campaign and the necessary capacity building plans. The Directorate coordinated the development of an action plan to ensure the implementation of Malta's obligations under the EU *acquis* with regard to marketing standards. It monitored and facilitated its implementation as necessary.

Visit by Agriculture Commissioner

EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Dacian Ciolos paid a brief visit to Malta between 27 and 28 October. The Commissioner met the Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs. During his visit, Mr Ciolos was taken on site visits which included a number of farms in Malta and Gozo, a helicopter ride which focused on terraced field farming, and a family run group of companies which includes a tomato processing factory. The EUAD facilitated the drafting of the brief for the said visit.

POLICY UNIT – ENERGY

The Directorate continuously followed Energy issues being discussed in EU fora. A number of exchanges were held with other governmental stakeholders, in particular Malta's Permanent Representation in Brussels, the EU Secretariat within the OPM, the MRA and other ministerial stakeholders in relation to the position to be adopted by Malta on various policy issues. In particular the following items were closely followed:

- The disruptions of energy caused by the situation in Libya
- Energy infrastructure projects inside and outside EU borders
- Present and future power generation policies and their implications for Europe's energy supply
- Commission Communication on the external energy policy of the EU
- Proposal for a Directive on Energy Efficiency
- Proposal for a Regulation on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities
- The Energy Roadmap for 2050.

First European Council on Energy

The Directorate provided important input to the Office of the Prime Minister in connection with the European Council on Energy held in Brussels on 4 February 2011. At this Council, Heads of State and Government adopted a final communication to confirm that safe, sustainable and affordable energy contributes to Europe's competitiveness, and is a priority for the EU. At Malta's insistence, this final communication also included an undertaking by the European Council that 'No EU Member State should remain isolated from the Union's electricity and gas networks after 2015 or see its energy security jeopardised by lack of the appropriate connections'. This was a very significant step forward in the energy policy of Malta.

Visit by Energy Commissioner

EU Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger paid a brief visit to Malta between 20 and 21 July 2011. The Commissioner had important talks with the Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs and with the Minister of Finance, and was conducted on a number of site visits including the Sant Antnin Waste Management Complex at Marsascala and the Power Station Extension at Delimara. The EUAD facilitated the drafting of the brief for the said visit.

Renewable Energy Action Plan

According to the EU Directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (2009/28/EC), each Member State shall adopt a national renewable energy action plan, setting out national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020.

Although Malta had adopted its Renewable Energy Action Plan in 2010, the EU Commission made a number of observations and recommendations on the Malta Plan which had to be dealt with within a given deadline and after urgent consultation with a number of stakeholders.

Malta's revised Renewable Energy Action Plan was submitted to the Commission on 24 May 2011.

Energy Efficiency Action Plan

According to the EU Directive on energy end-use efficiency and energy services (2006/32/EC), each Member State shall submit to the Commission its second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan not later than 30 June 2011. This plan describes the energy efficiency improvement measures planned to reach the

targets set out in Article 4(1) and (2) of the Directive, and the exemplary role of the public sector and the provision of information and advice to final customers set out in Articles 5(1) and 7(2) respectively.

After lengthy consultation with a number of stakeholders, including the Ministry of Finance, OPM, Enemalta, MRA and the Building Regulations Office, Malta's second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan was submitted to the Commission on 2 September 2011.

Oil Storage Agreement with France

According to the EU Directive of 24 July 2006 which imposes an obligation on Member States to keep a stock of minimum levels of crude oil and/or petroleum products, a member state can keep such stores or parts thereof in another member state, and bilateral agreements can be entered into for this purpose.

The Maltese and French Governments agreed to initial a first draft of such an agreement in order to honour their obligations under this Directive in a better manner and with more flexibility. The document was initialled in Malta on 11 May 2011, and it is planned to be signed in 2012.

EU meetings

The EU Directorate also prepares Instruction Notes, Briefing Notes, and Speaking Notes for Maltese representatives participating in Council Working Parties (generally the Energy Working Party but also, on occasion, the Environment Working Party), COREPER and Council meetings. The Directorate also follows meetings of expert groups, comitology and expert conferences.

During 2011 there were 37 meetings of the Energy Working Party, five formal Ministerial Energy Councils and two Informal Energy Councils. There were also two bilateral meetings between the Minister and the European Commissioner for Energy, regarding the Malta-Italy Electricity Interconnector project, and a bilateral meeting with the EU Commission regarding Malta's views and concerns on the proposed Energy Efficiency Directive.

POLICY UNIT - CLIMATE CHANGE

The Directorate continuously followed issues being discussed on Climate Change issues. A number of exchanges were held with other governmental stakeholders, in particular Malta's Permanent Representation in Brussels, the EU Secretariat with the OPM, line departments and other ministerial stakeholders in relation to the position to be adopted by Malta on various policy issues. In particular the following items were closely followed:

- The EU position at UNFCCC meetings as a follow-up of the Copenhagen accords
- The build-up toward the EU participation in the UNFCCC summit in Durban
- Malta's position on bunkering fuels
- The inclusion of Aviation in the Emissions Trading Scheme.

The EU Affairs Directorate prepared Briefing Notes towards ensuring Malta's full participation on the subject of Climate Change, as required at various levels, including UNFCCC meetings, such as the 17th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, serving also as the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol held in Durban, as well as preparatory meetings as regards the COP-17. An example of this is the telephone conference between EU Commissioner for Climate Action, Ms Connie Hedegaard and the Ministers of Environment of the 27 Member States. Briefing notes were also prepared for the European Council meetings, informal Environment Council meetings, Environment Council meetings, and for specific meetings between the PM, the Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs, the Permanent Representative, the Deputy Permanent Representative and foreign dignitaries including Heads of State, Prime Ministers, Ministers and other Permanent Representations.

The Directorate has furthermore prepared Instruction Notes on Climate Change for Malta's participation in Commonwealth meetings and countless Instruction Notes for regular EU Working Party and COREPER meetings, apart from Instruction Notes for Working Party meetings on International Environmental Issues.

The Directorate also took timely action to avoid potential infringements by the Commission and for Malta to meet its various obligations on areas under the Ministry's control, even through the Malta Resources Authority, as for instance, towards Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks.

The EU Affairs Directorate consulted other ministries for the purposes of drafting positions on EU dossiers and has also extended its assistance when approached for consultation by other ministries,

Fast Start Finance 2011

The Directorate contributed towards Malta honouring the 2011 Fast Start Finance Commitment under the Copenhagen Accord. In the run-up to COP-15 in Copenhagen, Malta joined other Member States in agreeing on an EU position with regard to emission reductions, as well as the EU's contribution for fast-start funding. Malta pledged €300,000 for the year 2011 which has now been honoured in full. The funds were disbursed, entirely in the form of grants to six non-government organisations for projects which seek to improve environmental living conditions relating to both mitigation and adaptation in African countries. These NGOs were the Mission Fund - *Energy from recycled waste: A Biogas plant at Makiungu Hospital in Tanzania*; SOS Malta - *Rainwater harvesting for natural resource management and sustainable development: Assisting to eliminate poverty in Njeru, Uganda*; KOPIN - *Community Managed Sanitation and Biogas Development*; Signum Fidei Malta (SFM) - *Integrated environmental intervention in Meki's rural area providing Biogas, compost, Soil and Water Conservation, Ethiopia*; The Ghana Mission Fund - *Bore-Hole Project for the Maltese Health Centre in Ghana and neighbouring villages – Phase 1*; Solar Water Heating Project – *Reducing the dependence from expensive and polluting energy sources*; Rotary Club Malta - *Co-funding the installation of a "Mini Grid" in the Kids of Africa Orphanage in Goruga/Entebbe, Uganda*. The presentation of cheques and letters of commitment for the Fast Start Finance projects were formally presented by the Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs and the Deputy Prime Minister, in an event held on 17 November at the University of Malta, which formed part of the Green Fair.

Water Catchment Management Plan for the Maltese Islands

In March 2011, the Water Catchment Management Plan for the Maltese Islands was published. The plan which was produced by MRA and MEPA identifies the status of the waters of the country and specifies measures to improve that status. The Water Catchment Management Plan includes the characterisation of the water catchment, the monitoring programme, the definition of the environment objectives, the programme of measures, and the economic analysis.

Draft National Environment Policy

In September 2011, a Draft National Environment Policy was issued for public consultation. National Environmental Policy lays down the principles upon which Malta's environment will be managed and upgraded and which other non-environmental sectors must respect and adhere to. The aim of this policy is to highlight and strengthen the environmental pillar of the National Sustainable Development Strategy for the Maltese Islands. The policy addresses the employment, research and development/innovation, climate change/energy, education and poverty/social exclusion in conjunction with environment. It takes forward in particular the climate change/energy objective. The directorate facilitated ongoing consultations between MRRA and the NEP team within OPM to ensure synergy between the Ministry's targets and the said policy.

Local Meetings

The EU Directorate hosted various important local meetings related to the subject of Climate Change, including:

- Meetings for formulating Malta's position on Commission communications, for generating Explanatory Memoranda on such dossiers;
- Meetings to address Malta's fast-start finance contributions as resulting from the Copenhagen Accord;
- Inter-Ministry meetings towards establishing a common Malta position on proposals emanating from various member states and the Commission, and that are potentially conducive to the shaping of EU-wide approaches and the making of EU policies and commitments.

Environment Package Meeting

On 13-14 October, an Environment Package meeting was organised in Malta, in which several issues were discussed with members representing the Commission. The Commission asked questions related to the following issues, to which the Directorate facilitated MRRA's terms of reply:

- Wind farm projects (update)
- Energy Strategy for Malta – application of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)
- Implementation of the Waste Management Plan
- Implementation of the Large Combustion Plant Directive (2001/80/EC) - Marsa Power Plant (decommissioning)
- Transposition of the Floods Directive
- Groundwater issues (over-abstraction)

TRAINING SEMINAR FOR GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY REVIEW EXPERTS

During its 15th session, the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) had requested the Secretariat to develop and implement the updated training programme for technical greenhouse gas inventory review experts. These programmes, which include the examination for experts, also gave priority to the organisation of additional annual training seminars for the basic course. Following this, the Government of Malta offered to host the next training seminar in Malta. Accordingly, between 24 and 26 October, the MRRA hosted the UNFCCC's Training Seminar for Greenhouse Gas Inventory Review Experts. MRRA met part of the related costs. The seminar consisted basically in an inventory review simulation for which the trainees were divided into five sector-specific groups (Energy, LULUCF, Agriculture, Waste, and Industrial Processes).

EU FUNDS UNIT

SFP 2004-2006

As the Line Ministry and Intermediate Body for the Structural Funds 2004-2006, the EU Affairs Directorate is still involved in the processing of payments still ongoing under the previous programme. A total of €1,740,320.39 were processed during 2011 in relation to the Sant' Antnin Waste Treatment Plant, a project implemented by WasteServ Malta Ltd.

European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013

As the Managing Authority for the European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013 (EFF), the Directorate plays an important role in the monitoring, guidance and implementation of projects being co-financed under EFF. With a co-financing rate of 75% - EU funds and 25% - Malta funds, Malta will benefit from a total of €11,163,105 during the seven-year duration of this programme.

In August 2011, a call under Permanent Cessation of Fishing Activities was issued for vessels with the aim of reducing the Maltese fishing effort. Under this scheme fishers are compensated for the withdrawal of their fishing licence. A total budget of €600,000 was made available. Six fishermen benefitted from this scheme. By the end of the year, €527,776.64 was paid in grants to the selected fishermen.

Part of the budget under the EFF assistance is dedicated to the authorities as Technical Assistance to aid in the implementation and monitoring of the programme. During the year, €87,232.31 were spent in supplies as well as various studies, including an aquaculture strategy and alternative site assessment and the interim evaluation of the EFF.

The above resulted in Malta reaching its 2011 N+2 targets. The following table summarises these payments which at the end of the year were claimed back from the European Union:

Project	Total Public € (EU and Malta Funds)
Permanent Cessation	791,601.27
Investment on Board	34,239.22
Socio-economic Compensation	84,410.55
Marketing & Processing	132,433.75
Service Pillars	33,850.00
Technical Assistance	65,704.48
Total	1,142,239.27

In addition to the above, the EU Affairs Directorate continued working on other larger projects.

Tendering procedures for the provision of Safety Training to all vessel owners were initiated and completed. Training started in December 2010 and continued during 2011. More than 700 fishermen were trained in the following subjects: Basic Sea Survival; Basic Health & Safety; Basic First Aid; Fire-fighting and prevention; Promotion of Equal Rights; Diversification of Activities.

Another major aspect of the EFF Operational Programme is the capital projects to be co-financed under EFF. These are the Relocation of the Fish Market from Valletta to Marsa, development and improvements to four designated ports in Valletta, Marsaxlokk, Marfa and Mġarr Gozo, and a Promotional Campaign to support and promote the consumption of fish and fish products. All these projects have started and are work-in-progress. Port infrastructure has been enhanced through the procurement of service pillars which are providing electricity and fresh water to be used for maintenance, repair and cleaning of fishing vessels.

Progress on all these projects was reported to the EU Commission and other stakeholders during the biannual Monitoring Committee Meetings held on 17 June and 28 November 2011.

LIFE+

During 2011, the European Commission approved the 'DemoEV' project, which will see an investment of €1.9 million funded by the LIFE+ Programme and national funds. The *Demonstration of the feasibility of electric vehicles towards climate change mitigation* project will create public awareness on the importance of clean energy vehicles through the use of 24 electric cars by Government, private companies and the public. One hundred charging points will also be installed for public use. Such an investment will contribute towards reducing the impact of private transport on climate change.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

A number of meetings were held with representatives of UK and France. The Directorate also facilitated a number of exchanges with UK, French, and Polish Embassies in Malta.

Director EU Affairs also participated in the Maltese delegation for the 9th session of the Maltese-Tunisian Joint Commission held in Malta in June 2011. Amongst other issues, agreement was reached on cooperation on agricultural, phyto-sanitary and waste-separation issues.

Several meetings were conducted with MFA giving input on several issues related to MRRA in the fields of agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries. Bilateral agreements are in process with Tunisia, Georgia, Libya and Qatar.

In line with Government's objective to assist Libya, MRRA is in the process of offering a number of researchers the opportunity to carry out an internship with the Plant Health Directorate. Such collaboration would serve to build relations between phytosanitary authorities of both countries.

TRANSPOSITIONS

The Directorate ensures that all the necessary procedures are implemented to transpose EU Directives in a timely manner. During 2011 the EUAD facilitated the transposition of seven Directives related to Plant Health, another seven related to Resources, one related to Animal Welfare, and another one to Veterinary Services.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDA

During the year the Directorate processed 95 Explanatory Memoranda regarding Commissions' proposals for Regulations/Directives, Decisions or Reports to which MRRA was lead ministry and four Explanatory Memoranda to which MRRA was secondary ministry. Of these Explanatory Memoranda, 75 were forwarded to OPM for further processing leading to IMC consideration.

FINANCIAL PAYMENTS

The Directorate processed requests for payment of annual national contributions to international organisations of which Malta is a party. In total, €191,328 were paid.

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

The Directorate created a regulatory database to ensure that the Ministry meets all its reporting obligations under the EU acquis. It has also created a meetings database to ensure adequate participation/monitor participation in all EU meetings. In addition, work started during 2010 on the drafting of a set of standard operating procedures is near completion. During the second half of 2011, the EU Directorate reorganised its registry – thus making it more user friendly, efficient and effective.

Training

During the year, eight officers within the Directorate attended a number of training courses related to their work duties. These courses were organised by CDRT, MEU, the European Commission, UNFCCC and the University of Malta. The newly recruited staff also attended an induction course organised by CDRT.

Environment

Throughout 2011, the Directorate continued putting emphasis on the need to implement environment-related (as well as cost-saving) initiatives. Its efforts to reduce the carbon foot print were increased throughout the year with the introduction of waste separation at source (mainly paper, plastic, metal and glass), and the re-use of paper and envelopes etc. Besides, the effort started the previous year to minimise waste by increasing ownership of printing and photocopying through password controls was continued during the year under review.

Data Protection and Freedom of Information

The duties of the Freedom of Information Officer and Data Protection Officer within the Directorate were entrusted to the newly appointed Assistant Director. During 2011, the officer responsible for both Data Protection and the Freedom of Information attended a number of meetings organised for Data Protection Officers and Freedom of Information Officers.

During the year the EU Affairs Directorate continued preparing itself for the entry into force of the FOI Act.

STEFAN CACHIA
Director (EU Affairs)

Paying Agency

OBJECTIVES

The Paying Agency within the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs is responsible for managing EU funds allocated to implement the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In this connection, the Agency applies the principle of share management with the Commission Services in the management of the European Agriculture Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

The objectives of the Agency are to:

- operate an effective administrative set-up;
- ensure an efficient, effective and timely processing of claims;
- attain effective control procedures that would ensure that there is no risk to the Community Funding;
- provide accurate and timely information to the Commission, the local entities and to the farming community.

The core functions of the Agency consist of:

- authorisation functions;
- payment functions;
- accounting and reporting; and
- technical services made up the physical Control Unit and the Internal Control Units.

FRONT OFFICE

The Front Office of the Paying Agency is mainly responsible for the following tasks:

- receipt of requests for new registration and withdrawals of parcels on the Land Parcel Identification System;
- receipt of requests for transfer of entitlements and commitments, withdrawals and new registrations regarding Less Favoured Areas and Agri-Environmental Schemes and Single Payment Scheme;
- submission of payment claims for 2011; these included the Single Payment Scheme, Less Favoured Areas, Agri-Environmental Schemes and National Aid Schemes (Additional Aid for Vines);
- promotion activities targeting farmers and livestock breeders;
- receipt of applications for Aid to Beekeepers and Measures under Axis 1 - 121, 133 and 142;
- receipt of queries and requests submitted by applicants which include the provision of information related to obligations of the majority of measures issued by the PA, status of applications and payments issued;
- provision of feedback through the official telephone line and generic e-mail of the PA;
- logging of all the requests made by individuals on the *servizz.gov.mt*;
- receipt and tracking of objection forms related to reduction in payments and forward them to other units to provide feedback;
- receipt of documentation requested by other units from applicants;
- informing agricultural entities of any measures or important notifications issued by the PA;
- archiving of all documentation related to area aid applications of each beneficiary.
-
- In 2011, a one-off exercise was carried out by FO whereby data entry and verification of all applications submitted for the free installation of water meters were carried out.

Access to Farmers' Details Online

In 2011, a new service was introduced whereby applicants could submit a request through the website of the PA, in order to have access to their profile online. By applying for this service, applicants would not only be able to submit area aid payment claims online (e-applications) but be able to view personal details and scanned images of documentation submitted; applications submitted since 2008; payments received since 2008; and ortophotos and satellite images of their holding. The total number of beneficiaries who applied for this service was more than 2,800.

Area Aid Applications

During the payment claim period in 2011, e-applications were introduced whereby the farming community was able to submit payment claims both personally at the Front Office of the Paying Agency or through the e-applications (Farmer Assistance Services Centre, as well as from the comfort of their home).

The following statistics indicate the payment claims submitted, categorised according to whether the applications were submitted at the FO or by online submission (e-applications) in Malta and Gozo.

Rural Development Measures 2007 - 2013

M212 – New applications and renewal of commitments for Less Favoured Areas

FO/FASC	Total Payment Claims 2011
FO	>6,300
e-applications	86

M214 – New applications and renewal of commitments for Agri-Environmental Measures

- AEM 1: Use of environmentally friendly plant protection products in vineyards
- AEM 2: Traditional cultivation of *sulla* through crop rotation
- AEM 3: Low input farming
- AEM 4: Support to suppress the use of herbicides in vineyards and fruit orchards
- AEM 5: Support for the establishment and maintenance of conservation buffer strips (renewal of commitments only)
- AEM 6: Conservation of rural structures providing a natural habitat for fauna and flora
- AEM 7: Providing a healthy forage area for bees
- AEM 8: Support for Organic Farming
- AEM 9: Support for the Conservation of species in danger of genetic erosion

FO/FASC	Total Payment Claims 2011
FO	>2,300
e-applications	48

Land Based National Aid (SMPPMA)

Additional Aid for Vines

FO/FASC	Total Payment Claims 2011
FO	>1,400
e-applications	39

Single Payment Scheme

Renewal of entitlements

FO/FASC	Total Payment Claims 2011
FO	>6,000
e-applications	101

Statistics – Other Applications

Type of Measure	2011	Total
Measure 214 - AEM 10	Oct – Dec	6
Measure 121 - Modernisation of Agricultural Holdings	Oct – Dec	509
Measure 123 - Adding Value to Agricultural Products	Oct – Dec	38
Measure 124 - Cooperation for development of new products, processes and technologies in the agriculture and food sectors	Oct – Dec	5
Measure 142 - Setting up of Producer Groups	Oct – Dec	4
Measure 115 - Setting up of Farm Advisory Services	March	1
Measure 111 - Vocational Training and Information Actions	March	4
Aid to Beekeepers	1 week in July	34

Statistics – Front Office Queries and Requests 2011

The following is a list of queries and requests presented by the farming community at the FO in 2011.

Type of Request	Total
Query for update of the Farmer Registry	2
Request for Information	636
Provision of Documentation	930
Request for Payment Claim 2012	3,885

Beneficiaries also presented queries through the official telephone line of the Paying Agency, with a total of 5,230 calls.

Survey 2011

A survey carried out amongst a number of beneficiaries in 2011 indicates that:

- the promotion campaign was fruitful, as awareness of e-services is relatively high - only 8.6% are unaware of such services;
- a high percentage of beneficiaries prefer personal contact, indicating that the farming community still prefers traditional methods of communication;
- increasing the number of beneficiaries benefiting from e-services is challenging, since about 30% are not computer literate;
- individuals classify the overall service of the PA as follows: 89.1% very good, 15.5% excellent, 2.2% adequate and 0.4% bad.

LAND BASED MEASURED UNIT

The Land Based Measures Unit (LBMU) is responsible for the administration and implementation of the Agri-environmental measures (AXIS II) and the Single Payment Scheme. Its aim is to administer, in an efficient way, the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 and the Single Payment Scheme.

In 2011, the LBMU was involved in the following tasks:

- processing of the requests for claim year 2012;
- formulating the new contracts for Less Favoured Areas for 2012-2016;
- establishing the commitment registry for Less Favoured Areas and Agri-Environmental measures in the IT system;
- authorising payments for the Less Favoured Areas and Agri-Environmental measures.

Payments Effected

Measure	Amount (€)	Beneficiaries
Less Favoured Area (2010 claim)	539,123.74	920
Less Favoured Area (2011 claim)*	1,343,778.89	4,687

Agri-environmental measures (2010 claim)	296,780.3	429
Agri-environmental measures (2011 claim)*	597,478.98	1,262

* There are pending payments for claim year 2011.

Implementation of the Single Payment Scheme (SPS)

In relation to the Single Payment Scheme, the LBMU in 2011 effected the following tasks:

- Entitlements that were not activated for two consecutive years were returned to the national reserve.
- New entitlements were allocated to those beneficiaries who had land eligible for the SPS and who expressed interest for the SPS during the 2011 application campaign.
- Requests for the transfer of entitlements related to the application campaign 2012 were processed.

Ongoing discussions and meetings were held abroad in relation to the new regulation which is to replace EC Regulation 73/2009, in connection to the new CAP reform 2014-2020. This involved intense preparation of a number of documentation related to the possible effects that the new proposed regulation may have on Malta.

Payments Effected

Measure	Amount CNDP* (€)	Amount EU (€)	Beneficiaries
Single Payment Scheme (2009)	-	2,725.40	1
Single Payment Scheme (2010)*	497,826.32	3,652,607.68	4,815
Total	497,826.32	3,655,333.08	4,816

*There are pending payments for claim year 2011.

MARKET MECHANISM UNIT

The Market Mechanisms Unit is responsible for the Management of the Non-IACS Measures.

Aid to Beekeepers

The allocation for the implementation of this scheme in 2011 amounted to €13,974, 50% of which was allocated from EU Funds. 30 out of 34 applications that were received benefitted from this scheme. Payments were effected in September 2011.

Aid to Producer Organisations and Producer Groups

Applications for aid for Claim year 2011 were received from three producer groups (*Frott Artna*, KPTM and TQPG) and two producer organisations (*Gomriza* and *Gozitano*).

Aid to the Deprived

5,990 tonnes of cereals were allocated from intervention stocks. These were processed in 310 tonnes of pasta, 65 tonnes of toasted bread, 204 tonnes of biscuits, 141 tonnes of rice and 66 tonnes of crackers, which were delivered from Italy to Malta.

Distribution was made to around 145 parishes and organisations, from which 24,000 persons who were eligible for aid, benefitted from such activity.

School Milk Scheme

A total of 50 primary schools participated in this scheme. In all 14,241 students consumed over 133,000 kilos of milk, which is partly subsidised by the European Commission. The total cost incurred by schools was €98,638 while the subsidy amounted to €24,150.

School Fruit Scheme

The School Fruit Scheme 2011 commenced on 12 October 2010, and ended on 2 September 2011 including Skolasajf. The total cost of the scheme was €423,166.86, of which €276,854.25 is financed by the EU.

Rates of participation were 138 schools (99%) and 31,155 children (96%). The target group for the scheme was primary school children aged from 3-10 irrespective of their socio-economic background or geographical location. Fruit or vegetables were delivered once a week, every morning to each school. The fruit and vegetables were both packaged and distributed by *Frott Artna*. In total, 75 tonnes of fruit and vegetables were purchased and distributed in 1.1 million portions. All fruit and vegetables used in the scheme were fresh, local and seasonal.

A School Fruit Scheme poster was distributed to every school to publicise the scheme and the source of funding.

The following accompanying measures were carried out:

- Classroom charts that record the children's consumption rate in the form of a competition were distributed. 138 schools received the charts, in which 27,038 children took part.
- Colouring books were distributed to 131 schools, where kindergarten pupils could learn about fruit and vegetables. 8,536 pupils benefited from this activity.
- 31 schools requested the nutritional talks and activities which form part of the accompanying measures for the year - Years 1, 2 and 3 classes. In all, 2,413 pupils took part in this activity.
- 18 schools took part in the kitchen garden option, which was aimed at year 6 pupils. In total, 651 children took advantage of this measure, which allowed children to grow their own crops and cultivate them throughout the year. A competition was held for this activity, and three schools were rewarded with a small greenhouse for having the most exemplary of gardens.
- 18 schools sent their Year 4 and 5 pupils to farm visits in Mgarr. A total of 1,230 pupils benefited from this activity.
- In addition to these, visits were also organised to Ghammieri Government Farm. In all, 37 schools and 2,732 children benefited from this activity.
- An evaluation of the scheme was carried out. The draft report points out in the overall assessment that 76.72% of parents said that the scheme resulted in healthier lifestyles for their children and themselves. Furthermore, the feedback provided regarding the perception of the scheme in its entirety was very positive, with 84.39% of parents and 79% of teachers confirming its benefits.

Imports and Exports

The unit issued 133 import licences, mostly on surveillance (full duty applicable) basis.

Promotion on Agricultural Products

There is only one beneficiary benefitting from this scheme – the MDP/KPH Joint Committee, which has launched the Milk Promotion Campaign consisting of three phases. During 2011, this beneficiary was paid the amount of €121,390.77 for Phase 1 and the amount of €24,303.46 for the first quarter of Phase 2.

Special Market Policy Programme for Maltese Agriculture (SMPPMA)

During 2011, approximately €5.6m were paid to beneficiaries for measures which included pig meat, dairy, broilers, eggs, fruit and vegetables, vines and wineries, and tomatoes. The subsidies for the Animal Sector covered the arrears up to December 2010. The subsidies for the Crops Sector will continue up to 2014.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT UNIT

During 2011, the Investment Measures Unit had two main functions related to administrative and eligibility checks; and authorisation of payments. These functions covered the following measures under the Rural Development Programme for Malta, 2007-2013:

- Axis 1 - Improving the Competitiveness of the Agricultural Sector
- Axis 3 - Improving the Quality of life in Rural Areas
- Axis 4 - Building Local Capacity
- Axis 5 - Technical Assistance

Administrative and Eligibility Checks

Administrative checks incorporate checks on eligibility for funding, ensuring that the application proposal fitted in the scope of the measure and that the same proposal was not presented for funding under other measures (including other programmes).

The Investment Measures Unit carried out the verification of payment claims and authorised payments for the following measures:

Measure	Payment
Measure 111 - Training, Information and Diffusion of Knowledge	€81,490.00
Measure 121- Modernisation of Agricultural Holdings	€4,535,052.05
Measure 123 - Adding Value to Agricultural Products	€552,453.22
Measure 124 - Cooperation for Development of New Products, Processes and Technologies in the Agriculture and Food Sectors	€21,168.00
Measure 142 - Setting Up of Producer Groups	€34,187.71
Measure 125 - Infrastructure Related to the Development and Adaptation of Agriculture	€2,023,812.90
Measure 132 - Participation of Farmers in Food Quality Schemes	€1,618.32
Measure 313 - Encouragement of Tourism Activities	€1,981,337.62
Measure 323 - Conservation and Upgrading of the Rural Heritage	€177,668.66
Measure 431 - Running Costs, Acquisition of Skills and Animation	€229,373.51
Measure 511 - Technical Assistance	€597,370.11

CONTROL UNIT

The Control Unit is one of the functions within the Paying Agency responsible for coordinating and conducting checks related to eligibility, Rural Development Measures, Cross Compliance, the administration of the Land Parcel Identification System, and Farm Advisory Service.

As from 2011, the Control Unit has also taken over the Liaison Agency of the Farm Accountancy Data Network.

IACS Controls

Controls and Results

In 2011, the Control Sample for the area based measures was partially selected before the end of the application campaign on the basis of the 2010 applications. The sample was completed following the closure of the application period. This permitted the initiation of the on-the-spot controls earlier than in previous years. Inspections related to agri-environmental measures, were carried out during June and July. The number of farmers selected for inspections for the agri-environment measure was 131, while that of the LFA/SPS was 378 beneficiaries, and a total of 5,965 parcels.

Farm Accountancy Data Network

The Control Unit is also responsible for the Farm Accountancy Data Network. A total of 530 farmers were interviewed between June and September 2011. Data verification, data entry and uploading of files in the European Commission website was carried out between August and December 2011.

The Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) was established in 1965 to gather information on the situation of agricultural holdings. The Network compiles information which allows the determining of the income of the farmers and conducting business analysis of the holdings. The FADN is one of the tools used by the European Commission to evaluate policy initiatives and decisions in the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Non-IACS Controls

Non-IACS Measures include Aid to Beekeepers, Aid to Producer Organisations and Producer Groups, Aid to the Deprived, School Milk Scheme, School Fruit Scheme, Imports, Exports and Promotion Programmes for Agriculture.

During 2011, the CU concluded the following inspections, Food Aid to the most deprived (17), School Fruit Scheme (30), School Milk Scheme (20), Aid to PO's/PG's (4), Measure 121 (95), Measure 123 (6), Measure 431 (2) and Measure 111 (3).

Cross Compliance

The 2011 inspections were performed during the period July to December when the Control Unit inspected 810 beneficiaries, involving 6,687 on-the-spot inspections on agricultural land parcels, of which 2,225 were found in Gozo and 4,462 in Malta, including also 162 livestock farms.

As from 2011, the number of parcels selected for control was reduced from 10,961 to 6,687 in accordance with the regulations to reduce the administrative burden. In cases where non-compliances were found during the inspections, the rest of the parcels of the beneficiary in question were inspected.

The revised methodology allowed for the completion of the controls within the stipulated timeframes. However, this involved an increase of resources in terms of extra hours and transport, because the control sample was quite extensive. The new methodology allowed for better organisation of the controls.

Farm Advisory Services

The Control Unit is also responsible for the implementation of the Farm Advisory Service in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation 73/2009. The Farm Advisory Service Registration Board, set up in February 2009, is made up of five committee members and a secretary to establish a proper protocol for the official registration and procedures for the Farm Advisory Services.

The Paying Agency approved two entities: one is already in operation while the other one is expected to start functioning at the beginning of 2012.

LPIS

The Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) is the key component of the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) for area based subsidies. The LPIS dataset is continuously being updated to reflect changes in the real world. The LPIS upgrading included the establishment of Landscape Features in a GIS layer. The PA received and processed 2,500 requests from farmers to make the necessary changes to their reference parcels.

In 2011, the European Commission introduced a new Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) to assess the quality and reliability of the LPIS. This invokes the need for continuous monitoring of the LPIS, as now it is the PA which shall give an assurance to the Commission that the LPIS is fit to serve the very important quality elements i.e. to unambiguously determine the reference parcel boundaries and to correctly quantify the eligible area.

In parallel to these tasks, the LPIS section started working on a two-year project to re-design the LPIS, which refers to a change in the model used to register reference parcels in the LPIS (from Agricultural Parcel to Farmers Block reference type of system). This means that several adjacent parcels that belong to the same farmer will be aggregated, thus reducing the number of records in the LPIS by 45%. This project brings several advantages to the farmer as well as to the Paying Agency.

PAYMENTS UNIT

The principal responsibilities of the Payments Unit are to execute payments of financial aid to the correct beneficiary, monitor the use of funds provided by the Commission and/or Government, and manage securities issued in the name of the Paying Agency.

During 2011, the PA effected payments to beneficiaries for measures shown below. The payments are classified into three: those paid out of the EAGF, others financed under the EAFRD and those disbursed from national funds.

European Agricultural Guarantee Fund

Measure	Total (€)
School fruit scheme - products - scholastic year 2010/2011	307,148.80
School fruit scheme – communication – scholastic year 2010/2011	3,827.25
School fruit scheme products - scholastic year 2011/2012	77,278.50
Promotion of agricultural products (Milk)	145,694.23
Operational programmes (Producers' Organisations)	111,062.00
Formation, administrative operation (Producer Groups)	62,971.49
Aid to bee-keepers - Programme 2011	13,974.00
Single Payment Scheme Claim Year 2008	5,372.43
Single Payment Scheme Claim Year 2009	5,195.40
Single Payment Scheme Claim Year 2010	3,652,058.90
Total	€4,384,583.00

European Agricultural Guarantee Fund - Social Aid Measures

Measure	Total (€)
Bread-making wheat – transport costs within Member States. - programme 2010	29,774.18
Intra-Community transport costs – programme 2010 - bread-making wheat	23,649.00
Administrative costs – programme 2010	6,619.41
Intra-Community transport costs – programme 2011 - barley	22,144.89
School milk	24,150.50
Total	€106,337.98

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Measure	Total (€)
Measure 111 - Vocational training and information actions	81,490.00
Measure 121 - Modernisation of agricultural holdings	4,535,052.05
Measure 123 - Adding value to agricultural products	642,967.82
Measure 124 - Cooperation for development of new products, processes and technologies in the agriculture and food sector	21,168.00
Measure 125 - Infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of	2,023,812.90

Agriculture	
Measure 132 - Participation of farmers in food quality schemes	1,618.32
Measure 142 - Setting up of producer groups	34,187.71
Measure 212 - Natural handicap payments in other areas with handicaps	1,890,942.48
Measure 214 - Agri-environmental payments	972,717.74
Measure 313 - Encouragement of tourism activities	1,981,337.62
Measure 323 - Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage	177,668.66
Measure 431 - Running the local action group	229,373.51
Measure 511 - Technical Assistance	597,370.11
Total	€13,189,706.92

National Funds

Measure	Total (€)
Potato aid - Claim Year 2008	63.47
Potato aid - Claim Year 2009	616.02
Potato aid - Claim Year 2010	114,026.98
Wine sector	4,744.46
Single Payment Scheme - CNDP - Claim Year 2010	497,826.32
Total	€617,277.25

Provision of Information to Beneficiaries

During 2011, the Paying Agency sent text messages to its clients with information regarding payments that had been deposited in their respective bank account. This new initiative, besides being a means of information, helped beneficiaries to confirm that the payment had been actually received in the bank account.

At the end of Financial Year 2011, beneficiaries were also provided with an annual statement, indicating all payments that they received throughout the year. The statement also provided information about any deductions that may have been effected from their payments as a result of penalties, such as Cross Compliance, Multi-Annual Sanctions, or other debts due to the Paying Agency.

ACCOUNTS UNIT

The objectives of the Accounts Unit consists of two functions: the handling of assigned revenue owed to the EU budget (debtors management), and financial reporting. In this regard, the Accounts Unit is responsible to communicate to the European Commission, routine declarations of expenditure (including reporting of assigned revenue), estimates of financial requirements (forecasts), and the annual clearance of accounts. These reports should reflect a true and fair view of the books of accounts and submitted to the EC on their respective deadlines.

In light of the above, the Accounts Unit provides the Head of the Paying Agency with the assurance that the roles falling within the remit of the Accounts Unit, as specified and established by EU Regulations, are being respected.

Financial Reporting

Throughout 2011, the Accounts Unit accounted for the expenditure related to the EAGF and the EAFRD. The total expenditure declared throughout this period, which is equivalent to the total amount reimbursed by the European Commission (through monthly/quarterly payments) amounts to the following:

Expenditure incurred from the EAGF budget - €4,111,045.46
 Expenditure incurred from the EAFRD budget - €9,963,802.63

Prior to submitting declarations of expenditure, the Accounts Unit is responsible of carrying out the required administrative checks. These comprise monthly reconciliations and cross-checks with debtors' management related data. These checks are compliant with the four-eye principle policy, established by Council Regulation (EC) No 1605/2002.

During 2011, the Accounts Unit consolidated its financial year-end clearance of accounts without any difficulties and the required documents were sent to the European Commission, in time to be cleared during the first clearance-phase carried out by the EC (April 2012).

Debtors Management

Expenditure, which is unduly paid to beneficiaries, is deemed as assigned revenue and thus falls within the remit of the Accounts Unit. This Unit is responsible for monitoring and implementing the necessary recovery action in order to be able to account for debts, and credit back the undue payment to the EU's budget. Meanwhile, the European Commission acts as a watchdog on Member States to ensure that the adopted recovery procedures are effective and no risks on the EU budget are present.

During 2011, the Accounts Unit focused on further strengthening its debt-related policies and opted to recover a substantial amount of assigned revenue. These policies are envisaged to be implemented throughout the coming financial year (2012) in order to recover outstanding debts. The following summary presents the status of outstanding debts as at 15 October 2011:

Outstanding debts pertaining to the EAGF budget - €567,659.23
 Outstanding debts pertaining to the EAFRD budget - €80,123.01
 Outstanding debts pertaining to the TRDI budget - €103,724.35

CONCLUSION

The Paying Agency is committed to continue improving its level of service delivery in order to provide timely and quality service to the farming community, while ensuring full compliance with rules and regulations to ensure that there is no risk to EU and national funds.

MANAGING AUTHORITY FOR EAFRD

The Managing Authority (MA) is responsible for the management of the Rural Development Programme 2007 – 13 as approved by the European Commission. The core functions of the MA include:

- the implementation of the programmes within the approved allocated budget
- the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the programme
- the publicity and promotion campaign of the programme.

RDP 2007-2013 – EAFRD

Programme Implementation

All measures under Axis 1 - Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, Axis 2 - Improving the Environment and the Countryside, and Axis 3 - Improving the Quality of Life in Rural Areas, have been launched.

During 2011, calls for the following measures were issued:

- Measure 111 – Vocational training and information actions
- Measure 114 – Use of advisory services
- Measure 115 – Setting up of advisory services
- Measure 121 – Modernisation of agricultural holdings

- Measure 123 – Adding value to agricultural products
- Measure 124 – Cooperation for development of new products, processes and technologies in the agriculture and food sector
- Measure 125 – Infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture
- Measure 132 – Participation of farmers in food quality schemes
- Measure 133 – Information and promotion activities
- Measure 142 – Setting up of producer groups
- Measure 212 – Less Favoured Areas
- Measure 214 – Agri-Environmental Measures
- Measure 214(10) – Support for the conservation of genetic resources in agriculture
- Measure 511 - Technical assistance is ongoing and is used to finance activities and costs required to ensure the smooth implementation, preparation and programming, management and support, monitoring, evaluation, information and control functions of the programme. In addition, technical assistance allocation is utilised for the establishment and operational costs of the National Rural Network (NRN), including the implementation of the action plan and the structures required to run the network. The total amount allocated for this measure is of €4,084,473.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Annual Progress Report (APR)

The final version of APR 2010 and its Monitoring Tables were submitted to the European Commission for approval in November 2011.

Expert Committee Meeting on Evaluation of RDPs

The Managing Authority is a member of the Evaluation Expert Committee whereby member state officials and commission representatives have the opportunity to exchange views on the objectives, methodology and procedures to be adopted, in order to carry out evaluations on the Rural Development Programme. The MA participates actively during these meetings.

Ongoing Evaluation

The overall objective of the ongoing evaluation is to provide an independent review and evaluation of the RDP for the period 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. The specific focus of the ongoing evaluation is to:

- report objectively on the progress of the programme in relation to its stated goals as well as its output, result and impact indicators;
- identify possible weaknesses in the programme and to put forward recommendations on how the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the programme can be improved;
- suggest possible amendments to the programme, where deemed necessary for the successful completion of the programme;
- serve as a quality management mechanism and an early warning system;
- identify data collection requirements necessary for the implementation of the programme, as well as for reporting purposes;
- collect the necessary data for the verification of result and impact indicators;
- review the programme indicators on an annual basis and to suggest possible refinements to such indicators.

Monitoring Committee (MC)

The MC for the RDP for 2007-2013 was established on 2 July 2008 after the approval of the RDP by the Commission. The main aims of the MC are to:

- assess and approve the selection criteria for operations that will be financed through the programme;
- review progress made towards achieving the specific targets of the programme on the basis of the documents submitted by the MA;
- examine the results of implementation, particularly achievements of the targets set for each axis and ongoing evaluations;

- consider and approve APRs and the last progress report prior to onward submission to the European Commission;
- propose to the MA any adjustments or review of the programme aimed at achieving the objectives of the programme as defined in Article 4 or in improving the management of the programme; and
- consider and approve any proposal to amend the content of the Commission decision on the contribution from the EAFRD.

The MC is made up of government representatives including officers from the MA for Rural Development (RD), representatives from the European Commission, representatives from social and economic partners, representatives from the civil society, and other affiliated organisations, such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The diverse composition of the MC is important in order to ensure that different stakeholders within the government and the rural community contribute more effectively towards the implementation of the programme for 2007 – 2013.

European Evaluation Network for Rural Development (EENRD)

The EENRD provides support for improving the quality and efficiency of evaluation of RDPs in Member States of the European Union in the period 2007-2013.

The network is targeted at the evaluation functions established by national authorities, evaluation experts and other stakeholders dealing with evaluation of RDPs. Network support includes development of evaluation methods and tools, guidance on evaluation processes, establishing best practice, aspects of data collection and management, and assistance to the European Commission and Member States in dealing with evaluation requirements. Operating under the responsibility of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), the network includes an operational structure in the form of the Evaluation Helpdesk to implement the multiple tasks.

Rural Development Committee (RDC)

During 2011, the MA attended various Rural Development Committee meetings held by the Commission.

The objective of the RDC is to monitor the progress, impact and effectiveness of rural policy across the different member states, as well as to coordinate matters relating to policy development and programme implementation of the Rural Development Plans (RDPs) at the national level.

Member States are required to convene, more or less, on a monthly basis, amongst others activities, to vote on amendments to RDPs discuss topics of common interest and provide documentation, reporting and updated lists of the monitoring and financial indicators.

Stakeholder Conference on Monitoring and Evaluation CAP post-2013

The Managing Authority participated in the first Stakeholder Conference on Monitoring and Evaluation CAP post-2013 held on 20-21 September 2011 in Brussels. The conference was organised by the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development, and took place as part of an ongoing process of preparing the monitoring and evaluation system for post-2013. The participants discussed issues such as simplification and proportionality, good and better integrated data, timing of evaluations and methodologies, etc.

IT System

At present, the new IT system implemented supports are Area based measures for 2004-2006 as well as 2007 – 2013 period; and the Rural Development Investment Measures (RDIM).

National Rural Network

The Maltese NRN was set up in order to:

- develop and maintain channels of communication through information activities and thematic sessions;
- promote exchange of experiences;
- share of good practices in between all local parties that have an interest or are directly involved in the operations of the RDP; and
- create communication networks in the international-fora, particularly the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD).

In 2011, the MA website was revamped. The website includes a specific section dedicated to the NRN in order to create more awareness on the Maltese NRN.

The MA worked in close collaboration both with the Decision Committee of each respective LAG, as well as with the newly appointed managers, to ensure they acquire the necessary skills and capacity needed for the execution of the LEADER Programme.

The first NRN newsletter was published in June 2011. The second issue of the newsletter was published in October 2011.

At the end of October, Commissioner Ciolos visited Malta and the NRN Steering Committee and Coordination Committee members had the opportunity to meet the Commissioner and ask him questions related to the future of the CAP.

A short study-visit was organised on 16 and 17 November 2011, by the Estonian National Rural Network, in collaboration with the Maltese National Rural Network. The objective was to share useful experiences on the implementation of the National Rural Network and appreciate the beauty of Maltese agriculture and landscape.

Leader Programme

In September 2010, following the approval of the Local Development Strategies, the Paying Agency signed contracts with three Local Action Groups (LAG): Gozo Action Group Foundation; Local Action Group Xlokk Foundation; and Majjistral Action Group Foundation.

The MA requested that the LAGs participate in a road-show event so as to promote their LAG and its operations. The Majjistral LAG participated in two road-shows, one in Dingli on 15 May, and one in Mellieħa on 22 May. The Xlokk LAG participated in *Irkotta Fest* in Kirkop on 21 and 22 May. The Gozo LAG participated in *Lejlet Lapsi* in Gozo, held between 3 and 5 June.

The first Action under the Leader Programme was launched by the Majjistral LAG. The Action was M413.3 - Open Call for Craft Workers. This was launched on 19 September and closed on 2 October with a total of six applications. M125 was launched in September 2011, together with other Actions by the respective LAGs.

So as to further promote the LEADER programme, the MA requested that the LAGs also participate in the Mnarja event held in Buskett, where they each set up an exhibition about their LAG together with an exhibition of products coming from their respective territories.

The three LAGs also participated in a radio programme called *Frott Artna*, where they spoke about their LAG and the Actions to be launched by each respective LAG.

Communication and Publicity

During 2011, the Managing Authority, in collaboration with key stakeholders of the Rural Development Programme, undertook a number of publicity and information events such as seminars, one-to-one meetings and exhibitions in respect of measures launched, projects contracted and other activities, such as:

- participation in the following *Naturalment Malti* Fairs: *Milk Fair* on 3 April in Gharghur; *Strawberry Fair* on 10 April in Imġarr; *Pork Fair* on 11 December in Siġġiewi;
- seminar on the Payments Claims Campaign for the farmers and other stakeholders held on 8 February;
- publishing of informative flyers on the Paying Agency which were distributed to all farmers who renewed their payment claim in February: *Cross Compliance*; *Agri-Environmental Measures*;
- promotion of Payment Claims Campaign on TV programmes: *Bongu Bundy* on One TV on 10 February; *Stenbah* on Favourite Channel on 17 February; *Malta Illejla* on Net TV on 22 February; *It-Tnejn Li Huma* on Net TV on 23 February; and on the radio programme *Lill Hinn Minn Darna* on Radju Malta in February;
- ongoing support to beneficiaries under M313 and M323 on their publicity obligations.

At the end of June 2011, the MA once again actively participated in the Mnarja Festivities spanning over two days, held in the Buskett Gardens. Stands were set up for the Managing Authority, National Rural Network and the three Local Action Groups. In addition, the MA also set up an exhibition of rural produce together with PVC photos and captions of projects from Axis 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013.

Sponsorship of a series of TV programmes, *Mad-Daqqa t'Għajn*, on the various sectors within the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 held on One TV starting in April 2011 until September 2011.

The most exclusive event was the hosting of EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development Dacian Ciolos, who had the opportunity to meet the rural stakeholders and discuss the future of the Common Agricultural Policy. The MA set up an exhibition of fresh rural produce and another of local crafts manufactured in rural areas. A short DVD on Malta's Rural Development was produced for this occasion.

Upon the launch of measures 111, 114, 121, 123, 124, 132, 133, 142 and 214, the MA participated in radio and TV programmes which are highly popular both among farmers and the general public. A number of articles were also written on local newspapers and newsletters, including Funding 360, which is distributed by the Malta EU-Steering and Action Committee.

JOSEPH CARUANA
 Head (Paying Agency)

Rural Development and Aquaculture Department

Agriculture Directorate

OBJECTIVE

The Agriculture Directorate within the Department for Rural Development and Aquaculture is dedicated towards supporting and improving farming in Malta, as well as ensuring compliance with relevant agricultural legislation.

The Agriculture Directorate is made up of several units that are entrusted with Viticulture and Oenology, Oleiculture, Waste Water Distribution, Crop Husbandry, Apiculture, Organic Farming, Animal Husbandry, and the Fruit Tree Nursery.

CROP HUSBANDRY SECTION

The Crop Husbandry Section is responsible for the setting up and execution of trials and experiments performed both in the open fields and also under protected cultivation. These trials consist in the growing and demonstration of vegetables, forage crops and other crops deemed important by the agricultural sector in Malta.

During 2011, the Crop Husbandry Section performed a number of trials in Ghammieri on crop cultivation. Besides this, the Section was in charge of growing fodder for the Animal Husbandry Section, keeping in good agricultural and environmental condition the fields of Ghammieri, and providing transport to carry materials for other units.

Outdoor Crops

Trials at Ghammieri

- Cultivation of food crops using polished water. A trial was set up following a proposal by a private hydrologist to test the cultivation of two common crops using the polished water from Sant'Antnin Water Treatment Facility. For this trial, the two crops selected were lettuce and zucchini and the set-up included a replica to be irrigated with normal ground water. The outcomes of this trial showed that this water could be indeed used for irrigation, but availability is still a problem.
- Cultivation of lettuce using Magna Verno. An American supplier of agricultural products provided the section with *Magna Verno* to conduct a trial aimed to reduce irrigation. *Magna Verno* is a material added to soil next to the plants roots to help absorb more water, which will be released later. 1,000 lettuce seedlings were planted in the beginning of September, and to half of these, *Magna Verno* was applied to the roots of the plants, while the other half was used as control. The results for this trial show that *Magna Verno* did not seem to make a difference in the availability of water for the lettuce, but as it was the first trial of this type in the open fields at summer, this product might be tried on other crops again to check if there are any crops that can be positively affected by the application of this trial.

Other Outdoor Crops

- *Onion Seedlings*: During January the CH section sold onion seedling to the farmers and the general public. The total amount of seedlings sold was 173,300, for a total of €3,032.75.
- *Set aside area*: A set aside (Field Number 4) is being utilised to grow Maltese indigenous trees to be later used as mother plants to propagate further plants.

- *Fodder*: During 2011, the Crop Husbandry Section has grown wheat, lucern and sorghum to be used for animal feed by the Animal Husbandry Section.
- *Other Crops*: In 2011, the Section was in charge of the olive grove, the vineyard and the citrus orchards in Ghammieri. In other fields, vegetables such as pumpkin, sweet corn, kohlrabi, onions, cabbage, and garlic were grown.
- *Midd idejk fil-biedja initiative*: At the beginning of 2011, the section divided field no 19 into about 50 parcels to be used for this initiative. Drip irrigation was also made available to all plots from the reservoirs inside Ghammieri. The project was inaugurated in April.

Protected Crops

- *Greenhouse no 1* - This greenhouse was mainly used for the cultivation of poinsettias. A total of 1,500 poinsettias were rooted in August, and were ready for distribution by the beginning of December. A total of 1,481 poinsettia were successfully grown and distributed to various locations and ministries as requested for embellishment purposes.
- *Greenhouse no 5* - Four new varieties were selected to promote new types of tomatoes that may be introduced in the market. The varieties chosen were the Tomatoberry (a strawberry shaped tomato), OrangeSanta (cherry plum variety with orange skin), Golden Shine (yellow round fruits) and Big Red (beefsteak tomato). Due to the cold winter, fungal diseases started to attack the tomato plants while still young, and the yield was very low.
- *Multi-span Greenhouse*
 - Cucumber: Two new varieties of long cucumber were grown - the variety Louisa produced 702kg, while the variety Camilla produced 599 kg;
 - Aubergines: total production was of 1,399 kg;
 - Green Pepper: The other span of the greenhouse was cultivated with mixture of coloured green peppers such as yellow, red, white and black. The total production amounted to 418 kg;
 - Water melons: Another new variety tried in the greenhouses was the watermelon Yellowcrown variety which yielded 932 kg. Most produce was sold from Ghammieri.
- *Other Greenhouses*: Other crops cultivated in the greenhouses included melons, runner beans, herbs and pot plants. Among the pot plants grown in the greenhouses, a large number of Maltese indigenous trees were grown to be later planted in various locations around Malta by the PARKS directorate or to be planted on the farm for conservation purposes. During 2011, in the greenhouses a batch of Junipers and a batch of Hawthorn were successfully grown. Other ornamental plants were also grown in the greenhouse for other various uses.

Plants and Produce Donations

Date		Plants	Quantity
02/02/2011	PARKS	Oak Trees (<i>Quercus ilex</i>)	491
08/03/2011	MRRA	Herbs	50
18/03/2011	Guardian Angel School	Onion and Kohlrabi Seedlings	2 Bunches
05/05/2011	MRRA	Mixed Vegetables	2 Boxes
13/05/2011	Sliema Spring Fest	Hydrangea & Herbs	70
20/05/2011	MSD (Embellishment)	Ornamental Plants	69
19/05/2011	MRRA	Mixed Vegetables	2 Boxes
16/06/2011	MRRA	Mint plants	10
20/06/2011	Institute for Tourism Studies	Hydrangea	3
December		Poinsettia	1,481

Pitkali Produce

	Product	€
103 Boxes	Zucchini	354.35
55 Boxes	Pumpkin	135.60
217 Boxes	Lettuce	456.50
18 Boxes	Water Melon	47.00

134 Boxes	Sweet Corn	487.50
14 Boxes	Melons	99.80
63 Boxes	Onions	66.70
132 Boxes	Aubergines	784.05
40 Boxes	Green Pepper	107.75
683 Boxes	Globe Artichokes	523.60
143 Boxes	Cabbaged Lettuce	191.15
137 Bundles	Kohlrabi	128.60
14 Boxes	Runner Beans	83.50
105 Boxes	Cabbages	65.60
2 Boxes	Brussels Sprouts	7.50
1 Box	Red Lettuce	1.00
3 Boxes	Endives	2.25
6 Boxes	Greenhouse Tomatoes	65.35
22 Boxes	Garlic	44.80
35 Boxes	Cucumber	294.50
	Rucola	18.50
	Herbs	13.50
	Cherry Tomatoes	94.50
Total		€4,073.60

ST VINCENT DE PAULE NURSERY

The year's most important event – the sale of fruit trees and rootstock - was carried out during the second and third week of February. Clients placed a total of 298 orders the previous October and there were 296 direct sales. A total of 4,756 fruit trees, 7,111 fruit tree rootstock, and 7,708 American vine rootstock were sold with sales amounting €39,841. The majority of fruit trees were grafted or grown on nursery grounds.

The annual sale of olive trees and other fruit trees in pots was held as usual during the last two weeks of October. In all, 579 olive trees, and 393 fruit trees were sold for an income of €7,641. During the same period, 345 orders for fruit trees were also accepted.

During 2011, a total of 17,200 fruit tree rootstock and 10,000 American vine rootstock cuttings, and 5,900 fruit tree cuttings were planted out in the field. 10,000 olive rootstocks grown from seed were planted in pots, while 7,000 one-year-old olive rootstocks were grafted with several table, dual and oil popular varieties. Of these olive rootstocks 1,300 were grafted with the *Tal-Bidni* variety. At the end of the year, 500 olive trees of the *Tal-Bidni* variety were transferred to a private olive oil processor to be distributed as part of *Project Primo*. About 17,000 fruit tree rootstock planted out in the field the previous year were grafted with different varieties of peaches, nectarines, apricots, plums, prunes, sweet almonds, pears and apples.

Apart for maintenance work, other work was carried out around the nursery to improve access to all fields, clear out rubbish and dispose of excess rubble. A two-tumoli field was also reclaimed, with the addition of soil provided by the Valley Cleaning Section, while another is in the process of being reclaimed.

As part of upgrading works, an orchard formerly under the responsibility of the management of the St Vincent de Paule Residence for the Elderly was handed over to SVDP Nursery. The old Seville orange trees in this orchard were uprooted, and the land cleared. The scope of this project was to set up a demonstration orchard with well-known citrus varieties of oranges, lemons, mandarins, clementines, tangerines and kumquats.

VITICULTURE AND OENOLOGY

DOK and IGT Wine Certification

In 2011, four certification sessions for DOK/IGT were carried out as per normal practice of the Viticulture and Oenology Unit. In October, a new certification body was appointed to carry out DOK and IGT certification: the *Istituto Regionale della Vite e del Vino* of Marsala (IRVV), Sicily. Prior certification was carried out by the Enoteca Italian of Siena, Italy. The IRVV were appointed through a tendering procedure. In 2011, a total of 118 wine samples (438 bottles of wine) were submitted for certification, of which 91 for DOK and 37 for IGT.

International Office of the Vine and Wine (OIV)

In 2011, officers from the Viticulture and Oenology Unit continued to participate regularly in the Assembly meetings organised by the International Office of the Vine and Wine (OIV). In June, an officer from the Unit attended the 9th General Assembly in Porto, Portugal.

Since 2011, active participation in these meetings has become of increased importance to all EU Member States, in view of the recent adoption of a new Regulation (EC) 607/2009, which provides for the adoption of OIV resolutions on viticulture and oenology were appropriate, by the European Commission.

EU Wine Management Committee Meetings

Officers from the Unit also regularly attended monthly EU Wine Management Committee meetings in Brussels and also resumed participation to the Expert Group meetings on Oenological Practices, also held at DG AGRI in Brussels.

Instruction notes and meeting reports pertaining to each meeting attended in Brussels were also regularly compiled by the officers who attended the meetings.

2011 Harvest Campaign

Officers from the Unit carried out regular inspections of the wineries during harvesting of the grapes for the production of DOK and IGT wines in August and September 2011. Inspections were carried out every day of the week during these two months, to ensure that the wine grapes that were arriving at the wineries met the conditions required by the Wine Act for the production of quality wines.

PROMED: *La Protezione dell'Ambiente nelle Isole del Mediterraneo Attraverso la Valorizzazione di un Sistema Colturale Arboreo*

The Unit is currently implementing, as a project partner, an Italia-Malta 2007–2013 project, which was officially launched in May 2011. This project focuses on the recovery of autochthonous vine varieties via the identification of best management practices to improve their quality, the production of high value-added derivatives from local vine varieties, as well as international vine varieties that are suited to Malta's pedo-climatic conditions, and the reversion of soil erosion through the cultivation of the vine.

The Istituto Regionale della Vite e del Vino (IRVV) of Marsala, Sicily is the Lead Partner in the Project. The duration of the project is two years and the total budget allocation is of €1,470,345. The Viticulture and Oenology Section will be benefitting from a budget allocation of €442,520.

Through this project, MRRA will restore the Buskett winery, in order to set up a research station in viticulture and oenology that shall be dedicated to the improvement of local viticulture and wine sector and be a focal point for vine growers for advice and support in the cultivation of their vines aimed at the

production of superior quality wine and table grapes. Apart from a strong research component, regular promotional and educational activities aimed at transmitting information regarding the superior quality of local wine and table-grape products to local and foreign consumers, shall be organised.

During the first eight months of project implementation, since its official launch in May 2011, the Unit, with the support of Vitimalta, identified the experimental vineyard parcel areas, based on the autochthonous and international vine varieties, to be studied within the framework of the project. Ten farmers are currently participating in the project, with a total area under vines of 34.69 tumoli. Eight vine varieties are being studied, of which two autochthonous vine varieties, the white *Girgentina* and red *Ġellewża*.

The management of the experimental vineyard parcels was carried out by the farmers, in accordance with the instructions given by expert viticulturists from the IRVV and the officers of the Viticulture and Oenology Unit. The harvested grapes were transported to the IRVV in Marsala for experimental analysis and vinification trials that were planned and determined by the Unit's officers, together with the winemakers of the IRVV. The vinification of the grapes and their transformation at IRVV was monitored by officers from the Unit.

The objective of these experimental trials is to produce wine products that are of a superior quality which can be presented to the local wine sector as proof of the high standard that can be reached on the islands, and destroy the common belief that the *Girgentina* and *Ġellewża* varieties are unsuitable for the production of good wine due to the inability of the former variety to reach a high sugar concentration of the grapes and the lack of colour of the latter variety. The experimental wines, which were produced from the grapes harvested from the experimental vineyards in 2011, are to be presented at a renowned wine fair in Italy in March 2012.

Malta Land under Vines Restructuring Project 2011/2012

The Viticulture and Oenology Unit is also currently implementing a grafting project involving the conversion of 210 tumoli of vineyard in Malta and Gozo, from red wine grape varieties to white wine grape varieties. This project was initiated following a request for aid by the Malta Wine Association in November 2010, due to a present surplus of red wine on the local market and a deficiency in white wine, for which market demand is on the increase. This surplus of red grapes is also negatively affecting farmers, who are encountering difficulties in selling their red grapes.

This grafting project was initiated in April 2011, for which the services of a renowned French company, Worldwide Vineyards, were employed by the MRRA. A total of 60 tumoli (33,244 grafts) of vineyard were grafted by seven grafters between 29 April and 1 May 2011. The second phase of the project was scheduled to begin in April 2012. The total cost of the project is of €147,725, of which €100,000 will be financed by MRRA.

ORGANIC FARMING

Attendance at the Standing Committee on Organic Farming

The official responsible attended all SCOF meetings in Brussels. Eight meetings were held in 2011 and three Council meetings were held to align with the Commission implementing powers in Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 to the differentiation between delegated and implementing powers of the Commission, introduced by Articles 290 and 291 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFUE), and establish the corresponding procedure for adoption of these acts.

Trials at Ghammieri

Organic certified seeds like lettuce, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbages of different varieties were bought from Moles Seeds (UK) and were cultivated in Parcel Number 22. Circa 0.1124Ha of globe artichokes were also cultivated in the same field by the section.

Twenty different international varieties and two local varieties of olive trees are being cultivated organically for research and experimentation at Ghammieri. This grove contains around 200 olive trees.

In Parcel 6 and 17B, the section has about 40 citrus trees and in Parcel 18 there are different varieties of prickly pears. In Parcel 19, the section cultivates Alfalfa, fodder and herbs.

Liaison with other Entities

As Malta's Control Authority on Organic Farming, the Metrology Directorate and the Organic Section are working very closely together. Several meetings and discussions were held on various matters. This office liaised between the Metrology Directorate and the Department for Rural Development in the issuing of certificates for farmers, i.e. processors and producers, in conversion to organic farming, to be eligible to apply for the said subsidy. As a result of the recently approved Rural Development Plan 2007-2013, agri-environmental measures supporting organic farming were implemented as from 2011. Certification from the Metrology Directorate regarding payments/subsidies was issued on the following criteria - the size of the parcel, type of crop, and the conversion status (stating whether area is certified as being under conversion or already certified organic). The Section also held a routine inspection at the Metrology Directorate as part of a regulatory process performed by the Competent Authority.

Close contacts were established with the Malta Organic Farming Movement, which was often consulted and was referred to for its opinion.

The section was also of assistance to various students ranging from primary to university level, willing to research on organic farming. Schools expressing interest in the matter visited the farm. Visits also took place in schools whereby talks were given to students, who in turn exhibited their projects related to organic farming.

OLEICULTURE

Besides attending meetings at EU and international level, including a session of the International Olive Oil Council, this Section provided the necessary technical assistance to farmers and olive oil producers based on knowledge gained from training courses and results from experiments held at the Research and Development Centre. Consumption and production of olive oil and table olives were promoted through activities and events held by MRRA. Work also continued on the implementation of the law regulating this sector, as well as for the drafting of certification of olive oil products.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

This section continued to be involved in various activities ranging from administration to field work on private farms. Inspections continued to be carried out relating to both planning development consultations and the award of subsidy funds and development applications. The Unit is also responsible for the management of the dairy quota register. Participation at a significant number of EU-related meetings, both in Council and at comitology level were undertaken.

The number of animal heads at the Government Farm was reduced in line with the focus change from production to a research function of the centre. A number of breeding programmes were continued from the previous year, especially for the different Maltese breeds, primarily the Maltese cow and goat.

INSPECTIONS AND REGULATORY ACTIVITY

During 2011, a number of inspections were carried out by agricultural officers in connection with applications with MEPA for the upgrading/construction of farms, tool rooms, agricultural stores, water reservoirs, pump rooms etc, as well as applications and queries related to the removal or cutting of tree species within their jurisdiction, particularly conifers.

Regulatory work related to the monitoring and control of producers' organisations in the Fruit and Vegetable sector also continued, particularly during the last quarter 2011, when the programmes and expenditure for the coming year had to be approved, following a consultation procedure with the organisations involved and the Paying Agency.

The Nitrates Action Unit also worked throughout 2011 to continue the implementation of the National Action Plan on Nitrates, in particular by developing IT tools, which will be launched in 2012, to allow farmers to develop crop and fertiliser plans which are appropriate to the conditions of their parcels.

OPERATIONS

Training

Fifteen officers participated in an in-house training session on Data Protection Awareness. Several data protection issues related to the workplace were not only brought up and discussed, but also settled in the following weeks.

Several other officers were assisted in attending for CDRT courses related to ICT, Management Development as well as Continuous Development. In one specific case, this office liaised with CDRT officials to identify an ICT trainer for a particular officer. After identifying the officer's skills and needs for daily job requirements, a schedule of sessions were planned on a span of two months.

Human Resource Management

Close liaison with PMSS facilitated processing vis-à-vis attendances and notifications, medical tests and other health and safety issues. Other administrative services included overtime, students' placements, engaging of officers on service contracts, forwarding of govt. circulars, capacity building/evaluation of duties, and responsibilities of employees within the Agriculture Directorate. The re-organisation of various units continued unabated during the past year to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

MALTA EMBELLISHMENT AND LANDSCAPING PROJECT

2011 was the 9th year of the Public Private Partnership between the Government and the Environmental Landscapes Consortium Limited, that is, the 4th year under the implementation of the new contract where the Government was in a position to acquire a better service from ELC Ltd. This led to better general maintenance and presentation with the inclusion of a larger amount of flowering annuals. This was practically possible with the same budget allocation as the previous year's in respect of maintenance, amounting to seven million euros. Under the terms of this contract addendum, approximately 90,000m² of additional landscaped areas are now being maintained annually at the previous same cost, i.e. without increasing government expenditure.

The following projects were successfully completed during 2011:

- Roundabout at Ghajn Dwieli, Paola
- Roundabout at St Lucia
- Valletta Bus Terminus
- Gudja Picnic Area
- Tal-Ħniena Road, Gozo

- Mġarr Terminal
- Ta' Hamet Junction, Xagħra.

As well as several alterations on the sites of the new bus service network for Transport Malta and Arriva company in Malta and Gozo.

Apart from the work in Malta, maintenance and work on projects continued on a regular basis at Gozo with the extension of the contract there. A number of secondary projects in Gozo were initiated and should be ready by the end of the year at Xlendi, Marsalforn and Citadella.

RECYCLED WATER DISTRIBUTION UNIT AT ZABBAR

Five reservoirs which are located at Tumbrell Xgħajra, San Anard, Bidni l/o Żabbar, Habel l-Abjad l/o Żejtun, and Tas-Silġ l/o Dellimara are used by farmers to irrigate fields situated in these areas and were replenished with recycled water. The Unit also repaired water channels and cleaned the areas surrounding the reservoirs.

SAN ANTON PRESIDENT'S GARDENS AND VERDALA

San Anton President's Gardens and Verdala cover about 80 tumoli of arable land comprising 10 tumoli of citrus trees, stone fruit trees and vines, six tumoli for the cultivation of the kitchen garden, five tumoli for the cultivation of flowers, and three tumoli for lawn garden. Another six tumoli of land comprise flower gardens, whilst 50 tumoli consist of decorative trees at Verdala Buskett.

During the year, the gardens were maintained by the Directorate's gardeners who provide fresh flowers, vegetables, etc, for the President's Palaces, which are situated at San Anton, Verdala and Valletta. Gardens were prepared for state visits by foreign presidents. As in previous years, the surrounding gardens at Verdala Buskett were prepared for various occasions such as the August Moon Ball.

An official from the Directorate is also involved in the keeping of animals housed in the President's Kitchen Garden.

DR JUSTIN ZAHRA
Director (Agriculture)

Rural Development and Aquaculture Department

Animal Welfare, Promotion & Services Directorate

The Animal Welfare, Promotion and Services (AWPS) Directorate has continued strengthening its operations on the number of areas related to the animal welfare during 2011. The main activities covered by the AWPS Directorate included the regulatory monitoring and enforcement related to the upkeep of animal welfare standards, the running of the ambulance service, the launch of initiatives related to animal welfare, the delivery animal welfare education, and dissemination of animal welfare promotion.

Animal Welfare Inspectorate and Enforcement

The AWPS Directorate followed up and assisted the Police in 27 court cases related to Animal Welfare Act infringements. In addition, the AWPS Directorate is following an additional 15 new cases which will be prosecuted in 2012. The cases that have been investigated by the Directorate range from mistreatment of pets, abandonment of companion animals, illegal importation of birds, illegal trapping of birds, maltreatment of carriage animals, rearing of food producing species below prescribed animal welfare standards, illegal slaughter of food producing species, illegal keeping of farm animals, and pet shops infringing the Animal Welfare Act.

Animal Ambulance and Aftercare Services

The Directorate has successfully run the Animal Ambulance Service which operates on a 24-hour basis, seven days a week. Calls received at the Ambulance Service are forwarded to the AWPS Directorate and injured stray animals are collected from the various sites and taken to the Ċentru San Frangisk for treatment in 2011; a total of 2,060 animals were given treatment at the centre. The Animal Ambulance Service picked up 2,560 injured strays, following reports submitted by the public. After recovery, these animals were housed within the pens at Ghammieri and provided with additional aftercare. The AWPS Directorate managed to successfully offer 764 of these stray animals for adoption.

Animal Welfare Initiatives

As part of the ongoing initiatives, the AWPS Directorate, jointly with Transport Malta, embarked on a project for the construction of Karozzini shelters in Valletta, Mdina/Rabat Area, Sliema/St Julian's area, and in the Buġibba/Qawra area. This project involves a capital investment equivalent to €300,000. The project involves the construction of shelters which provides horses with protection from the elements, watering facilities and drainage systems for the karozzini. This project is regarded as a major investment in animal welfare. The tender for the said works was published by Transport Malta and has been adjudicated. The works are scheduled to start early in 2012. During the summer period, 10 temporary shelters were also set up for the karozzini at the Valletta Waterfront, adjacent to the VISET sea terminal.

Animal Welfare Promotion and Education

AWPS Directorate officers participated in over 28 television programmes aimed at increasing animal welfare awareness. These programmes highlighted the work carried out by the Directorate and also disseminated information about the services it offered. Information about the proper care and right of animals was also delivered on a weekly basis. Officers also promoted the adoption of stray animals from the Directorate. A part of these activities was also aimed at increasing awareness and informing the public

about the Dog Identification Regulations 2010, and included the delivery of valuable information about the microchipping of dogs.

As part of animal welfare promotion, animal welfare officers organised a number of lectures at the Ċentru San Frangisk. The officers also visited 20 schools as part of the SkolaSajf project. A number of visits were also held at the Day Care Centre in Paola and at the Msida Scout Group. The Animal Welfare Directorate also participated in 10 activities which include the Dog Walk, the Charity Ride, the Dogs Trust Activity in Tigne' Point, the Milk Fest in Gharghur, the Spring Fest in Sliema, the *Festa tal-Majjal* activities organised in relation to the Innarja Feast, the animal welfare day organised by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS), and the monitoring of the Feast of San Anton Abbati in Rabat. The Directorate also organised the Animal Welfare Day at the Ċentru San Frangisk, comprising mainly an open day which marked the first year of operation of the said Centre. The public was invited for various guided tours around the hospital and was able to visualise the work carried out and the state-of-the-art veterinary care services offered at the Centre. The attendees could also view an exposition of posters depicting the stories and photographs of seriously injured strays which were saved by the AWPS Directorate and treated at the Ċentru San Frangisk. A number of informative talks were also held on various issues related to animal care and welfare. A number of NGOs also set up various stalls highlighting and showcasing the work carried out by them. Donations to various NGOs were also awarded during the activity.

JOSEPH JOHN VELLA

Director (Animal Welfare Promotion and Services)

Rural Development and Aquaculture Department Promotion & Information Directorate

During 2011, the Promotion and Information Office continued its educational and promotional campaign with regard to local agricultural and fisheries sectors targeted mainly to attract and educate as many consumers as possible.

BIEDJA U SAJD PUBLICATION

The end of 2011 has seen the comeback, after an absence of two years, of the informative and educational magazine *Biedja u Sajd*. The Promotion and Information Office published the 206th edition of *Biedja u Sajd* in December 2011, with a circulation of more than 9,000 copies reaching the registered full-time/part-time farmers and fishermen registered with the Ministry and all those who are related with, or have at heart, the Maltese farming, fishing and rural sectors.

MIDD IDEJK FIL-BIEDJA

As from April 2011, after the launch of the *Midd Idejk fil-Biedja* scheme by the Minister and Parliamentary Assistant to the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, the Promotion and Information Office has been responsible for all the administrative work involved with the scheme, such as receiving, vetting and processing of applications, preparation of contracts, communicating with applicants and plot holders, scheduling of timetables, attendances and all other related work.

FIRST MEETING OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the Monitoring Committee on the National Milk Campaign to be held in Malta was spread over two days – 28 and 29 July 2011. Present for the first day meeting was the representative of the Directorate General Agri UnitD4 in the EU, Mr Emanuel Jankowski, the Head Paying Agency, and the other stakeholders in the National Milk Campaign i.e. the Malta Dairy Products, *Koperattiva Produtturi tal-Halib* and the implementing body of the campaign, namely MPS Marketing Communications. Other interested parties such as KIM (*Koperattiva ta' min irabbi l-Majjal*), *Assoċjazzjoni tal-Bdiewa*, Malta Poultry Producers Organisation, *Frottartna*, etc, were invited to attend to the second day meeting where everyone had the opportunity to address his/her views and difficulties directly to Mr Jankowski.

PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (PGI) IN TERMS OF EU REGULATION 510/2006

In 2011, the Promotion and Information Office, together with the Directorate for EU Affairs and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation, started a research exercise wherein interviews were held with local herdsmen who produce the Maltese *gbejna*. The interviews, which are to cover all of the Maltese islands, are divided into four regions: Malta South, Malta Central, Malta North and Gozo. This year, interviews were carried out in Malta South and Malta North and will continue in 2012. The purpose of this exercise is to acquire a common characteristic recipe for the making of *gbejniet*, which will eventually lead to the acquisition of the PGI label for the Maltese *gbejna*.

TV Programmes

Between April and September 2011, the Promotion and Information Office was involved in *Mad-Daqqa t'Ghajn*, a TV programme aired on *One TV*. Each week this programme, among other slots, featured a topic focusing on local agricultural and/or the farming industry, thus promoting the European Agricultural Funds under the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. Sectors covered included, amongst others, the pork, poultry, potatoes, tomatoes, mushrooms, wine, rabbit and honey industries.

Radio Programmes

Frott Artna continued running for another year on Radju Malta every Sunday at 7.30am. The Promotion and Information Office once again was responsible for the coordination, production and presentation of this informative programme focusing on agriculture and fisheries.

Farm Visits

During 2011 Ghammieri Farm welcomed 3,543 primary school children, people with special needs and members from the general public for guided farm visits coordinated by the Promotion and Information Office. This year the PIO handed out questionnaires to all who came on these visits and, from the feedback received, is now finalising a new, fresh Farm Visits Programme (including new booklets, hands-on experience, a facelift to the surroundings, etc). These will be officially proposed in 2012.

Participation in International Fairs

Between 21 and 30 January 2011, the Promotion and Information Office represented MRRA on the *MRRA-ECO GOZO- A Taste of the Mediterranean* stand at the Berlin International Fair (Green Week).

During May, the PIO coordinated the delivery of Maltese delicacies and wines to the Embassy of Malta in Madrid for the celebration of Burgos Malta Week and Europe Day in Madrid. In December, a consignment of Maltese cheeselets, honey, wine and olive oil was sent to the Embassy of Malta in Rome.

Local Activities

Naturalment Malti organised the following popular *festas*, where promotion of fresh local produce is the main attraction:

- *Festa tal-Ħalib* in Gharghur on 3 April
- *Mnarja* at Buskett Gardens between 28 and 29 June
- *Festa tal-Ħut* at St Paul's Bay on 17 September
- *Festa tal-Majjal* at Siggiewi on 11 December

Moreover during the year, the Office offered its help to other government departments, local councils and other organisations in various activities, such as:

- Nigret Springfest at Rabat, 21-22 May
- *Rikotta Fest* at Kirkop, 21-22 May
- *Wirja u Bejgh ta' Frott u Ħxejjex Lokali* at Żebbiegh, 5 June
- *Wirja Agrarja* at Siggiewi, 11-12 June
- MCAST Open Weekend at MCAST Ghammieri, 11-12 June
- *Ghana Fest* at Argotti Gardens, 11-12 June
- *Festa tal-Bdiewa* at Burmarrad, 3-4 September
- *L-Imqabba mal-Medda taż-Żmien* at Mqabba, 7 September
- *Ijjeli Mellihin* at Mellieħa, 9-11 September
- *Żejt iż-Żejtun* at Żejtun, 24-25 September

- *Milied Rabti* at Rabat, 17-18 December
- *Presepju Ħaj* at Dingli, 22-27 December
- *Milied Imdawwal* at Paola, 17 December

MARIO SPITERI

Director General (Rural Development and Aquaculture)

Rural Development and Aquaculture Department Wholesale Markets and Fishing Fleet Facilities Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The Wholesale Markets and Fishing Fleet Facilities Directorate is responsible for managing the operations of the Civil Abattoir, the Fruit and Vegetable Market, the Fish Market and the Fishing Fleet Facilities.

The Fishing Fleet Facilities consist of the hard standing facility at Marsaxlokk, and fishing ports and slipways located all around the Maltese coastal areas.

The Directorate continued with its activities to contribute to the economically viable development of the agriculture and fishing industry through administration, control and supervision of the surrounding environment and through the employment of veterinary, agriculture fisheries and administrative knowledge, skills and resources in a cost effective and social manner.

SLAUGHTERING OF LIVESTOCK

The number of livestock slaughtered at the Civil Abattoir in Malta is as indicated the table below:

Animals Slaughtered (Heads)						
Cattle	Swine	Sheep	Lambs	Goats	Kids	Equines
4,201	83,140	3,088	555	831	48	76

Animals Slaughtered (Weight/Kgs)						
Cattle	Swine	Sheep	Lamb	Goats	Kids	Equines
944,102	7,260,569	61,798	3,094	10,537	321	13,046

Slaughter Analysis

There was a slight decrease in the number of total animals slaughtered as compared to the previous year (91,879 in 2011 as against a total of 95,051 in 2010).

There was a major increase of 336% in the number of kids slaughtered with respect to 2010, followed by an increase in slaughtered goats (29%), lambs (15%) and sheep (9%). On the other hand, there was a significant decrease in the number of slaughtered equines (56%) and cattle (26%), and a slight decrease in the number of slaughtered swine. A detailed slaughter 2010-2011 analysis is presented in the table below.

The decrease in slaughtered equines was experienced due to the fact that since May 2011 the emergency slaughterline was closed down and it was replaced by the On-Farm Emergency Slaughter Service. The total weight of animals slaughtered during the year was 8,293,467kgs, while the total for the same period of last year was 9,040,730kgs. This resulted in a decrease of 8% in weight in relation to 2010. The year 2011 experienced a decrease in the weight of cattle (34%) and swine (3%).

2010:2011 Animal Heads and Slaughter Analysis								
Year	Cattle	Swine	Sheep	Lamb	Goats	Kids	Equines	Total
2010	5,691	85,228	2,822	481	645	11	173	95,051
2011	4,201	83,080	3,088	555	831	48	76	91,879
% Change	-26.18	-2.45	+9.43	+15..38	+28.8	+336.36	-56.07	-3.34

Animal Weight (kg) Slaughter Analysis								
Year	Cattle	Swine	Sheep	Lamb	Goats	Kids	Equines	Total
2010	1,422,421	7,510,956	65,008	2,660	8,802	57	30,826	9,040,730
2011	944,102	7,260,569	61,798	3,094	10,537	321	1,046	8,293,467
% Change	-33.63	-3.33	-4.94	+16.32	+19.71	+463.16	-57.68	-8.27

Swine Analysis

The market demand for local pork during the year shows a downward trend, with the number of slaughtered heads being 2.52% lower than that for 2010. Similarly the weight experienced a reduction from 7,511 M.tons to 7,261 M.tons. The percentage grade/quality of the meat – is mostly A1 and A2.

Importation of pork stood at about 1,436.4 Metric tons, from January till September 2011.

The average carcass weight was equivalent to 87.3kgs. Production amounted to 7,303.3 M.tons, which is equivalent to about €11.40 million.

		% in Weight by Class				
		%	%	%	%	%
Quantity	Weight	A1	A2	A3	B	C
83,667	7,303,349kg	70.3	9.6	6	3.9	10.3

Pork Slaughter 2010-2011							
Year	Abattoir	Weight	Gozo	Weight	Total	T/Weight	Value/Lm/€
2010	85,228	7,510,956	0	0	85,228	7,510,956	€12.74M
2011	83,140	7,260,569	527	42,780	83,667	7,303,349	€11.4M

Capital Projects at the Civil Abattoir

Within the Civil Abattoir during 2011, continuous efforts were diverted to various projects that aim at ensuring an ameliorated quality product and increase in controls on hygiene.

The tender for the modernisation of the six chillers at the Civil Abattoir was adjudicated, and the manufacturing works of the equipment started, in order for the equipment to be installed on site. Project planning was completed and split into two phases. This installation is expected within a number of months and a parallel plan for the continuation of the slaughter without interruptions during ongoing installation works was set up. With the new refrigeration plant system, the meat will reach the desirable temperature range within a shorter span of time and the new system will also cater for a controlled temperature within the meat dispatch area. Works are scheduled to start during January 2012.

During the year, the new system for On-Farm Emergency Service was inaugurated in order for animals that have been injured to be slaughtered on-farm. Previously, injured animals had to be transported to the Emergency slaughterline within the Civil Abattoir with a lot of stress being placed on the animal which created concerns with regard to animal welfare. This investment offers an emergency service where two trucks which are fully equipped to function as a mobile abattoir visit the farm where the injured animals are located and these animals are slaughtered on-site in a hygienic way. At the same time, the Emergency slaughterline at the Civil Abattoir was closed down.

The policies drafted during 2010 and the code of practice for the middlemen, transport and distributors have been fully implemented throughout 2011. New arrangements have been made with the middlemen and cooperatives that increase the utilisation of the cutting and deboning plant, for the cutting, deboning and vacuum packing of the meat before it is dispatched from the Civil Abattoir, which process has increased the marketing presentation and hygiene of the meat.

The meat traceability system at the Civil Abattoir was further developed whereby at the lairages and at the slaughterline all information related to the animals being slaughtered is registered, so that from the reports

issued after the slaughter and on the labels affixed to the carcasses, one can immediately identify the animals slaughtered, the livestock establishment from where the animal was reared, and the final place of destination. This system builds on the previously existing system, with the addition that Food Chain Information is also being recorded electronically. Test runs were also carried out, in order for this system to be extended into the cutting and deboning plant during 2012.

Preparatory arrangements were carried out during 2011 in connection with a number of projects that are planned for 2012, among them:

- modernisation of the sewer system within the two slaughter lines at the Civil Abattoir;
- construction of a new filtration sump with increased capacity;
- works in relation to the of the old water reservoir which requires repair or demolition in view of its dangerous state;
- construction of three new change facilities and canteens for each controlled area within the Civil Abattoir.

European Fisheries Fund 2007 – 2013

The objectives of the European Fisheries Fund are to achieve a sustainable balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities, to consolidate and improve the current infrastructure servicing the fisheries industry, to improve the competitiveness of the fisheries industry, aquaculture and processing establishments. During 2011, about €1.5 million were utilised from the EFF Operational Programme sustainably and efficiently. These funds are 75% co-funded by the European Union and 25% co-funded from Maltese Funds.

Priority Axis I

Permanent Cessation Scheme - The permanent cessation scheme is aimed to finance the permanent cessation of fishing activities of those fishing vessels that are currently actively involved in the actual take-up of wild fish stocks in order to reduce the number of fishing vessels from the Maltese Fishing Vessel Register. The permanent cessation of fishing activities of a fishing vessel may be achieved only by scrapping the vessel, reassignment under the flag of a Member State, and registered in the Community for activities outside fishing activities or by the reassignment of the vessel for the purpose of the creation of artificial reefs. During 2011, the first permanent cessation scheme was concluded, accumulating a total of €1.1million. During the same year, another call for the permanent cessation scheme was published and concluded. To enlighten the details of the scheme and assisting fishers filling application forms, several one-to-one meetings with fishers were held. In total, the two schemes demolished 15 fishing vessels and removed their permanent fishing licences from the fishing fleet vessel register. By implementing this scheme, Malta is achieving the European Union objectives to reduce the fishing capacity. The scheme resulted in reducing the fishing capacity by 238 gross tonnage.

Investment on Board Fishing Vessels and Selectivity - The measure is intended specifically to improve the existing fishing fleet through modernisation and will be managed in such a way that the fishing capacity does not exceed the tonnage and power of the existing fishing fleet. This could be reached through improvements of safety on board, working conditions on board, enhance hygiene, improve product quality, improve energy efficiency and increase selectivity of fishing gear provided that these do not increase the ability of the vessel to catch fish. During 2011, the investment on board fishing vessels and selectivity scheme was being implemented. Fishing vessel owners procured and installed the approved equipment, and submitted most of the necessary documents to the relevant authorities for further processing. The items procured were inspected by WMF officials and Fisheries Protection Officers and payments were effected according to the inspection done. By 2011, about €41,000, co-funded by the European Union and the Maltese Government, were granted to fishermen.

Socio Economic Compensation - Training courses for fishermen commenced during December 2010 and were concluded in the second quarter of 2011. More than 750 full time and part-time fishermen successfully completed the training courses. The fishermen were trained in sea survival techniques, first -

aid, fire-fighting and prevention, basic health and safety, diversification and gender equality. The tender for training courses amounted to about €224,400, which were paid during the last quarter of 2011.

Priority Axis 2

Processing and Marketing Scheme - The scheme is aimed to give support to a number of processing facilities within the fisheries sector. Investment concerns capital projects in the construction, extension, procurement and modernising processing equipment of fish products which involve fish handling, fish treatment, storage and distribution between the time of landing or harvesting, and the end product stage but not at retail stage.

During the first quarter of 2011, two final beneficiaries signed the contractual agreements and started to implement the projects proposed. On-the-spot checks to verify works carried out were held and, by the end of 2011, about €180,000 EFF and Malta funds were granted to the final beneficiaries.

Investment in Aquaculture and Aqua Environmental Measures - An aquaculture and aqua environmental scheme was drafted and sent to the Managing Authority for approval. The general objective of this measure is aimed to improve the aquaculture production methods, competitiveness, reduce the negative impact of aquaculture on the environment.

Priority Axis 3

Service Pillars at Xatt is-Sajjieda Marsaxlokk - During 2011, the Wholesale Markets and Fishing Facilities Directorate procured, installed and commissioned a set of service pillars at Xatt is-Sajjieda, Marsaxlokk costing €45,000.

New Fish Market - During the year, the MEPA approval for the fish market was issued. A turnkey project for the fish market works amounting to about €3 million was published internationally.

FISH MARKET AND FISH MARKETING SCHEME

The Maltese fleet landed about 70 species, with the total annual landings (TAL) reaching approximately 1,183 tonnes. Dolphin fish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) landings reached 194 tonnes, equivalent to about 16% of the TAL, and were mostly derived from the Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) fishery operating between August and December. The swordfish surface longline fisheries contributed to about 26% of the TAL.

The landings of Frigate mackerel increased very sharply in 2011 to represent 22% of the TAL. The contribution to the TAL of Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) landings continued to drop, reaching 7% from 10% in 2010. Landings of Bluefin tuna amounted to approximately 81 tonnes (gilled and gutted) in 2011.

In general, the seasonality and fishing patterns during 2011 remained the same as in previous years, with no indication of an increase in fishing effort in any fishery. The catch of bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) by all vessels reached approximately 142 tonnes (round weight). This figure is within the limit of the catch allocation set for Malta by ICCAT, which lays down the multi-annual management regimes for this species.

Landings by Species			
Maltese	English Name	Quantity (kg)	Value (€)
<i>Accola</i>	Amberjack	4,298	30,798
<i>Aljotta</i>	Mixed fish	2,702	7,288
<i>Alonga</i>	Albacore	10,161	29,225
<i>Arznell</i>	Picarel	15	23
<i>Awrat</i>	Gilthead Bream	24	162
<i>Awwista</i>	Crayfish	355	5,451
<i>Bażuk</i>	Blue-Spotted Bream	4,137	53,855

<i>Boll</i>	Common Sting Ray	176	556
<i>Čawl</i>	Damsel Fish	112	83
<i>Černa</i>	Grouper	249	2,749
<i>Červjol</i>	Amberjack juv.	1,114	4,081
<i>Čippullazz</i>	Large Scale Scorpion Fish	11,590	138,933
<i>Čkala</i>	Med. Locust Lobster	1,109	10,940
<i>Denči</i>	Dentex	2,599	31,777
<i>Dott</i>	Stone Bass	9,427	92,745
<i>Fanfri</i>	Pilot Fish	16,340	71,436
<i>Gallini</i>	Gurnard	3,562	22,227
<i>Gambli</i>	Shrimps/Prawns	41,796	742,844
<i>Gattarelli</i>	Small Spotted Dog Fish	3,322	40,212
<i>Gringijiet</i>	Conger	1,111	3,330
<i>Ġurdien</i>	Thresher Shark	353	1,113
<i>Ħamiema</i>	White Skate	10	25
<i>Ħanzir</i>	Wreckfish	4,079	25,899
<i>Ħut iehor</i>	Other species	10,889	82,217
<i>Ħuta Kahla</i>	Blue Shark	2,922	6,356
<i>Imrejjen</i>	Moray Eels	109	179
<i>Kahli</i>	Saddled Bream	2,574	15,403
<i>Kavalli</i>	Mackerel	260,058	151,853
<i>Klamari</i>	Squid	4,481	38,446
<i>Kubrit</i>	Little Tunny	3,042	8,225
<i>Laċċi</i>	Allice Shad	13,759	18,388
<i>Lampuki</i>	Dolphin Fish	193,963	572,138
<i>Lipp</i>	Ling	2,530	14,999
<i>Lizz</i>	Barracuda	1,891	9,418
<i>Makku</i>	Pellucid Sole	526	3,183
<i>Mazzola</i>	Dog Fish	26,977	70,553
<i>Merluzz</i>	Hake	9,987	53,483
<i>Mulett</i>	Grey Mullet	1,534	2,791
<i>Munqara</i>	Picarel	31	57
<i>Muruna</i>	Six-Gilled Shark	5,352	16,798
<i>P. San Pietru</i>	John Dory	4,297	42,759
<i>Paġell</i>	Pandora	3,622	25,435
<i>Pagri</i>	Common Sea Bream	8,978	126,390
<i>Pastardella</i>	Spear-Fish	4,484	31,459
<i>Petrici</i>	Angler Fish	3,396	18,618
<i>Pixxiplamtu</i>	Porbeagle Shark	1,141	4,804
<i>Pixxispad</i>	Swordfish	306,562	2,132,538
<i>Plamti</i>	Atlantic Bonito	16,921	123,599
<i>Qarnit</i>	Octopus	17,027	87,209
<i>Qtates</i>	Spotted Dog Fish	1,536	6,652
<i>Raj</i>	Skate	10,506	30,231
<i>Rebekkini</i>	Long Nose Skate	933	1,618
<i>Sargi</i>	White Bream	2,606	24,996
<i>Sawrell</i>	Horse Mackerel	5,267	15,781
<i>Serran</i>	Comber	2,048	6,776
<i>Siċċ</i>	Cuttle Fish	14,274	68,686
<i>Skorfon</i>	Scorpion Fish	6,662	46,425
<i>Spnott</i>	European Sea Bass	716	3,609
<i>Tonn*</i>	Blue Fin Tuna	81,207	617,317
<i>Totli</i>	Squid	1,089	5,331
<i>Traċni</i>	Spotted Weaver	671	3,583
<i>Trill</i>	Red Mullett	3,267	25,561
<i>Tumbrelli</i>	Frigate Mackerel	1,898	2,701
<i>Vopi</i>	Bogue	22,926	59,157
<i>Xilep</i>	Salema	230	707
<i>Xwabel</i>	Scabbardfish	1,172	2,627
<i>Žaġħrun</i>	Rough Shark	35	126
Total		1,182,737	5,894,934

*These figures refer to gilled and gutted BFT.

FISHING FLEET FACILITIES

Within 2011, the facility in Marsaxlokk was utilised by 122 fishing vessels. This facility offered dry standing services equivalent to 2,761 dry standing days. On average, each vessel spent some 22 days of dry standing where maintenance operations could be carried out in order that the fishermen could prepare for their fishing seasons. Whilst this facility offered services that are essential to the fishing community, it also generated funds totalling to €97,715, and it operated in a self-sustainable manner without any need of government subvention required for its operations.

A number of projects were started in the hardstanding facility in Marsaxlokk. These include the new alignments for the quays, in order for the existing slipway to be utilised by the 50-ton traveller's hoist crane, without the need of going into the sea. This project ensures that the crane operates in a safe manner and it also prevents corrosion due to exposure of saline conditions. The works included demolition of the slipway, narrowing of the slipway and formation reinforced concrete platform, complete with a drain system and an oil separator. The platforms supporting the crane were also widened via the use of concrete piles. Additional works include the installation of a rain water drain system. The rain system was upgraded via the installation of new pipes and a manhole system. These works are being carried out by the Marine and Storm Water Unit and partly by a sub-contracted party. The works comprise an investment of €157,000.

A number of preparations were also made for the development of fishing fleet facilities in Marsaxlokk. The preparations of the designs and submission to MEPA were carried out for the Delimara breakwater arm, the construction of a new breakwater at the Ponta tal-Qrejten in Marsaxlokk, and the construction of a new channel adjoining the areas know as il-Maghluq and the Marsaxlokk bay. A MEPA development application was also submitted in view of the landing facility in Marsaxlokk which includes reclamation of sea area on reinforced concrete piles. The permit for the new hardstanding facility at the Ponta' tal-Qrejten was also issued by the MEPA.

During 2011, several inspections were held on a number of slipways, which include the slipway in Mistra and the slipway in Tal-Veċċja in St Paul's Bay. A number of other slipways were also inspected in various localities including Marfa, Birżebbuġa, and Marsaxlokk and in Għajn Żejtuna. Ongoing works also include repairs carried out by the Marine and Storm Water Unit, MRRA on a set of two slipways in Qawra and the preparation of a tender for the archaeological monitoring and evaluation at the same site. The main maintenance works carried out on slipways in 2011 include the replacement of wooden sleepers found at slipways across various localities in Malta and Gozo.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Occupational Risk Assessment/s are updated as necessary as per Act 27 of 2002, Legal Notices 36 of 2003 and other subsequent OH&S legislation. Control measures listed in these ORA are, where possible, duly implemented.
- OH&S ongoing advice to employees
- More fixing at strategic places of OH&S signs as per LN 45 of 2002
- Training of a First Aider as per LN 11 of 2002
- Election of Health & Safety Representatives as per LN 36 of 2003
- OH&S training to employees

As all workstations within the WMFFF have a multitude and variety of occupations ranging from high risk abattoirs, laboratory, maintenance people (boilers, hoists, electricians, fitters, etc), farmers, field workers, middlemen, laboratory workers and office workers, OH&S is an ongoing process. Other 'outstations' within the Directorate are also being taken into account such as the Marsaxlokk hard standing premises. The OHS legal responsibilities were explained to personnel concerned, especially the requirement of an adequate Occupational Risk Assessment. Information and a fill-in ORA template was explained and forwarded to employees concerned in order to initiate the process of risk assessment. The same exercise was carried out with the security personnel situated within the WMFFF premises.

Continuous systematic and random walk-around inspections (including enforcing the use of personal protective equipment) at various workstations are done on a daily basis within the Civil Abattoir, and also other outpost workstations falling within the WMFFF.

During these inspections the various and diverse health and safety shortcomings are discussed on site with the responsible personnel, and where possible, immediate and appropriate control measures are taken, in discussion with the management.

FRUIT & VEGETABLE MARKET (PITKALI)

During January a new arrangement with WasteServ was implemented for the provision and service of three daily open skips to allow for separation of all residues at the Pitkali Markets. All this was agreed to be free of charge.

During 2011, a project for the upgrading of the Pitkali Markets was finalised. A pilot project in the FCCS sheds, which includes the refurbishment of the sheds and restructuring of their roofs, was also launched. This involves various paint and electrical works and the laying of part of the floor with concrete and Apoxil. An agreement was also reached for the installation of a cold room. All these works are to be finalised by the beginning of 2012.

Various meetings were held with MEPA for the upgrading of the Pitkali Markets. Site plans by MRRA architects were forwarded.

The management at the Pitkali Markets, in liaison with the Ministry, announced that a new company would be running the Pitkali Markets in future, taking care of administration and coordination of the Ta' Qali fruit and vegetable market.

Work was carried out on a new IT system to ensure transparency and traceability in the transactions related to outgoing and incoming local fresh produce and the grading of all the fruit and vegetables brought at the Pitkali by farmers. The system includes updated data immediately available to farmers about their produce brought in the Pitkali, with all details which include values and volume.

The Government took action and assumed responsibility for the washing and proper cleansing of crates and also the replacement of broken ones. During the year, the Pitkali administration purchased 43,000 crates. The stores and garage for the storage and cleansing of crates were also refurbished. A washing machine from the Civil Abattoir was brought and installed at the Pitkali Crates' garage.

A tender for the construction and finishing of a civic amenity site at the Pitkali Markets was issued by WasteServ Malta. The tender was adjudicated and the works are due to start during the first quarter of 2012. The project will ensure proper waste management at the Pitkali Market and is one of the most important projects for the Pitkali Market.

During 2011, the Ministry opened applications for three new farmers' markets, two in Malta (one in the South and one in the North) and another one in Gozo. 90 farmers showed interest in submitting the relevant application for the two markets in Malta. It was agreed that the farmers market in Gozo is to open by January 2012; in fact, 45 farmers have a permit to sell their produce in Victoria, Gozo.

An agreement was also reached with Gomriza for an allocation in the Pitkali Market grounds for the members of said producer organisation. This will enable Gomriza members to sell their produce within the Pitkali Market grounds. After meetings with Gomriza regarding this allocation, site plans were finalised and submitted to MEPA.

During 2011, the refurbishment of all administration offices at the Pitkali Markets was finalised.

Total Value (€) and weight (kg) of agricultural products negotiated by the private Pitkali, Cooperatives and the Ta' Qali PG

Pitkali		Co-op Stalls		Ta' Qali PG		Total (€)	
<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
14,733,310	14,496,746	5,071,033	4,762,527	365,476	241,302	20,169,819	19,500,575

Pitkali		Co-op Stalls		Ta' Qali PG		Total (€)	
<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
33,529,872	35,614,109	9,766,908	9,959,745	1,302,971	892,036	44,599,751	46,465,890

JOSEPH VELLA

Director (Animal Welfare, Promotion, and Services)

Rural Development and Aquaculture Department Parks and Initiatives Directorate

INTRODUCTION

During the year under review, PARK sought to consolidate its governance on areas of responsibility entrusted to it, whilst embarking on new projects which were either completed during 2011, or shall be completed during the current year.

2011 brought with it new challenges. The ever-increasing footprint of recreational areas assigned to PARK, whilst getting the best value for money for the capital and recurrent outlay engaged, proved to be a major challenge. The financial and human resources engaged in the consolidation of the existing areas of responsibilities, whilst embarking on new projects, were retained within budgetary provisions. Indeed in most cases, the resources employed were on the same level as those in 2010, if not less.

The completion of the Xrobb L-Ghagin Nature and Sustainability Park in Delimara, the initiation of the new Petting Farm at Ta' Qali National Park, and the consolidation of the Ta' Qali BOV Adventure Park, were the major capital projects undertaken during 2011.

The recurrent expenditure in 2011 focused mainly on the upkeep, operations and maintenance of areas falling within PARK's portfolio. These areas included among others: the Ta' Qali and the Salina National Parks, Buskett, the BOV Adventure Park, the San Frangisk Animal Welfare Centre, and a number of smaller new recreational areas across the Maltese Islands.

Together with the above, PARK is responsible also for a number of initiatives, mainly environmental, including: the 34U Campaign, the Red Palm Weevil Control Programme, and the Environment Awareness Programme.

Ta' Qali National Park

The Formal Garden entrance to the Park was planted with annual plants according to the season so as to have colour without obstructing the setting. Following the removal of palm trees in May 2010 from the formal entrance planters, a new planting scheme was drawn up for the six planters at the entrance. The formal garden's seasonal plants include: Kochia, Vinca, Petunia, Lobelia, Celosia, French marigold and zinnias. A new drip irrigation system was extended to other parts of the park, to cater for the watering needs of most trees, shrubs and flowering plants.

General Maintenance Work

- Tree pruning and grass cutting are regularly carried out in all areas of the Ta'Qali Park namely: the Oak Tree Circle, Picnic Area, the 34U Area, Europa Grove, the Formal Garden Entrance, the Roots Area, the National Stadium area, and all the peripheral roads.
- With the introduction of a mechanical shredder, all pruned branches and other tree trunks felled from various soft areas of the Maltese islands, are transported to Ta' Qali and shredded into mulch, which provides protection to the soil from evaporation especially during the dry season and moisture.
- Drip irrigation systems were extended to other areas of the park, notably those areas where new trees, shrubs or flowering plants are planted.

Ta' Qali Adventure Park

The popularity of this park brought with it the need to have better management of the whole park. Besides a 24x7 security on site, new franka stone paving was installed in those areas most vulnerable to trampling. Fencing-off of planted areas was also carried out due to the extent of damage incurred especially after weekends. To reduce the inflow of visitors from the adjacent picnic area, a chain link fence was set up to block access.

A new play area, designed primarily for children with special needs, was set up. The accessible play equipment installed on this site, besides catering for all capabilities, provides also for children with special needs, facilitating inclusivity.

Salina National Park

During 2011, the area adjacent to the Salina National Park, now considered to be part of the Park itself, received new trees. This areas covers circa 15,000m².

A new water pump, with all the relative fittings, was installed at the newly built pump room fields. The pump will supply all the main distribution pipes and drip irrigation system around the fields. It also serves for pumping up water from the existing well (*spiera*) and filling of the small reservoir adjacent to the pump room. It is estimated that in just a quarter of an hour 10,000 litres of second class water is pumped up, topping up the reservoir. It is also estimated that the same amount of water can be delivered via the drip irrigation system to circa 1,200 trees in just a half an hour.

The integration of this new extension to the Salina Park and Kennedy Grove totals 85,000 sq.m², making it one whole park: The upper part of the Salina Park incorporates a naturally turfed area with an open fountain served with a cafeteria, an artificial water course and over 12,000 trees and shrubs. A new wooden footpath was installed, linking the upper part of the Salina Park with the lower Kennedy Grove.

The external wall of an existing reservoir was reconstructed and filled up with second class water, which is used for irrigation.

Xrobb I-Ghagin Nature and Sustainability Park

Works on the ex-Deutche Welle building continued into the first quarter 2011. The Nature and Sustainability Park was completed and officially inaugurated on 8 April 2011. The Park will provide amongst others: a research area and laboratories, and will host students studying on the marine environment. The project was financed by the Norwegian Fund and was carried out in collaboration with Nature Trust, who will ultimately manage this initiative.

As its name implies, the Park focuses on the fostering of the natural environment and sustainable development amongst the younger, but not only, generation. The Centre, in fact, generates its own power by means of wind turbines and photovoltaic panels, heats its water via solar panels and recycles its own sewage via a sewage treatment plant installed within an existing large reservoir within the precincts of the Park.

The 'boarding' block of the Park is composed of two levels. Dormitories with adjacent bathrooms on the upper level and a dining room cum kitchen and a large terrace overlooking the Xrobb L-Ghagin panoramic cliffs on the lower level .

The Administration block houses: offices, a kitchenette, classes, a playing room, the main hall, store room, a small common room, and toilet facilities.

A contained team of PARK personnel are deployed on site to maintain the extensive landscaped surrounding the building.

Buskett

Repair and rehabilitation works at Buskett continued into 2011.

Most rubble walls, damaged due to various reasons, were dismantled and reconstructed or repaired.

In parallel, an application was submitted to MEPA for a proposal for restoration and conservation of *Ir-Razzett tal-Ghorof*, existing public toilets, rubble walls and water culverts.

Pruning of undergrowth in upper valley was conducted in consultation with the Buskett Hydrological Assessment.

There was also the cutting and removal of overgrown bramble/undergrowth exposing water passage in the valley. This task was required to carry necessary water samples in relation to the hydrological report in connection with the Buskett Master Plan application, being carried out by PARK and MRA.

Construction of Girna at Verdala Palace

Work consisted in the excavation of soil to form a 5m diameter by 0.23m deep platform, laying of steel reinforcement, and pouring of concrete to form above mentioned platform. Works included also the laying of tilted wall 1.00m wide, forming the internal and external walls of a *Girna*. All this work was carried out by three men.

Petting Farm

In concept, the Petting Farm shall provide the opportunity for the younger generation to enjoy and indeed interact with traditional farm animals. Unfortunately, this opportunity is not easy to come by nowadays, so the Petting Farm shall fill in this gap.

Physically, the Petting Farm shall consist of a main farm building which will house among others; sheep, goats, horses, ponies, and donkeys. A separate building within the premises shall be dedicated for rabbits; the Rabbit Zoo shall house different species of rabbits which shall be on display for the enjoyment of all. Yet another separate building shall be the aviary. The aviary shall house a variety of avian species and will provide a spectacle of colour and sound. The Petting Farm shall be complemented by a pond, and all the facilities one expects to find in similar surroundings.

Initial site survey works commenced by end April, with random site investigations regarding formation of underground rock material. Following geological results and amendments to layout plans accordingly, excavation works commenced in June. The approximate area excavated measures 20mx20mx3m deep, thus amounting to a total volume of 1,200m³. Other excavation works included foundation works along the main perimeter wall of the Petting Farm, measuring approximately 150m in length by 2m wide, with a varying depth ranging from 0.5m to 3m.

Actual construction works commenced during the first week of September. Both basement and perimeter walls were constructed in parallel and completed by early October/November. Whilst these works were ongoing, excavation works were initiated on the construction of a water reservoir measuring 18mx18mx3m deep, situated beneath the 'Rabbit Zoo' building. Both the Rabbit Zoo building and the reservoir were completed by mid-November.

Concurrently, the main farm building started to take shape whilst excavation works on the site of the proposed 'Water Pond' were also initiated. Construction works on the pond were completed by end November.

By the last week of December, the main farm building was completed and works were focused on the construction of a ramp leading to the basement level underneath the main farm. The ramp was, in fact, completed by end December. The Petting Farm is expected to be completed during the first quarter of 2012.

Initiatives

Red Palm Weevil Control Programme

In a continuous effort to control this disease, about 260 infected palm trees were felled by the PARK during 2011. Palm trees were felled from both public and private premises.

The Red Palm Weevil Control programme at Ta' Qali National Park is managed through an integrated approach, including drenching of palm trees with pesticide (*Imidacloprid* and *Dimethoate* products used in 2011), pheromone trapping, and endotherapy treatment. Both endotherapy treatments and drenching treatments were carried out in 2011, with a total of 862 treatments being carried out till December 2011.

The PARK and Initiatives Department is taking part in the National Red Palm Weevil Control Scheme organised by the Plant Health Directorate. A total of 47 traps were set up at the Ta' Qali National Park in October/November 2011. The traps were placed in areas within the park away from palm trees not to attract the infective insect towards the palm trees. The pheromone traps were placed on high unreachable places due to the presence of children in the Park, such as on workshop roofs or hung on high tree branches (other than palm species) such as pine trees. Traps were also set up in Buskett (seven traps), Salina (five traps), Xrobb l-Għaġin (five traps) and Ta' Kandja Police HQ (six traps), totalling to 70 traps. The traps are being monitored by PARK personnel. The following table shows the total number of weevils trapped in November and December.

Site	Traps	Weevils trapped in November	Weevils trapped in December
Ta' Qali Park/Adventure Park	47	42	68
Buskett	7	49	37
Salina	5	18	10
Xrobb l-Għaġin	5	N/A	2
Ta' Kandja Police HQ	6	N/A	12

The traps are monitored on a monthly basis, and the number of Red Palm weevils caught in each trap is communicated to Plant Health Directorate.

34U Campaign

The success of the 34U Campaign, now in its seventh year, was consolidated during 2011. In total, 1,875 different species of trees were planted under this scheme by individuals and private companies. 1,000 trees sponsored by a private company were planted at Dar Fra Jacobe in Marsascala, whilst another 1,000 trees, this time sponsored by a foreign travel agency, were planted in the environs of the Xghajra Water Treatment Plant.

The main planting events for 2011 included: the January tree planting at the Salini National Park, the Mother's Day tree planting event held in Selmun together with the Farmers' Market, the planting event at Dar Fra Jacobe mentioned earlier, and the donation of 1,000 trees by St Aloysius College towards the 34U Campaign, the latter to be planted during 2012.

The 34U team at PARK participated also in various local TV and radio programmes, as well as put up stands at the now popular local *festas*, promoting the various local products, such as the Milkfest held in Gharghur, *Festa tal-Majjal* held in Siggiewi, the Fishfest in St Paul's Bay, and others.

A 34U facebook page, which is regularly updated, was also introduced.

Drum Collection

More than 22,700kgs of material was collected from various sites including Ta' Qali, Żebbuġ, M'Scala, Siggiewi, Imqabba, Xghajra and Chadwick Lakes. Material collected was transported to be shredded and exported as recycled steel.

Centru San Frangisk

A contained team of employees was deployed at this centre to maintain the surrounding soft areas. The green areas at the Animal Care Centre are all being managed by PARK including irrigation, planting, lawn mowing, and application of fertiliser and pesticides when necessary.

Belt is-Sebh Planting

During the year under review, PARK Directorate consolidated the maintenance programme initiated in 2010 for the upkeep of the planters surrounding the MRRA buildings at Belt is-Sebh. Gardening works included pruning of established trees, application of organic fertiliser to various planters, rotovation and fitting of a drip irrigation system where necessary, planting of annuals and perennial shrubs, and weeding.

Environment Awareness

During 2011, the PARK Directorate continued its environment awareness programme to encourage the general public, especially the younger generation, to better appreciate the importance of indigenous trees.

During October, ARBOR committee in collaboration with the PARK Directorate, launched an effort to have local councils set up their own indigenous tree nursery.

Every local council was contacted, appointments made and meetings held to explain a simple low cost initiative aimed at growing Malta's national tree – Gharghar. To this end, a quantity of seeds was collected. Makeshift 'greenhouses' were made from agricultural product crates and sheets of polythene. Planting 'kits' were then distributed to interested local councils.

A small project aimed at having students utilise a greenhouse to grow a number of indigenous trees was launched. A pilot project was launched at the Wardija School. PARK personnel installed a drip irrigation system to an existing greenhouse, and set a planting area on the school grounds. PARK provided soil and a number of indigenous trees which were later planted on this area within the school grounds.

Centre for Environment Education and Research (CEER)

The Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs has, for some years, been collaborating with the University of Malta to establish a Centre for Environment Education and Research (CEER).

The aim of the CEER is to catalyse change towards a sustainable society by providing opportunities for environmental education that empower citizens, irrespective of age, gender and socio-economic status, to actively participate in environmental decision making fora and in initiatives that promote a good quality of life.

The Centre, housed at a former primary school in Fawwara, has undergone extensive structural and finishing works. Works are now completed, the compliance certificate was issued by MEPA, and handing over of the project to the University of Malta is imminent.

Gharghur

The widening of the road from St Catherine street to the Gharghur fire works factory, took place. Works included the excavation of soil and material for foundations, uprooting and pruning of trees up to the new alignment, dismantling of the existing rubble walls, and construction and backfilling with material of a new boundary rubble wall.

At the end of the road, opposite the fireworks factory entrance, an open space for parking was levelled with material and a retaining wall 15mx6crs. high, was constructed with franka stones and clad with 0.6m width rubble wall. Adjacent to this wall, a stairs was constructed to provide access from the parking to the factory. Six wooden red deal gates were manufactured and fixed on site.

HERMAN GALEA

Director (Parks and Initiatives)

Rural Development and Aquaculture Department

Malta Aquaculture Research Centre

During 2011, MAR continued its commitments to aquaculture research projects. The preparation of an Aquaculture Strategy for Malta was given priority as MAR coordinated and advised on various issues within this strategy. Upgrading and developments to the marine hatchery were also carried out so as to increase the potential of the Centre for research.

AQUACULTURE RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Amberjack Project was extended for another five years in June 2011, and the marine hatchery was running for 10 months of the year. Apart from producing two sea bream cycles, a number of sea bass fingerlings was produced with great improvements, whereas for the first time in Malta's aquaculture history, a cycle of White Sea bream was carried out, producing a small number of fingerlings. Groupers and meagre that are reared at MAR were still too young to show signs of maturity. As from late May/June, the hatchery was used for the Amberjack Project followed by the SELFDOTT Blue-fin tuna project.

Amberjack Project

During the fifth year of a five-year Amberjack Joint Venture contract with MFF Ltd, fertilised eggs were successfully obtained from the amberjack broodstock. The techniques developed for egg collection were improved, and a different type of induction carrier system was used in collaboration with the University of Düsseldorf. More experience was gained in this area of research. No improvements were made in the number of juveniles produced, however the results of this season have clarified the direction in which the Centre should proceed for more success in 2012.

EU Selfdott Tuna Project

2011 marked the final year after an extension of the Selfdott Project. During this final extended year of the project, Malta once again successfully obtained fertilised eggs from Blue-fin tuna and managed to culture one Blue-fin tuna juvenile until it was 55 days old, which is a significant improvement over 2010 when the last survivor disappeared after 15 days post-hatch.

Data loggers for water temperature and light sensitivity were placed around the spawning cage for data collection in collaboration with the University of Düsseldorf (UNIDUS), and representatives from the Israel Oceanographic and Limnological Research/National Centre for Mariculture (IOLR/NCM) and from UNIDUS were in Malta during the spawning period to assist in the induction procedures and egg collection. Egg samples for genetic analyses were collected for analyses at UNIDUS and a student from UNIDUS was present to investigate the effect of co-feeding rotifers and copepods to larvae of Blue-fin tuna.

Fish Vaccine Testing

Vaccine testing continued in the second year of a five-year contract with Intervet UK Production Ltd (previously known as Schering Plough Aquaculture Ltd). The testing involved 11 safety tests for vaccines to be used for sea bream on commercial farms.

Water Quality Monitoring

The water quality monitoring programme for P2M Ltd was carried out according to the service agreement for 2011. The methodology of the analysis was agreed with P2M Ltd as documented and approved by MEPA.

Turtle Release

MAR participated in the Turtle Release Programme in collaboration with the AFRD Division of MRRA, Nature Trust Malta and MEPA. A total of 15 turtles were rehabilitated and released during 2011, two were released on 26 May from Ġnejna Bay, four were released on 13 July from Xrobb l-Għaġin, six were released on 11 August from Ġnejna Bay, and three were released on 9 December from Xrobb l-Għaġin.

Students

A number of students carried out research or work-practice sessions at MAR during 2011. A student from the University of Dusseldorf was carrying out work related to the SELFDOTT Project, and another student did some research experiments on larval rearing of amberjacks as an internship from the University of La Rochelle in France. Two students reading a BSc from the University of Malta carried out the practical work for their thesis at MAR, carrying out experiments on sea bream rearing. One student from MCAST did a summer work-phase at MAR, whereas two students did some practice for their Systems of Knowledge project. Students were also accepted for 'job shadowing' from St Margaret's College.

Education and Promotion

Guided tours for school children from Year 5 primary grades and secondary grades were held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, whilst the permanent exhibition of aquaria, the sea turtle rehabilitation unit and the marine hatchery opened for viewing by the general public on Saturdays. A total of 1,889 guests were shown around the facilities, mainly consisting of primary school students, followed by foreign students and the general public. MAR set up a stand at the *Festa tal-Ħut* at St Paul's Bay on 17 September 2011.

Aquaculture publicity was featured during the TV Programme *Mad-daqqa t'għajn* where the importance of aquaculture and species diversification was promoted.

POLICY AND OTHER INITIATIVES

Aquaculture Strategy

During the year MAR coordinated the preparation of the Aquaculture Strategy for Malta. This was done in collaboration with the aquaculture experts from Stirling University in Scotland, who were the contracted experts resulting from a tender call. The Aquaculture Strategy Final Draft was received by the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs in October 2011. Plans are underway to issue this strategy for public consultation in 2012, in parallel with a Strategic Environment Assessment.

Proposals

During 2011, MAR subcontracted a specialist company to carry out an Alternative Site Assessment for the location of a Bluefin tuna Spawning Facility and Marine Hatchery.

MRRA also continued work on Malta's intention to attract a future Regional Advisory Committee body to Malta. MRRA, in consultation with MAR, issued a call for the preparation of such a proposal, which should be concluded in 2012.

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

- Attended SELFDOTT Annual Meeting at the University of Montpellier Montpellier, France - 1 to 5 February.
- Visited IEO facilities in Cartagena, Spain, to see blue-fin tuna larval fingerling rearing. Visited cage site for early morning egg collection. Meeting with Spanish scientists at IEO from 14 to 16 July.
- European Aquaculture Society Conference in Rhodes, Greece - 17 to 21 October.
- Selfdott Project Final Meeting in Rhodes, Greece - 22 to 23 October.
- Blue-fin Tuna Stakeholders Meeting in Madrid, Spain – 2 to 4 November.

LECTURES/INFORMATIVE TALKS

- Lecture *The Tropical Reef Aquarium* at the Malta Aquarist Society - 30 January.
- Lecture on *Broodstock Management for Marine Fish* at Fished out Conference organised by *Din L-Art Helwa* – 25 March.
- Panel for EU Framework Projects – Selfdott at Malta Council for Science and Technology Forum – 26 July.
- Lecture *Broodstock Management* for German University students – 10 October.

PUBLICATIONS

Seven presentations related to the Selfdott Project on Blue-fin tuna were presented in the European Aquaculture Society Conference. One poster entitled ‘The effect of broodstock diets on growth and chemical components of gonads of Atlantic Bluefin tuna *Thunnus thynnus* (L.) reared in cages’ was presented with Malta as the main author. Another publication was published in Food and Nutrition Sciences and in Animal Reproduction Science.

MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP OF FORT SAN LUCJAN

Various works were carried out for Maintenance and upkeep of Fort San Luċjan during 2011. These included the upgrading of Larval Room and Rotifer Room within the Marine Hatchery with an increase in tank capacity, refurbishing and upgrade of Arena section, refurbishing of laboratories, removal and replacement of main drainpipe system of Broodstock section, maintenance of filter system, repair and maintenance of blowers and pumps.

DR ROBERT VASSALLO-AGIUS

Deputising Head (Aquaculture Research)

Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation Department Veterinary Regulations Directorate

The Veterinary Regulation Directorate comprises the Animal Health and Welfare Unit (AHWU), the Safety of the Food Chain Unit (SFCU) and the National Veterinary Lab. The AHWU is responsible for animal health and animal welfare regulation, while the SFCU is responsible for veterinary public health. Veterinary medicines and animal feeding stuffs fall under the National Veterinary Laboratory Competence in line with the Veterinary Services Act (Cap 437) and Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) for the import controls on food of animal origin and animals are attached to the SFCU. These two Units report to the Director General of AFRD, who is currently the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), as the post of Director of Veterinary Regulation Directorate is currently vacant. Coordination of EU and national legislation fall directly under the responsibility of the CVO. Legal powers are provided in the Food Safety Act and the Veterinary Services Act.

Control activities in the area of animal health, animal welfare, food of animal origin, animal by-products, veterinary medicines, and animal feeding stuffs, takes place through inspections, audits, sampling, monitoring, and analyses. VRD prepares annual plans and sets the inspection frequencies for inspectors. Controls of animal health and zoonoses are performed mainly via monitoring and supplemented by sampling. Monitoring is based on annual disease control programmes which take into account past sampling results and records.

Internal Audits

Internal audits were carried out as part of the series of internal audits carried out by the various Competent Authorities (CAs) making up the Food Safety Commission. The Food Safety Commission is a public entity which is legally required to carry out internal audits on the CAs in terms of Regulation (EC) 882 of 2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules. Within VRD, there are two trained internal auditors. One of them carried out an advance specific training organised by DG SANCO of the European Commission on the set-up and the risk categorisation of areas to be audited.

The working group on internal audits based at the FVO headquarters in Grange was attended by the FSC auditors, one of who works within VRD. An ad hoc document, specifying the general basis for risk assessment, was drafted.

In March the Animal Welfare section of AHWU was audited for three days. The main objective was to go through the inspection procedures undertaken by the personnel of the section and ascertain whether the said procedures were being followed. The auditor verified how animal welfare checks are applied along the food chain and for imported live animals.

The audit outcome was largely positive, as the system was upgraded in accordance with the specific recommendations of the FVO audit mission held previously in the year.

However, to be in line with the requirements of Regulation 882/2004, the Section still has to plan official controls after carrying out a risk evaluation based on the results of the inspections.

In the meantime, in order to be in line with the requirement of Regulation 882/2004, the section was requested to rectify the following shortcomings:

- Ensure that official controls are carried out on a risk basis and with the appropriate frequency as required by Article 3 (1) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004;
- Include this plan in the MANCP;
- Prepare the annual report accordingly;
- Draft a set of standard of procedures to cover the process of these official controls;
- Make sure that all employees receive training in these processes and that training is recorded.

During the year, the section provided the Auditor evidence that the shortcomings were already being addressed.

Internal Training

The Directorate implemented a detailed standard operating procedure that takes care of the requirements that officials have to implement in order to fulfil continual professional education.

A workshop was held in February 2011, with the theme *Border Inspection Legislation and Familiarisation with Imports*, at which two Austrian and German experts delivered the lectures and organised practical sessions. The workshop was attended by several veterinarians, auxiliaries and clerical staff directly involved in the official controls in this important sector and also by staff who may be replacing the existent ones. Since this workshop aimed to prepare personnel for the FVO mission, customs officers were invited to attend the training, in order to enhance collaboration with other competent authorities. This training covered also the topic of personal imports. The workshop was extremely beneficial and FVO very positively commented on the outcomes of this initiative.

External Training

Attendance to various external training sessions organised under the Better Training Initiative of the European Commission were consistent and beneficial for all who attended these initiatives.

Officials attended 35 training sessions on the following topics: Border Inspection Posts, Animal By-Products, Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy; Official Controls on Meat, Fish and Dairy products, Animal Welfare at farm and slaughterhouse, Animal Feed, Fish Health, Zoonosis, Microbiological Criteria, and Internal Audits.

Officials also attended training organised by OIE and conferences organised by other entities, such as the European Food Safety Authority and DG SANCO (EU Veterinary Week)

SAFETY OF THE FOOD CHAIN UNIT

The competent authority for controls on food of animal origin is the VRD, which which the Safety of the Food Chain Unit (SFCU) is responsible for guidance, approval and inspection of all types of establishments for food of animal origin. The ABP section is also part of this Unit.

The VRD has a risk oriented control system in the food sector encompassing all relevant criteria as laid down in Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. Risk based controls have only been implemented in the areas of food of animal origin and food hygiene.

The VRD categorises establishments of food of animal origin into three risk groups (high, medium and low). Each risk group has a standard inspection frequency. The classification and frequency of inspections of premises is described in the Guidelines on Risk Categorisation of Establishments Manufacturing Food of Animal Origin [Multi Annual National Control Programme (MANCP)].

Slaughter Houses

The Malta Civil Abattoir (M001) is a Red Meat Slaughterhouse that in 2011 processed meat of swine, bovine, ovine and caprine species.

The table below shows two types of slaughter:

- Regular slaughter: intended on a basis daily booking;
- Other slaughter: intended as animals collected by an on-farm emergency slaughter system and animals not booked for slaughter. (These were slaughtered in the Emergency Slaughter hall up to March 2011. This slaughter hall was closed down, as it was not in line with regulations, and the on-farm emergency slaughter system was started. A small number of animals of the species being processed on the day, not booked for regular slaughter, are slaughtered at the end of the day if their condition requires immediate slaughter.

The table shows all animals inspected, found fit for human consumption or condemned as unfit for human consumption for both regular and other slaughtering. The table also shows percentages of the condemned carcasses.

Regular Slaughter

No. of Animals	Bovine under 20 months		Bovine over 20 months		Swine			Ovine	Caprine	Equine
	B	C/H	B	C/H	Fatteners	Sows	Boars			
Inspected	2,250	333	113	1,539	81,089	2,189	154	3,786	894	0
Total	4,235				83,432					
Passed	2,245	330	113	1,499	80,871	2,027	150	3,711	876	0
Total fit for HC	4,187				83,048					
Condemned	5	3	0	40	218	162	4	75	18	0
Total	48		1.13%		384	0.46%		1.98%	2.01%	0

Other Slaughter

No. of Animals	Bovine under 20 months		Bovine over 20 months		Fatteners	Sows	Boars	Ovine	Caprine	Equine
Inspected on Emergency	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total Inspected	4				0					
Passed on Emergency	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total fit for HC	2				0					
Condemned on Emergency	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2		50%		0			0	0	0

Some animals were deemed not fit for human consumption at ante mortem inspection. These were put down humanely and sent for destruction without going through the slaughter halls:

BOVINE	SWINE	OVINE CAPRINE	EQUINE	OTHER
100	53	174	105	1

The second section of the table indicates the causes of condemnation for each animal found not fit for human consumption.

Each percentage in this table shows the relevance of the individual causes of condemnation on the total of animals condemned. The cause of major condemnation was multiple abscesses largely encountered during

pig slaughter. The high prevalence was due also to the very large number of swine slaughtered when compared to other species. In bovines, a frequent cause of condemnation was *oedema*.

It is important to notice that also a line for 'Subsidy or Technical Fault' is present and it represents almost 5% of all animal condemned. These animals were rendered unfit for human consumption through technical faults during the slaughter process due to malfunction of machinery or wrong practices by slaughtering butchers. Some claims by commercial butchers of alterations of marketed carcasses are included in this field.

The Gozo Civil *abattoir* at Xewkija industrial estate completed its refurbishment programme and was awarded a conditional approval. During the last weeks of 2011, this abattoir slaughtered bovines and swine for test and trial purposes. The procedures were assessed and the establishment is due for reassessment and full approval in the first quarter of 2012.

Trial Slaughtering in September took place with the slaughter of 10 bulls, five cows and 15 pigs. Regular slaughtering commenced in December and 25 bulls, eight cows, three heifers and 522 pigs were slaughtered up to the end of the year.

Poultry Slaughterhouses Section and annexed cutting plants

The fifth approved slaughterhouse in Gozo currently under refurbishment carried out a trial run but, to date, the slaughtering at this premises has not been reactivated nor approved.

A total of 1,901,742 poultry carcasses were slaughtered and inspected in 2011. The number of chickens arriving dead at the slaughterhouses, which were discarded at ante-mortem, was the following:

	No of Chicken
Slaughterhouse A	715 chickens
Slaughterhouse B	998 chickens
Slaughterhouse C	1,912 chickens
Slaughterhouse D	1,104 chickens

This is a very low percentage (0.25%) and is indicative of improved transport conditions that the OV's have been requesting from the operators. The main action taken was the intervention of the VRD with the transport authorities and the Gozo Ferry operator to improve embarkation procedures for live animals. This is evidence of the continuous commitment of the VRD for improved animal welfare.

A total of 9,759 poultry carcasses were discarded during meat inspection in 2011, compared to the 14,313 discarded the previous year. This is an indication of improved animal husbandry conditions by the breeders during the production cycles.

	2011	% of total animals slaughtered	Major cause
Sl. A	2,482	0.13	Damage/technical fault (27.72%)
Sl. B	2,421	0.12	Malnutrition (24.7%)
Sl. C	2,978	0.16	Damage/technical fault (31.26%)
Sl. D	1,878	0.01	Malnutrition (46.97%)

A total of eight Hazard Analysis Scores (HAS) were carried out for the slaughtering operations and eight for the cutting operations (each establishment was therefore assessed twice). The results obtained show that the establishments performed quite well, being able to guarantee a high degree of hygiene and therefore food safety.

During the general review FVO mission, inspectors assessed the implementation of the recommendations that had been agreed with the Directorate, in order to improve the controls on Salmonella. As a result, a number of positive changes were carried out and positively assessed, in particular, a standard operating

procedure concerning the communication of salmonella testing results has been implemented together with the NVL. Operators of the poultry slaughter houses carried out tests according to the microbiological plans, and no positivity was detected. The corrective action that had been requested as a result of the previous salmonella mission was closed.

One corrective action was issued to one of the food producing establishments inspected. All the recommendations were fulfilled, as verification visits were carried out by officials of the section.

The section was also involved in the implementation of the poultry marketing standards, attending conferences abroad and verifying presence of undeclared water in marketed products. From this point of view, carcasses slaughtered in Malta are compliant with these standards as none of them contain injected additional liquids.

Lagomorph slaughterhouses

Currently there are two approved lagomorph slaughterhouses: Bigfoot in Magħtab and Furplay in B'Bugia. These two slaughterhouses are approved to carry out the slaughter of their own stock since both slaughterhouses are within the perimeter of their own farm. There is veterinary inspection during all slaughter in order to ensure that the Food Business Operators (FBO) adhere to the Animal Welfare Regulations at slaughter, and furthermore to carry out ante mortem and post-mortem inspection on animals, carcasses and organs respectively. All carcasses found fit for human consumption are fitted with a seal of approval in the form of a food-grade tag bearing the establishments' approval number and a serial number that allows traceability of the carcass from the consumer to the slaughter house and further to the farm of origin.

A detailed yearly audit inspection was also carried out on these premises. During this audit, a documentary check on the FBO's HACCP plan was carried out, as well as on all the HACCP pre-requisite documentation and all relevant monitoring results. Feedback was provided in a report that detailed any shortcomings or needs for improvement.

In 2011, procedures for approving another two slaughterhouses for lagomorphs were initiated. These will be approved to slaughter third party rabbits. Structural alterations are almost complete and approval should be granted in the early part of 2012. Once third party slaughter is established, a detailed system of hygiene monitoring will be introduced using the HAS documentation system on all approved rabbit slaughterhouses.

	SL. H 1	SL. H 2	Others	Total
Total number of routine inspection	42	46	0	87
Total number of carcasses detained/condemned	66	6	0	72
Total number of organs detained/condemned	30	58	0	88
Total number of audit inspections	1	1	3*	4
Total rabbits slaughtered	31,928	12,885	0	44,813

Note: There were a total of 29,950 rabbit tags given out to approved slaughterhouses since May 2011 (8,850 to Furplay Farm and 21,100 to Bigfoot Farm).

Food Establishments Section

The Section is in charge of approval procedures for all the establishments including fishing vessels, approved under regulation 853/2004 - processing plants, dairy, fishery products and vessels, cold stores.

In accordance with the provisions of the MANCP and the risk assessment, a reduction on the frequency of the inspections was programmed; however, due to lack of personnel, only 50% of the targeted inspections were carried out. The establishments inspected comply with the requirements of the hygiene package:

- 20 inspections carried out in re-wrapping establishments
- 10 follow-up visits carried out in order to verify that recommendations were fulfilled;
- two fishery vessels audits for approval purposes;
- five visits and one audit for approval purposes in dairy establishment;
- 18 visits in cold stores;
- 24 visits carried out for approval purposes in meat establishments; included the final audit for approval purposes;
- 15 visits carried out in fishery products (including final audits for approval purposes);
- 18 visits for preliminary assessment after or prior to application from FBO;
- three refrigerated trucks for transport of fish (mostly being used abroad) were inspected and registered.

Milk Hygiene

Dairy Farms

This section is responsible for inspections on the dairy cow farms producing raw milk for collection and processing for human consumption. The dairy cow farms were subjected to a process of approval in line with EU Reg. 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 – *Laying down specific hygiene rules for the hygiene of foodstuffs*.

The first round of the farm inspections was divided in two parts:

- A general inspection during which the Veterinary Officer checked the hygienic structure of the farm and gathered information from the farmers on the procedures they used to prepare the herd for milking. In the second instance, the VO controlled and checked the milking hygiene handling during the milking, storage and transport operations.
- The second round of inspections included the official parameters, with details to identify the grade of hygiene standard and management of each farm. The VO identified the grade of approval for internal use which is used as a scale to show progress or regress on each unit. Very few farms were given a rating due to the general rebuilding status of the dairy sector.

The Section prepared the necessary formal documentation for the first and second round of inspections (check lists, inspection forms, approval certificate templates, warning letter templates, close down letters, etc). The Section is involved in internal working groups that decide on policies for the movement of live animals within the dairy herd, and on the strategy for the importation of new breeding stock. Participation and involvement of this Section involved also the establishment of procedures for the treatment of milk as a waste animal by-product in case of suspension of delivery arising from negative results on controls of hygiene and residues.

The Section is currently involved in formulating a new licence document for dairy farms including the categorisation on a two-tier ranking: High Quality Milk Producer and Quality Milk Producer. A new mastitis health programme on dairy farms is also being developed.

The number of active dairy farms in 2011 was 121. The section carried out 64 inspections.

In 2011, the approval status of the dairy farms declared in 2010 was confirmed for 2011: 76 had Full Approval; 42 were considered as Conditionally Approved; three farms were identified for closing down.

During 2011, the inspections were carried out on a risk basis. Farms under enforcement action and the three farms identified for closure were inspected mostly. From the 42 conditionally approved farms, 17 are proposed for indefinite close down unless relocated.

The Section issued three warning letters and nine enforcement actions. It is also involved in a court case with a dairy farm that is proposed for indefinite closedown on the basis of inadequate management and hygiene on farm.

The Section organised a one-day training course for farmers tackling hygiene principles, biosecurity and animal health and welfare on dairy farms.

Dairy Establishments

The main producing plant is Malta Dairy Products (*Benna*), on which six official inspections were carried out between the Malta and Gozo premises. Several other meetings were held with quality, administrative and process managers.

One Official Enforcement Action on Gozo Benna premises was issued. Five other visits and one audit were carried out on dairy establishments for approval purposes by the Food Establishment Section. This Section also carried out another two visits for approval purposes at dairy re-wrapping establishments.

Cheeselet Producers

The AFRD is in the process of registering all farmers that are producing the Maltese traditional cheeselets (*gbejniet*) and is carrying out the controls on these holdings and establishments. These controls are being carried out on the basis of draft legislation that has been developed and is in the process of consultation at a local and EU level. The list of cheeselet producers to inspect is regularly updated so as to include any farmer who breeds more than 10 sheep and/or goats that have reached a milk-producing age. During these inspections, the cheeselet producers are distinguished into three main categories:

- those that intend selling over the farm wall or produce for their own personal use;
- those that sell wholesale (in shops) locally; and
- those aiming to sell throughout the EU market. These producers are regularly being inspected and a general HACCP system is being put in place.

Border Inspection Posts

All live animals (excluding pet dogs, cats and ferrets, which follow the requisites of the Pet Passport), as well as products of animal origin (for human consumption, for animal consumption, for other purposes other than human or animal consumption) originating from Third Countries are subject to veterinary checks, which are carried out at one of Malta's three Border Inspection Posts (BIP) approved by the EU. These are:

- Malta International Freeport BIP, for products of animal origin - MT MAR 1
- Malta International Airport BIP, for products of animal origin and for live animals MT LUQ 4
- Malta Grand Harbour BIP, for live animals (the premises permit direct access to the facility from the ship unloading areas of the port). MT MLA 1

The tables below indicate the figures related to the importation of live animals and products of animal origin at the Malta International Airport BIP, as well as those related to the importation of products of animal origin at the Malta Freeport BIP during 2011. No consignments of live animals from Third Countries were received at the Grand Harbour BIP during this period.

Malta International Airport Border Inspection Post			
2011			
	Total No. ⁽¹⁾	Rejected ⁽²⁾	Lab Tests ⁽³⁾
HC-total	156	1	-
Ambient T°	-	-	-
Chilled	156	-	-
Frozen	-	-	-
NHC-total	-	-	-

Ambient T°	-	-	-
Chilled	-	-	-
Frozen	-	-	-
Total Products	156	1	-
U	-	-	-
E	-	-	-
O	117	-	-
Total Live Animals*	117	-	-

* All live animals were consignments of tropical fish.

Malta Freeport Border Inspection Post			
	2011		
	<i>Total No. ⁽¹⁾</i>	<i>Rejected ⁽²⁾</i>	<i>Lab Tests ⁽³⁾</i>
HC-total	404	-	24
Ambient T°	133	-	8
Chilled	9	-	1
Frozen	262	-	15
NHC-total	79	-	-
Ambient T°	25	-	-
Chilled	-	-	-
Frozen	54	-	-
Total Products	-	-	-
Total Live Animals	-	-	-

⁽¹⁾ The number of consignments of products of animal origin fit for human consumption (HC), products of animal origin not fit for human consumption (NHC) with separation into the number of consignments without low temperature requirements and frozen/chilled consignments; the number of consignments of live animals for each category (ungulates, registered equidae and other animals).

⁽²⁾ For each category, the number of rejected consignments

⁽³⁾ For each category, the number of laboratory tests carried out.

- **Traces:** After the introduction of the TRACES online system for filling in of part one of the CVED by importers and couriers in July 2007, BIPs registered a substantial amount of positive feedbacks from both local users and importers. TRACES system now has become a tool used by all and has improved the processing of consignments. Towards the end of 2011, the system was overhauled and separated into a central system and peripheral users within the same VRD. This separation of duties will continue to be developed throughout 2012. An online system was introduced at each loading dock at both Freeport and Airport BIP, so that consignments are released and recording of data takes place immediately in an electronic manner and therefore registered in real time.
- **Pet Passport and Intra Community Trade of Pets:** During 2011, the Border Inspection Post personnel carried out inspections and released 433 dogs and 129 cats; quarantined; while 975 pigs, 607 bovines and 350 equines were inspected and released.
- **Quarantine:** small animals quarantined - 110 dogs, 107 cats, 80 tortoises, six birds, four pigeons, two ferrets; large animals quarantined - 517 bovine, five ovine, three caprine, 192 equine.
- **Avian flu:** 11 consignments of bird skins were tested for avian flu.
- **Traces Intra-Trade Controls:** As from September 2011, officers from the Local Veterinary Unit of the VRD started carrying out controls, in conjunction with officers from the Environmental Health Directorate (DEH), and customs officers, on Intra-Community Trade. The aim of these controls is to confirm that the goods being introduced in Malta and presented to the consumer are compliant with national and European legislation. During these controls, other veterinary-related checks, such as controls on the movements of live animals, were carried out. The number of intra-trade controls carried out in 2011 were 54 between September and December 2011.

National Veterinary Laboratory

Brucellosis

In 2011, a total of 49,109 tests were carried out for Brucellosis in bovine, ovine and caprine animals, with the Rose Bengal Test being main screening test used. 4,400 of these were tested from cattle slaughtered at the Civil Abattoir.

239 bulk tank milk samples from dairy herds were collected and tested for Brucellosis using the Milk Ring Test. All samples tested negative.

Tests for Brucellosis in 2011

Test	Samples tested	Positive	Negative
Rose Bengal Test Bovine on Farm	21,954	0	21,954
Rose Bengal Test Bovine Slaughter	4,400	0	4,400
Rose Bengal Test Ovine on Farm	15,805	0	15,805
Rose Bengal Test Caprine on Farm	6,693	0	6,693
ELISA Bovine	6	0	6
ELISA Ovine/Caprine	12	0	12
Milk Ring Test	239	0	239
Total	49,109	0	49,109

In May 2011, the National Veterinary Laboratory, as the National Reference Laboratory for Brucellosis for Malta, hosted the 4th Workshop of the EU Brucellosis National Reference Laboratories, together with Community Reference Laboratory AFSSA Maisons Alfort in France. Delegates from all the Member States' National Reference Laboratories met in Malta to discuss the latest trends in Brucellosis laboratory techniques. All the staff of the NVL attended the three-day meeting benefiting from the presentations delivered by the experts from the respective NRLs.

During the year, the National Veterinary Laboratory also participated in several proficiency tests and validation studies. One was the validation of the Bovine Milk ELISA organised by the Community Reference Laboratory AFSSA Maisons Alfort in France. Other proficiency schemes that the NVL participated in during 2011 that were organised by the Veterinary Laboratory agency in the UK were four for Rose Bengal Test; four for Milk Ring Test; and four for ELISA.

While data from the CRL/NRL has not yet been published, satisfactory results were obtained for all proficiency tests.

Enzootic Bovine Leucosis

A testing and eradication programme for EBL has been running since 2009. EBL is included in the Maltese legislation regarding notifiable diseases. All animals that are found EBL positive are slaughtered. EBL is also on the OIE list of infectious diseases and current surveillance standards are given in EU legislation, Directive 64/432/EEC. An intensive testing and slaughter programme was undertaken over the period between 2009 and 2011. All animals over the age of one year were tested twice a year for EBL antibodies. All infected cattle were slaughtered. During 2011, the number of samples tested for EBL was 20,709.

Testing for EBL 2009 to 2011			
Year	Tests	Positives	% Positive tests
2009	21,569	2,153	9.9%
2010	21,539	1,292	5.9%
2011	20,709	44	0.22%

The number of positive animals has decreased dramatically, from an overall 9.9% positivity to 0.22% positivity. A large number of holdings have now maintained a disease free status for the past 12 months and many have also more than four negative tests rendering them officially free from EBL.

The National Veterinary Laboratory also participated in the proficiency test for the detection of EBL antibodies organised by the Italian Reference Laboratory for EBL under the *Istituto Zooprofilattico delle Venezie*, Italy, as well as in four proficiency test distributions organised by the Veterinary Laboratory Agency in the UK. The results obtained by the NVL were in all cases excellent.

Maedi Visna

In 2011, a study was carried out to establish the prevalence of *Maedi Visna* in the Maltese sheep and goat population. The future goal of the programme will now be to move on to a control and eradication programme that will eliminate *Maedi Visna* from the Maltese sheep and goat population. In 2011, the total number of samples tested was 1,315.

In view of the above project, the National Veterinary Laboratory also participated in four proficiency tests organised by the Veterinary Laboratory Agency in the UK. The results obtained by the NVL were in all cases excellent.

National Control Programme for Salmonella in chicken egg laying flocks

Commercial laying flocks are subject to mandatory *Salmonella* testing programmes, in order to fulfil the requirements of EU legislation Regulation (EC) No. 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Regulation (EC) No 1168/2006 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1237/2007. All layer flocks are sampled and tested every 15 weeks throughout their production cycle. Samples of dust and faeces are sampled and tested at the National Veterinary Laboratory according to the approved ISO 6579/2002 for the presence of *Salmonella typhimurium* and *Salmonella enteritidis*.

National Control Programme for Salmonella in broiler flocks

A National Control Programme (NCP) for *Salmonella* in broiler flocks was implemented in 2009. All flocks of chickens reared for meat are included in the testing programme. Sampling of flocks is carried out two weeks of age prior to slaughter, using boot swabs. These are then tested at the National Veterinary Laboratory according to the approved ISO 6579/2002, for the presence of *Salmonella typhimurium* and *Salmonella enteritidis*.

Other tests carried out under the Salmonella control programme

Fourteen samples of chick liners were also analysed in 2011. As part of the Salmonella control programme and to investigate the potential sources of contamination to poultry flocks, on-farm feed samples are also cultured for salmonella. In 2011, 77 samples were cultured for salmonella by the National Veterinary Laboratory.

Pre-stocking cleaning verification controls are also carried out. These consist of environmental samples to verify the effectiveness of cleaning prior to restocking of a holding or barn. During 2011, 25 such tests were carried out in layer farms, while 45 were carried out on broiler farms. Two samples of sawdust for use as litter were also tested for salmonella in 2011. Broiler neck skin samples from slaughter houses were also tested for salmonella. 12 samples of neck skins were tested in 2011.

During 2011, the number of Layer farms that were found positive for either *Salmonella typhimurium* or *Salmonella enteritidis* was eight, out of which three were positive for *Salmonella typhimurium* and five for *Salmonella enteritidis*. Eggs from these holdings were either destroyed or exported for heat treatment.

Salmonella testing in 2011

Sample Type	Samples tested
Layer faeces	276
Layer dust	206
Layer chick liner	14
Poultry feeds	77
Layer cleaning	25
Broiler boot swabs	881
Broiler sawdust	2
Broiler neck skins	12

Broiler cleaning	45
Ducks	6
Total	1,544

In 2011, the number of broiler batches testing positive for *Salmonella typhimurium* and *Salmonella enteritidis* were three and one respectively. Another 122 non-target salmonella species were also isolated while 398 batches were negative.

All batches of *Salmonella Typhimurium* (ST) and *Salmonella Enteritidis* (SE) positive flocks were destroyed and did not enter the food chain. The percentage positivity of SE and ST in the Maltese broiler flock is now 0.57% and 0.19% respectively, that is below the 1% target set by the EU for these serotypes.

During 2011, a study was carried out to investigate the presence of Salmonella in various pests present on poultry farms. The collection of the samples took place between January and August 2011. In these eight months, 25 farms were sampled. These farms were distributed around the two main islands of Malta and Gozo. The pests consisted in *Rattus norvegicus*, *Passer hispaniolensis*, *Columba livia* and *Alphitobius diaperinus*.

From the *Rattus norvegicus*, intestines, liver and spleen were taken and tested separately. One rat out of 36 was found to be carrying *Salmonella*, thus having 2.78% positivity. The serovar found was *Enteritidis* and was isolated from both the intestines and the liver but it was not isolated from the spleen.

The sparrows were tested by two types of samples. These samples were swabs from single fresh faecal samples and 10 grams of grouped faecal samples. In all, there were 220 single fresh faecal samples and six 10g of faecal samples. All the swabs from single faecal samples resulted negative while two of the 10g faecal samples were found positive. The serovars present in the isolates were both sero-typed as *Salmonella Kentucky*.

25 cloacal swabs were taken from *Columbia livia*. Two of these samples resulted positive and thus 8% positivity was obtained from *Columbia livia*. The serovars isolated were *Salmonella kisi* and *Salmonella kambole*.

Out of the 120 *Alphitobius diaperus* sampled, no *Salmonella spp.* was isolated thus giving 0% positivity.

The data presented in this study will now serve as bases for better interpretation of biosecurity measures for the control of Salmonella on poultry farms.

To verify the competence of the laboratory in the field of Salmonella isolation during 2011, the NVL also participated in four distributions of proficiency tests for Salmonella in poultry samples and environment and another four distributions for Salmonella in animal feeds, organised by the Veterinary Laboratory Agency in the UK.

Suspect Microbiology Testing

Samples from meat inspection are submitted for microbiological testing by the official veterinarian at the slaughter house, this happens if the OV suspects that an animal presented for slaughter may be suffering from a disease condition such as septicaemia. In 2011, the number of bovine samples submitted for microbiology was 12, while there were seven samples originating from swine.

Parasitology

The National Veterinary Laboratory is the designated National Reference Laboratory for *Trichinella* and *Echinococcus* in the Maltese Islands. It also carries out all the *trichinella* testing for the Malta civil abattoir and the newly commissioned Gozo abattoir. A pilot study on the prevalence of *Toxoplasma* in small

ruminants was undertaken. Further studies on *toxoplasma* and other parasitic diseases of *zoonotic* and *zootechnic* importance are planned for 2012.

Trichinella

Trichinella is notifiable in animals. All slaughtered domestic pork and horses are tested for *Trichinella* using the digestive method as per Commission Regulation No 2075/2005.

In 2011, all slaughtered domestic swine and horses were tested for *Trichinella*. These consisted of 81,089 fattening pigs, 2,321 sows and boars and 76 horses. *Trichinella* was not detected in domestic pigs or horses. *Trichinella* has never been detected in the Maltese islands, in fact the disease has never been recorded in either veterinary or medical records.

The National Veterinary Laboratory also participated in the proficiency test for the detection and enumeration of *trichinella* in porcine and equine tissue organised by the Community Reference Laboratory for Parasites under the *Istituto Zooprofilattico* in Rome, Italy, as well as in four proficiency test distributions for the enumeration of *trichinella* in digest organised by the Veterinary Laboratory Agency in the UK. The results obtained by the NVL were in all cases excellent. In May 2011, two officers from the National Veterinary Laboratory attended the annual workshop for European National Reference Laboratories for Parasites that was held in Rome.

Trichinella tests for 2011

Sample type	Total Tested
Fattening Pigs	81,089
Sows and Boars	2,321
Horses	76
Total	83,486

Echinococcus

Echinococcosis is caused by tapeworms belonging to the genus of *Echinococcus*. Although the genus contains several species, only the species of *E. granulosus* and *multilocularis* commonly exist in some European countries. The life cycle of these parasites requires two hosts: a definitive and an intermediate host. The definitive hosts of this parasite are mainly foxes but also raccoon dogs, dogs, cats, coyotes and wolves. Small rodents and voles serve as intermediate hosts. The main host, the fox, contracts *E. multilocularis* mostly from eating rodents.

Humans are dead-end hosts of these parasites and may become infected by accidental ingestion of the eggs. *E. multilocularis* is notifiable in animals. Although most of the final hosts of this parasite are not present in the Maltese Islands, during meat inspection, all animals are controlled for cysts.

Malta, Finland, UK and Ireland are free from *E. multilocularis*. All imported dogs from extraneous countries must be treated with the anthelmintic (praziquantel) by a veterinarian prior to entering the island. Thus, the NVL set up the method for detecting and identifying *echinococcus* and has already participated in a proficiency test tissue organised by the Community Reference Laboratory for Parasites under the *Istituto Zooprofilattico* in Rome to test the competence of the laboratory.

Toxoplasma Gondi

In 2011, a study was carried out to evaluate the prevalence of *T.gondi* in small ruminants, blood samples were collected from goats and sheep. The samples were collected from 234 different farms in Malta and Gozo. Sampling was carried out over a period of six months. The serum and plasma were tested for antibodies to *T. gondii* with ELISA. Out of a total of 400 animals tested, 311 ovines were positive, while out of 409 caprines, 273 resulted positive. Further tests will be carried out in 2012 to put in place a control and educational programme for the reduction of this disease.

Fasciola hepatica

Fasciola Hepatica was recorded for the first time in the Maltese Islands. The case was recorded in a cow imported from Poland.

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy

The goal of the surveillance is to monitor and assess the effectiveness of control measures taken, such as the feed ban and SRM removal. According to TSE legislation 999/2001, each Member State shall carry out an annual monitoring programme for BSE including a screening procedure using approved rapid tests. This programme shall cover as a minimum all bovine animals above 30 months of age slaughtered normally for human consumption (healthy slaughtered animals) and all bovine animals above 24 months of age which have died/been killed or been sent for emergency slaughter (risk animals). This kind of surveillance programme has been in place in Malta since 2003.

As from June 2011, based on epidemiological criteria, the Commission authorised Malta to revise its monitoring programme. All Member States were authorised to review their monitoring programmes and to raise the age limit for testing to 48 months based on their favourable epidemiological situation and following positive EFSA opinions. This increase in age limit for testing led to a diminution of roughly 30% of the number of tests performed annually. The revision of the programme will be implemented in 2012.

TSE Testing by ELISA - 2011	
Sample Type	Samples tested
Bovine Regular Slaughter	1,657
Bovine Fallen	437
Bovine Emergency	44
Ovine Fallen	372
Caprine Fallen	235
Total	2,745

Antibiotic residues

The National Veterinary Drug Residue Programme includes a number of samples collected yearly from various foods of animal origin but also includes samples collected under the following testing schemes: National Plan; Suspect; Survey; Feed stuffs; National Salmonella Control Programme.

Antibiotic residues by Microbial Inhibition Tests - National Plan 2011	
Sample Type	Samples tested
Bovine Milk	188
Caprine Milk	8
Bovine Muscle/Kidney	27
Caprine Muscle	1
Swine Muscle/Kidney	21
Equine muscle	1
Poultry Muscle	33
Poultry Eggs	79
Rabbit Muscle	17
Total	375

Antibiotic residues by Microbial Inhibition Tests – Suspects 2011		
Sample Type	Samples tested	Positive samples
Bovine Muscle/Kidney/Injection Site	4	0
Swine Muscle/Kidney/Injection Site	368	22
Equine Muscle/Kidney/Injection Site	3	0
Poultry Muscle	4	0
Total	379	22

Samples that do not fall under any of the other designations and are collected over and above and that are tested within the NVL are designated as survey samples. For the past two years, these have included all the samples collected through the National Salmonella Control Programme. Testing layers and Broilers on farm ensures that antibiotics are not being used to control and mask salmonella infections.

Antibiotic residues by Microbial Inhibition Tests – Survey 2011	
Sample Type	Samples tested
Ovine Milk	1
Bovine Milk	2
Poultry Muscle within Salmonella Control Programme	431
Poultry Feeds	12
Caprine Muscle	1
Ovine Muscle	2
Honey	4
Total	453

Antibiotic residues by Microbial Inhibition Tests - Feed stuffs 2011	
Sample Type	Samples tested
Poultry	19
Porcine	20
Bovine	16
Total	55

Veterinary Medicinal Products and Animal Nutrition Section

- *Registration and Renewals of Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMPs)*: Renewal of authorisations was carried out throughout the year, according to the expiry of the relevant certificates. During 2011, there were 39 new products registered in Malta together with a total of 176 renewals.
- *VMP database*: This section is currently working on a complete and up-to-date Veterinary Medicinal database which will be eventually uploaded on the Internet so that the public may have access to the information of authorised veterinary medicinal products.
- *Inspections: wholesale dealers and pharmacies*: The Section conducted a round of inspections of the registered Veterinary Pharmacies and Veterinary Wholesale Dealers in September 2011. These inspections covered the general activities of the establishment related to the registered activity.
- *Veterinary Wholesale Dealers and Pharmacies Registers*: New approval numbers were issued and a register was created with links to these approvals. A new wholesale dealer's licence certificate template was drafted and used for the re-issue of wholesale dealer licence numbers; a similar type of certificate will be issued to all veterinary pharmacies.
- *Vetting of trade entries and Inspection of Parcels*: During the year a large number of parcels referred to the Section by Malta Customs were vetted so as to ascertain whether they could be admitted or not into Malta. These parcels were for private use, but nonetheless were subjected to import controls and movement. They came from both EU and third-countries. It is the responsibility of the Section to ascertain whether the products entering Maltese territory contain prohibited medicines or animal products and to dispose of them or allow them to enter accordingly.
- *Inspections*: In the course of 2011, a number of inspections were carried out in the following establishments: four feed mills; two feed traders; three feed stores; one feed wholesalers. Three feed mills were re-inspected so that they could be granted full approval. One major feed mill, which installed a line for the production of medicated feed, was re-inspected and granted full approval.
- *Official feed sampling: National Residue Plan*: Samples are taken annually for the monitoring of residue in various food products, not to mention various animal feeds, of undesirable substances. The matrix taken, whether they are animal tissues, excretions and secretions, depends on the residue to be tested for.
- *Registration of Feeds and Medicated Premises*: During 2011, new feeds were registered in Malta. Some of the medicated feeds are imported for use in Malta, these concern mainly rabbits and chickens.

- *Feed-related Investigations:* The Section also controls and monitors the presence of medicines and other undesirable substances in the food chain. During 2011, a number of investigations were carried out either as a consequence of the presence of illegal amounts of *coccidiostats* in poultry feeds produced by home mixers, or screenings for *Salmonella spp* and dioxins, the latter due to the outbreak of the contamination of animal feed with dioxins in Germany.
- *New Feed Mill Approvals:* In 2011, three feed mills were given full approval for the production of non-medicated feeds and one was given approval for the production of medicated feeds. The former were approved subsequent to a final pre-operative inspection to ascertain whether their HACCP plans were in order; the latter, who had installed a specific and separate line for the production of medicated feeds, was also inspected, pre-operatively regarding the flow of the line and the HACCP plan.
- *New identification system for feed and medicine-related establishments:* The section aims to standardise procedures, and issue licence numbers for the various sectors under it. A system has been devised whereby approval numbers will be issued to all the establishments.
- *Linguistic Review:* One of EMEA's responsibilities is to centrally register products prior to their being placed on the market. The Section is involved in such registration as it provides linguistic services. Each product submitted for registration has to supply documentation in all EU languages. The Section checks the documents for correctness of the Maltese language. A number of these were carried out during 2011.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

Ruminants Section

During 2011, the Ruminants Section carried out the regular ruminant disease surveillance schemes for Tuberculosis and Brucellosis and the eradication programmes for Bovine Enzootic Leucosis.

Census inspections were carried out on dairy and non-dairy ruminant farms in accordance with EU legislation regarding identification and registration and premium schemes.

The tagging and retagging of bovines and small ruminants is carried out by Veterinary Support Officers in this Department.

The National Livestock Database was further upgraded and data is inputted on a daily basis. The database was recognised as fully operational and is utilised in the calculation of premium subsidies. The database is also necessary for the issuing of computerised movement permits for bovines and small ruminants.

Coordinates of all ruminant holdings were taken throughout the year. These are being inputted into the National Livestock Database so as to be recognised as fully operational for sheep and goats. This exempts Malta from using herd registers for small ruminants.

Dairy Farms

A total of 89 dairy premises in Malta (119 including the dormant premises) and 36 dairy premises in Gozo (42 including the dormant premises) were registered with the Veterinary Affairs and Fisheries Regulation during 2011. 176 farms in Malta and 67 farms in Gozo were tested for Brucellosis (all active dairy farms were tested twice within the year except two because they started their activity in the second half) and 176 farms in Malta and 67 farms in Gozo were tested for Tuberculosis. A total of 23,387 bovines (16,069 in Malta + 7,318 in Gozo) and 1,450 caprines (1,408 in Malta + 42 in Gozo) were tested for Tuberculosis during 2011; whereas 21,487 bovines (14,169+7,318), 1,440 caprines (1,400+40) and 728 ovines (706+22) were tested for Brucellosis on dairy farms.

- Tuberculosis reactors

Out of 16,069 bovines tested in Malta, one bovine gave a dubious result to the intradermal comparative skin test for Tuberculosis. This bovine was re-tested after eight weeks and resulted negative. In Gozo, all 7,318 bovines tested resulted negative.

- Brucella reactors

Two bovines and one ovine in Malta and four bovines in Gozo (one on slaughter line) gave a positive result to the Rose Bengal test (RBT). The animals retested by ELISA were confirmed as negatives except one. The sample was sent abroad for further confirmatory tests and confirmed negative.

- Calf Identification Scheme

Tagging of bovines according to the relevant EU legislation continued during the year. All bovines are double ear tagged using a unique identification number which has to accompany the animal throughout its entire lifetime thus ensuring the 'farm to fork' traceability concept. All dairy farms are visited on a fortnightly basis, or on request of the farmer, in order to double-tag all newborn calves. The number of animals tagged on bovine holdings (Dairy + Non-dairy) was 4,639.

When a bovine or a small ruminant loses one of its ear tags, it is retagged using the same ear tag number, so as to ensure its traceability. Ear tag losses are reported by farmers to the department and tags bearing the same numbers are reordered from the supplier. Retags for the small ruminants started from September 2006. The retags for the small ruminants carried out in 2011 were 1,071 in Malta and 426 in Gozo for bovines, and 126 ovines and 87 caprines in Malta.

- Population

The animal population on dairy farms in Malta and Gozo in 2011 is as shown in the table below:

Animal Population - Dairy Farms - 2011				
	Bovine	Caprine	Ovine	Total
Malta	8,611	755	372	9,738
Gozo	4,872	23	3	4,898
Total	13,483	778	375	14,636

- Enzootic Bovine Leucosis eradication

190 visits on farms in Malta and 72 in Gozo were carried out for leucosis eradication purpose. During the year, 50 farms in Malta and 22 in Gozo reached the minimum number of test required to be recognised official free. A total of 13,309 bovines in Malta and 7,091 in Gozo were tested for leucosis, where only 19 resulted positive in Malta and 24 in Gozo throughout the year.

Non-dairy farms

Non-dairy farms, which also include the Registered Cheeselet Producers, hold the majority of sheep and goats present on the Maltese islands. These holdings are registered on the national database (InterTrace®) as Ruminant Farms. These holdings are subdivided into two categories, farms rearing only sheep and/or goats (RUM) and farms that rear also bovines (mostly bulls) for fattening and slaughter (RUM-B).

A total of 1,796 non-dairy farms were registered during 2011 (3,183 including dormant premises), and these are subdivided as in the table below.

Non-dairy Registered Holdings - 2011			
	RUM	RUM-B	Total
Malta	2,104 (1,111 actives)	187 actives	2,291 (1,298 actives)
Gozo	876 (482 actives)	16 actives	892 (498 actives)
Total	2,980 (1593)	203	3,183 (1,796)

- Population

The animal population on non-dairy farms in Malta and Gozo during 2011 is shown in the table below:

Animal Population - Non-dairy Farms - 2011				
	Bovine	Caprine	Ovine	Total
Malta	1,592	3,167	8,367	9,738
Gozo	124	1,743	3,562	4,898
Total	1,716	4,910	11,929	14,636

- Ovine and Caprine Identification Scheme

As from July 2006, a new system of tagging sheep and goats was implemented to be in line with EU Regulation No 21/2004. The Section continued to maintain the livestock national database. During 2011, the tagging of small ruminants was 5,615 for Malta and Gozo.

Animal Movements

All ruminants' movements must be authorised by animal health section. The farmer applies by submitting a request form and the Veterinary Officer, checking the animal welfare and animal health status of both holdings, authorises or refuses the request. The number of ruminants transferred with regular permits between premises amounted was 14,475.

- Results of checks carried out on bovines

The total number of holdings registered in Member State territory as registered at the beginning of the reporting period was 325. The number of holdings checked was 336. The number of animals registered at the beginning of the year was 14,954, while bovines checked in holdings during the first nine months were 21,554.

There were 14 holdings not compliant with Regulation (EC) 1760/2000. During the same period, three ruminant-bovine producers were given a warning letter; three bovines were confiscated and destroyed; two producers paid a fine of €3,884 each. All infringements were reported to the Paying Agency for further controls and deductions from the respective premia with regard to the Single Payment Scheme..

- Results of checks made in the ovine and caprine sector

The total number of holdings registered in Member State territory at the beginning of the year was 1,878, while the number of holdings checked during the year was 1,950. The total number of animals registered at the beginning of 2011 was 16,866, while the number of small ruminants in inspected holdings during the year was 21,986.

There were 101 holdings not compliant. All holdings with breaches were issued a warning letter or a final warning letter. All breaches were reported to the Paying Agency for further controls and deductions from the respective premia with regard to the Single Payment Scheme. 19 farms were closed down and depopulated. Ten animals were confiscated and destroyed. The inspection reports of the last month and a half are not included.

- Enforcement actions on farms

During the year, various enforcement actions were taken on illegal farms and legal farms (registered farms). 22 reports on illegal farms were filed at the Section, of which 18 were investigated, also with the aid of the ALE police. Four of them were found to be keeping animals on unregistered holdings. All animals were confiscated and destroyed by incineration. The rest resulted in false reports.

67 warning letters were sent to Maltese registered farms, while another 33 warning letters were sent to Gozitan registered farms. These were all related to small ruminants illegal movements or missing animals.

Besides these warning letters, one case was referred for legal action in court. Ten animals that were found to be in breach of the Identification and Registration Regulation were confiscated and destroyed, since the case could not be resolved. Inspections carried out in November/December are not included.

With regard to the bovine sector, 11 warning letters were issued regarding any breach of the Identification and Registration Regulation. Three bovines, were confiscated and destroyed, since their case could not be resolved.

Pig Production

Tattooing in 2011 amounted to 75,673 heads. This is a decrease of 26.2% over the previous year. Mortality stands at about 9.0%.

The market demand for local pork during the year showed a downward trend. This can be seen from the slaughter for the year, which was 1.83% lower than that for 2010. The total weight of pork marketed also decreased from 7,511 M.tons to 7,303 M.tons. The grade of carcasses remains prevalently A1 and A2.

During 2011, there was also the sourcing of about 1,436.4 Metric tons of pork-meat from other EU member states from January till September.

The average carcass weight for 2011 was 87.3 Kgs. The production of 7,303 M.tons is estimated to cost €11.40 million.

The replacement of gilts during the year, decreased by about 64.4% over the year 2010.

Animal By-Products

The Veterinary Regulation Directorate carries out regular traceability exercises on animal by-products. The aim of these internal audits is to confirm the operators' compliance with Council Regulation (EC) 1069/2009 on the handling and treatment of such products. In 2011, 46 traceability exercises were carried out.

Registration system for the transport of live animals

The Veterinary Regulation Directorate created a registration system for vehicles, or other means of transport, carrying live animals for commercial use over long distances, exceeding 65km or eight hours of travel, as is required by Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005. Given the size of the island, these regulations are only applicable to vehicles entering or leaving the territory of Malta. So far, one transporter is approved according to these regulations and registered under the new system.

Dog Microchipping Scheme

Legal Notice 199/2011, Electronic Identification of Dogs Regulations, was published in 2011. This initiated a process of identifying by an electronic microchip all dogs and registering them in the National Livestock Database (NLD).

The process started around late May 2011, with the participation of all private veterinarians who have the facility to register micro chipped dogs online by the submission of a file to a generic email address. This online facility will then input all data automatically in the database and subsequently a certificate is issued by the VRD and sent by post to the owner.

During the same period, discussions took place between the VRD and the MVA (Malta Veterinary Association) which owns the Pet Net Database for the transfer of a copy of the data to import it into the NLD. This allowed dogs already registered in Pet Net to be issued with a free licence. This data transfer

was carried out but due to some anomalies that were found during the testing phase, it was decided that such dogs will be dealt with through a different approach. All private vets were informed that all those clients that had their dog already micro-chipped and registered in Pet Net Database will have their details updated and/or corrected in the National Livestock Database free of charge. Dog owners can also opt to come directly to the office to claim the licence of their dog and confirm their personal details.

The details related to micro chipping of dogs since the commencement of the scheme are as follows:

- 10,783 licences processed (i.e. printed and posted)
- 49 transfers (since beginning Nov 2011)
- 17 deaths reported (since beginning Nov 2011)
- 2 missing dogs reported (since beginning Nov 2011)
- 92 general e-mail queries (since beginning Nov 2011)
- 124 returned licences (i.e. called owner, corrected data printed and reposted) (since beginning Nov 2011)

National Livestock Database Developments in 2011

In addition to various minor improvements, three major developments of the National Livestock Database (NLD) were completed and became operational in 2011.

- Dog registration

In April 2011, a new compulsory dog registration scheme was introduced as per Legal Notice 199/2011. The existing facility within the NLD for registering pet passports was extended to include records of dog registrations. Registration details are submitted to the NLD as e-mail attachments by private veterinarians. The data is checked automatically and either the dog is registered with an automatic response email confirming the registration to the vet, or an error message is sent to the veterinarian highlighting the source of error. Certificates are printed from the NLD and posted to the owner of the dog.

There are charges stipulated in the Legal Notice, and at the end of each month, the NLD prepares an invoice for each veterinarian detailing the dogs registered and the outstanding balances.

- Equine registration

During 2011, the database was modified to accept registration of equines and issue an Official Identification Document as per EU regulations. This involves the private veterinarian to present details of the horse that was micro-chipped and possibly vaccinated, together with markings and these details are inputted in the database in the office. After printing on security paper, this identification document is signed by the private veterinarian and authorised by the Director General.

All equines arriving from other countries with passports are also registered in the database.

- Abattoir management

A system was required to manage the meat traceability and labelling process for the refurbished *abattoir* in Gozo. As the animals (cattle, sheep, goats and pigs) enter the *abattoir*, the NLD confirms that each animal is fully traceable to a farm of origin, and assigns a kill number to each carcass to preserve the link between the farm traceability records and the carcass. If there are any discrepancies in the traceability, the carcass will be detained at the abattoir until the discrepancies are resolved. The carcass weight, and ultrasound probe data in the case of pigs, is acquired electronically from the abattoir equipment as a basis for grading the carcass. Any meat inspection findings can also be recorded directly into the NLD by the official veterinarian on the slaughter line. Finally, despatch labels for the carcass parts are printed with the traceability information for the animal and the weight, grade etc. Various reports for farmers, middlemen and abattoir managers are produced from the NLD. As data is entered or changed at various stages in the process, the NLD retains a log recording what was entered or changed, and the user and computer responsible. This log is visible to all staff, ensuring transparency in the origin of all data. This traceability

system is now being also introduced to the Civil Abattoir in Malta. Trials were carried out in the last weeks of 2011.

- Monitoring of consignments in ports

For some years, the NLD was recording imports of products of veterinary interest from other EU member states and third countries. However, the Government is also required to record, and inspect where appropriate, consignments of veterinary interest being trans-shipped or in transit in the ports. In the case of the Freeport, a very large number of such consignments are trans-shipped each year. To assist the transporting companies and the BIPs in the process of pre-notification, screening and inspection, a system has been developed within the NLD, intertrace to allow transporters to pre-notify consignments electronically. Depending on the products and countries of origin in each consignment, it is either cleared for unloading, or otherwise the consignment will enter an alert mode that results from a complex consideration by the software in accordance with various levels of security. The transporter, port operator, customs and the veterinary authorities will be notified in real time of these consignments.

The veterinary authority is also required to cross-check consignments notified to them with customs declarations. An automatic data feed to the NLD was established from the customs database, so that any consignments containing products of veterinary interest notified to Customs but not to the NLD are brought to the attention of the veterinary authority.

Extra Regulatory Activities

Bird Rehabilitation Programme

A number of staff are involved in the veterinary care and rehabilitation of birds. These birds that are casualties during the hunting season or excessive storms and wind are found by the general public and members of NGOs that forward them to the ALE who in turn deposit some of them to us.

The birds are examined on arrival and their condition and lesions are identified. The best possible treatment is decided and carried out at private clinics belonging to the participating veterinarians and other colleagues. Surgery is carried as necessary and the birds are then nursed back to health, fed and slowly rehabilitated to flight whenever possible by the veterinarians and staff participating in the scheme at their respective households. All the costs including those of treatment, surgery and feeding are covered personally by the participating veterinarians and staff.

This initiative started in 2009. Every year, around 50 birds are handed over, and out of these 40% or more die out of their wounds within the first 24 hours or during the initial days of treatment. Another 50% are eventually nursed back to full health and released. A very small number are considered totally impossible to treat and are euthanised, whereas a reduced number are retained alive but are not in a condition to be released into the wild again. These birds can form part of a regeneration programme to place back into the wild their offspring to make up for the unsustainable takings of such biodiversity.

The largest class of birds that have been involved in the programme are birds of prey that account for more than 50% of the individuals brought into the programme. These are followed by sea birds namely gulls and shearwaters.

Turtle Rehabilitation Programme

The Turtle Rehabilitation Unit is found at the Malta Aquaculture Research Centre.. Work is overseen by the Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation Department and carried out through the collaboration of MRRA with Nature Trust Malta and the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA). This programme has been maintained through the dedication of staff and members of the NGOs that donate their time, attention and materials to these turtles that are cared for and nursed back to health to be released.

Turtle Releases in 2011

After receiving the necessary treatment and having undergone rehabilitation at the Turtle Rehabilitation Unit, the Loggerhead marine turtles *Caretta caretta* were released to the natural environment: two were released on 26 May from Ġnejna Bay, four were released on 13 July from Xrobb l-Għagin, Delimara, six were released on 11 August from Ġnejna Bay, and three were released on 9 December from Xrobb l-Għagin, Delimara.

Prior to their release, the turtles were tagged by MEPA so that useful information on their growth and migration patterns could be obtained in the event of their recapture.

DR ANTHONY GRUPPETTA

Director General (Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation)

Agriculture and Fisheries Regulation Department

Fisheries Control Directorate

The Fisheries Control Directorate is subdivided into four major units, namely the following:

- Fisheries Control Unit
- Technical Unit
- Fishing Vessel Register Unit
- Capture Fisheries Unit

FISHERIES CONTROL UNIT

BFT Training

During 2011, all Fisheries Protection Officers, Landing Officers and National Observers attended ongoing training, briefings and debriefings on a day-to-day basis were provided to the Fisheries Protection Officers, particularly with regard to the BlueFin Tuna (BFT) season, swordfish closure, mesh sizes, controls on third country vessels in relation illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing activities, transshipments and preparation for harvesting of BFT.

In 2011, two Fisheries Control Inspectors (Senior and Trainee) attended official training on the control of the bluefin tuna fishery and illegal fishing organised by the Community Fisheries Control Agency (CFCA).

The Senior Fisheries Control Inspector in conjunction with the CFCA held training sessions in Malta for the officers in charge of control, including senior and trainee staff, Landing Officers, Armed Forces inspectors, and customs officials.

Training related to the Public Service Management Code was organised by the Centre for Development Research and Training (OPM) for staff at the Fisheries Control Directorate.

Bluefin Tuna Management

Licences for vessels fishing for Bluefin Tuna

Individual licences were issued by the Fisheries Control Directorate to each of the 40 active fishing vessels, each of which was bound to abide by a number of obligations, namely the obligation to respect the closed season and the quota limitation, and to abide by ICCAT and Commission regulations.

Operational Bluefin Tuna Farms during 2011

- Ta' Mattew Fish Farms Ltd
- Malta Fish Farming Ltd
- Fish & Fish Ltd
- MareBlu Tuna Ltd
- AJD Tuna Ltd

Bluefin Tuna Cagings 2011

The 2011 bluefin tuna fishery was characterised by catches made through contracted vessels of other Member States. The total indicative cagings made in 2011 are summarised in the table below:

Number of Cages	9
Catches by Flag States	Italy, France, Greece, Malta
Weight of Fish caged in 2011	757T
Carry Over Fish from previous years	478T

Harvests

The total indicative harvests carried out in 2011 are summarised in the following table:

Carry Over BFT Harvested in 2011	795T
2011 BFT Harvested in 2011	912T

Inspections

The Fisheries Control Directorate carried out regular inspections in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) 1224/2009 and its Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 404/2011. Inspections focused on designated ports, spot-inspections at non-designated ports, fishmarkets, retail outlets, fishmongers, hawkers, fishing vessels, (EU and third country), tuna farms, imported fish, and VMS port inspections.

The summer period was dominated by control on bluefin tuna landings. The October and November period was dominated by the continuation of the need to monitor the mandatory closure of the swordfish fishery, and administrative preparations for the commencement of harvests of farmed bluefin tuna.

Fish Retail Outlets

During its customary course of operation, the Directorate inspected 106 commercial outlets, open market areas and hawkers, wherein the legal requirements regarding the marketing of fishery products were explained. Moreover, these visits were also carried out in order to determine whether any illegal fish had been marketed during the year.

Control on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

Most of the work related to Council Regulation EC 1005/2008 focused on the imports of fishery products from third countries. This included the monitoring of all fishery imports and the documentary checks of all catch certificates accompanying the products.

Imports

The control of importation of fish focused on verifying all the catch certification related to the 2,641 kg of imported fishery products (excluding bluefin tuna) that fall within the remit of Council Regulation EC 1005/2008. This figure includes processed, frozen and fresh imported fishery products.

Verifications were carried out throughout the year by close cooperation with fisheries authorities in several third countries like Panama, Senegal, Oman, Philippines, Thailand and Ecuador, in order to bring these third countries in line with the requirements of the Regulation 1005/2008.

Council Regulation EC 1005/2008 also requires the reporting obligation of landing and transshipment operations in Member States for every quarter, updating of designated ports and inspections on third country fishing vessels.

National Observer Programme

For the scope of assigning observer coverage in accordance with Article 90 of ICCAT Recommendation 10-04, 18 National Observers were engaged in 2011 to provide coverage by 20% of all active longline vessels over 15m and 100% of towing vessels. The observers' task were mainly the monitoring of the catching vessel, recording and reporting upon the fishing activity, observation and estimation of catches as well as verification of logbook entries and sighting and recording of vessels contrary to ICCAT conservation measures.

Joint Deployment Plans

Due to the implementation of the bluefin tuna recovery plan, a Joint Deployment Plan (JDP) was set up to ensure operational coordination of joint control, inspection and surveillance activities by Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain and to give effect to the criteria, benchmarks, common inspection tasks and procedures and, in particular, the ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspections.

Under the JDP 2011, several inspections ashore, in port and in farms were carried out. Malta took part in six days of sea patrols and 18 flights of air surveillance, in conjunction with the Armed Forces of Malta. During JDP missions, in order to ensure the effectiveness of inspections ashore, in port and of farms and traps, mixed teams of inspectors including National Fisheries Inspectors from other participating Member States were associated as follows:

JDP (sea)	Date
MLT+ITA+ESP+FRA	11 – 29 May
MLT+ITA+CYP	7 – 25 July
MLT+ITA	15 – 30 June

JDP (Land)	Date
MLT+ITA	June
MLT+ITA	July
MLT+ESP	September
MLT+ITA	November

From 1 May to 31 July, a Maltese National Expert for the Technical Joint Deployment Group worked at the Community Fisheries Control Agency in Vigo, undertaking the following tasks:

- Follow-up of Mission Forms
- Forwarding Recommendations to the Inspection Means
- Follow-up of Missions and their Outcome
- Maintaining the TJDG operative during the first and second shift hours and weekends
- Information Management.

TECHNICAL UNIT

EU Affairs and Reporting

This section was in charge of the compilation of the required reports such as the Fisheries Control Programme, the Serious Infringement Report and the Annual Report which were sent to the European Commission (EC) in accordance with relevant council and commission regulations.

Participation in international groups and Meetings abroad

Besides attending meetings organised by the European Commission, officers within the Directorate also represent Malta in the meetings and workshops of the EU Data Collection Framework, scientific meetings of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) through active participation in the activities of the Scientific

Advisory Committee (SAC) of the GFCM and its sub-committees on stock assessment, statistics and information, marine environment and ecosystems and socio-economics, and also in meetings of the EU Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries. All the above make use of the data collected under the DCF to progress in the field of fisheries advice available to managers in the Mediterranean Sea.

Fish Marketing Scheme

The Maltese fleet landed about 70 species with the total annual landings (TAL) reaching approximately 1,183 tonnes. Dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) landings reached 194 tonnes, equivalent to about 16% of the TAL and were mostly derived from the Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) fishery operating between August and December. The swordfish surface longline fisheries contributed to about 26% of the TAL. The landings of Frigate mackerel increased very sharply in 2011 to represent 22% of the TAL. The contribution to the TAL of Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) landings continued to drop, reaching 7% from 10% in 2010. Landings of Bluefin tuna amounted to approximately 81 tonnes (gilled and gutted) in 2011.

In general, the seasonality and fishing patterns during 2011 remained the same as in previous years with no indication of an increase in fishing effort in any fishery. The catch of blue fin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) by all vessels reached approximately 142 tonnes (round weight). This figure is within the limit of the catch allocation set for Malta by ICCAT, which lays down the multi-annual management regimes for this species.

The profit share from the sale of Swordfish amounted to 36% of the total annual profit. This was followed by the sale of Shrimps/Prawns (13%), Blue fin tuna (10%) and Dolphin fish (9%).

Fisheries Board

During 2011, the Fisheries Board met on a regular basis. The main aim of the board is to advise the Minister on any matter related to the development, administration and conservation of the fisheries in Malta.

FISHING VESSEL REGISTER UNIT

The number of fishing vessels registered in the Maltese Fishing Vessel Register (FVR) as at end 2011 was of 3,007 vessels, of which 12.57% were full-time professional (MFA), 22.48% part-time professional (MFB) vessels and 63.88% recreational vessels (MFC). The category of auxiliary vessels (work boats) used in fishing operations (MFD) was made up of 32 vessels.

The total gross tonnage (GT) and power (main engine only) capacity at the end of 2011, according to FIDES – FRONT, for the full-time and part-time professional vessels were 8,135 GT and 78,437kW respectively.

Adjustment of ceiling in the Maltese Fishing Vessel Register

During 2011, eight professional fishing vessels with a total of 104.55 GT were scrapped and deleted their fishing licence from the Fishing Vessel Register after being granted funds from the European Fisheries Fund 2007 - 2013 Permanent Cessation Scheme.

Opening of the Professional part of the FVR

The Fishing Vessel Register did not open for the professional categories during 2011. A waiting list as from 1 May 2008 was kept throughout 2009, 2010 and 2011, with the information of all the Maltese vessel owners who submitted a written request to register a vessel in the professional categories.

CAPTURE FISHERIES UNIT

The Capture Fisheries Unit is in charge of providing scientific data and advice in order to enable the Fisheries Directorate to put into place scientifically informed management regimes. The latter is vital to ensure fish stocks of commercial importance in the Maltese Islands are exploited in a sustainable manner. More specifically the section collects relevant fisheries data, carries out scientific surveys at sea, processes and analyses the data and finally provides technical scientific advice in the formulation of management strategies.

As an EU member state, the collection of fisheries data is regulated through the European Union Fisheries Data Collection Framework (DCF). This data collection scheme started in January 2005, with an annual budget of around €500,000 (50% funded by the EC and 50% by Malta). Malta covers the areas of fish capacity and effort, catch and landing statistics, discards, catch per unit effort, biological parameters including both *métier* and stock related variables, scientific surveys (MEDITS and MEDIAS) and economics of the fishing fleet, fish processing and aquaculture industries. The programme thus contributes to a better knowledge of the main fishery resources of Malta from the biological, managerial, economical and social points of view.

In this regard, in 2011, the new triannual Data Collection programme was adopted (2011 – 2013). Some updates include the updating of the ranking system where two new *métiers* were ranked, these being trammel nets targeting demersal species and pots and traps targeting demersal species. Group 1, 2 and 3 species were all sampled when encountered during *métier* sampling. The group 1 species were studied in detail for stock related sampling and these are: Bluefin Tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), Swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*), Dolphin fish (*Coryphaena hippurus*), Mediterranean spearfish (*Tetrapturus belone*), Common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*), Giant Red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*), Red Shrimp (*Aristeus antennatus*), Pink shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*), Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), Hake (*Merluccius merluccius*), red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*), and striped red mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*).

FISHERIES MONITORING AND RESEARCH

Data Collection Framework

Fishing Capacities

Based on information supplied in the MALTASTAT system, Malta segmented the fleet of vessels according to the sub division set out in Appendix III (of Regulation EC93/2010), at the requested precision level of the Regulation.

For the scope of maintaining a database of the fishing capacity, the Fishing Vessel Register includes the following information related to each vessel typology, registration number, age of the hull, dimensions: GT, length, width, draught, engine power, type and age, ownership, health and safety equipment.

Fishing Effort

Effort data, which includes variables such as fishing days, number of trips, number of fishing operations and other variables, was collected and include all the information requested. Data on effort is available by species, vessel, day, geographic area, duration of trips in fishing days and by gear used. For vessels over 10 metres (LOA), data from logbooks, supplemented with data from the sales vouchers, was used when logbooks were not available. The effort data obtained for the > 10 metres are through a census. For vessels less than 10 metres (LOA) a multivariate sampling survey is carried out.

Logbook and Sales Vouchers

By using information from logbooks, Malta collects data on commercial landings (both within and outside the country) and total catch, including landings (in value and weight relating to the fleet of vessels over 10 metres. Moreover, Malta uses the Fish Market Sales Notes scheme together with the logbooks to gather such data. All information on sold fish is registered and stored in the Sales Notes database, and includes among others, information on vessel registration number, landing place, date and buyer, species, weight, and value.

The Sales Notes scheme is utilised to obtain data on landings in weight and value and estimates of fishing effort for vessels over and less than 10 metres for the vessels that land in the Valletta fish market only.

Catch assessment survey – Sampling approach for the small scale fleet (<10 metres)

During 2011, the same sampling approach started in 2010 was continued. A multivariate sampling survey for vessels less than 10 metres length overall was carried out to obtain monthly data on landings per species and on fishing effort. The target population is made up of the vessels registered in the Maltese fishing fleet register that includes full-time commercial vessels (MFA) and part-time commercial vessels (MFB), and comprises both active and inactive vessels. The sample is stratified randomly selected from the fleet segments from the fleet vessel register. The sample is randomly determined every quarter.

Interviews are conducted with the vessel owners every week in order to obtain information on catches, effort in fishing days, type of gear, fishing areas and activity. With respect to the small scale fishery, interviews were conducted during 2011.

From the vessels sampled, data on effort is raised to estimate effort to the total fleet of the <10 m LOA vessels. Raising data is based on a weighting factor attributed to the total fleet segment. Data quality is primarily assessed by estimating the Variance.

Quarters	Interviews	Ports
1 st	68	23
2 nd	67	22
3 rd	69	23
4 th	68	18
2011	272	33

Catches and Landings

Data on commercial landings is available by species, vessel, day, geographical area, gear employed. Data on commercial landings is aggregated by species, quarter and for each segment identified in the 'Fleet Segmentation by Region' table in Appendix III and, with regard to the geographical origin of the catches, at the level of 'Geographical Stratification' table specified in Appendix I of Commission Decision EU 93/2010. For vessels over 10 metres in length, a census was carried out. For vessels less than 10 metres in length, the sampling scheme described in the National Programme was implemented.

During 2011 about 1,800 tonnes of fish were landed.

MEDITS trawl survey

As part of the Mediterranean International Bottom Trawl Survey (MEDITS), an annual summer sampling survey was carried out in the Geographical Sub-Area 15 (GSA15), which includes the Maltese 25 Nautical Mile Fisheries Management Zone. This survey is performed in order to collect data on abundance and biological aspects of 35 species of the priority MEDITS list, including bony fish, crustaceans and cephalopods, as well as data about all elasmobranchs.

As specified by the MEDITS protocol, 44 hauls were performed for the survey, which was carried out from 21 May till 1 June 2011. Sampling using the MEDITS standard gear was performed at 45 selected stations at a depth ranging from 45 - 800 m. The number of valid hauls was 45, each one of them lasting for 30 or 60 minutes depending on the depth being sampled. Towing speed was three knots and the estimated distance covered in each trawl was about 3km. The trawl net width was about 20m and one metre in height.

From each haul, the catch was sorted into the MEDITS reference species, the fish by-catch and the invertebrate by-catch. The invertebrate by-catch was also retained for further analysis. A minimum of 50 individuals from each of the 35 MEDITS reference species and from all the elasmobranch species were retained from each station. The biological parameters collected include total length, weight, sex and maturity stage. Both haul registration and processing of biological samples were accurately performed according to the MEDITS protocol.

Taxonomic Group	No. Length Measurements	No. Sex / Maturity Measurements
Teleosts	6,021	3,648
Crustaceans	3,353	2,283
Selachians	2,015	1,964
Cephalopods	1,451	1,252
Total	12,840	9,147

All MEDITS data collected was inputted, checked and validated using ATrIS software. The ATrIS (AdriaMed Trawl Information System) software produces the necessary outputs (TA, TB and TC MEDITS files) that are sent and stored in the Regional MEDITS database. In order to maximise the survey, apart from MEDITS parameters defined by the protocol, all cephalopods caught (not only MEDITS target species) were retained to be able to carry our research on the different species caught and all *Plesionika* spp. specimens were retained for the collection of their biological parameters.

MEDITS acoustic survey

Similar to the MEDITS survey, Malta conducts the Mediterranean International Acoustic Survey (MEDIAS) on an annual basis. The inter-disciplinary group of Oceanography of the IAMC-CNR section of *Mazara del Vallo* in collaboration with the Department of Fishing Technology of the ISMAR, section on marine fisheries of the CNR in Ancona, has conducted research surveys at sea for several years. The objective is to assess the spatial distribution and abundance of small pelagic fish in the Strait of Sicily in accordance with the MEDIAS protocol.

Each year, Malta collaborates with IAMC-CNR *Mazara del Vallo* or IAMC-CNR *Capo Granitola* (a section which emerging from the one in *Mazara del Vallo*) for this survey, in order to benefit from IAMC-CNR's expertise and equipment availability. In this line, the 2011 MEDIAS survey was conducted on board *RV G. Dall Porta* in the beginning of July. The survey is carried out with the aim of conducting an interdisciplinary research to estimate the spatial distribution and abundance of small pelagic fish on the southern continental platform of Sicily, between Marsala and Capo Passero, on an area of about 2,700m².

The following operations were conducted during the research survey:

- Acoustic measurements of small pelagic fish stock with a multi-frequency scientific echo-sounder Kongsberg Simrad EK 60, with hull-mounted transducers of 38 and 120 kHz. The scientific echo-sounder was calibrated for both frequencies. During the acquisition of the signals, the echograms were recorded on hard disk through the acquisition and post-processing software ER60.
- Biological sampling of small pelagic fish using a pelagic trawl equipped with an acoustic system Kongsberg Simrad ITI for the control of the gear horizontal opening during the fishing operations. The gear is a pelagic trawl of 78m total length with a cod-end of 22m long with a 18mm mesh, vertical and horizontal opening of one and 13m respectively for an opening surface of nearly 90m². The front section mesh is 182x800mm, and the lateral mesh is 400mm. The towing cable is in steel, with a diameter of

16mm, and 50m length. Each otter board measures 220x130 centimetres and weighs 340 kilograms. For the use of the Simard ITI, the transducers were installed on the upper part of the net's mouth. A hydrophone used for the conversion of acoustic signals into electric signals was situated on a towed device. This device was put in water with a crane positioned on the left-hand side of the vessel and was towed during the whole fishing operation.

- Measurement of physical-chemical parameters of the water column using a 4a Hydrolab mini probe. The probe was put in the water while the vessel was stationary, using the pneumatic portal of the vessel on the right-hand side of the boat, by the use of double winches and an 8mm steel cable.

Sampling for métier-related variables

Malta is obliged to sample trips of specific gears. For sampling purposes, only the major *métiers* are considered and the procedure to choose the gears is specified by the EU Data Collection Framework.

The reference data utilised to select the *métier* to be sampled in 2011 was obtained from 2007 and 2008 averaged values, obtained from logbooks, sales vouchers and small scale fishery sampling survey. Following this exercise, in 2011 the following *métiers* were ranked and chosen for sampling: Drifting longlines; Lampara nets; Purse-seines; Bottom otter trawls; Set longlines; Trammel nets; Pots and traps.

Sampling of trips for the *métiers* mentioned above include onboard observations, market sampling and port sampling, depending on the fishery - around 413 sampling trips were effected.

Sampling of stock related variables (length, weight, age, sex maturity)

As part of the requirements of the EU Data Collection Framework, Malta is obliged to collect stock-variables related data for all Group 1 species under the same regulation, for which the Member state has landing of more than 200 tonnes annually, or for which the Member state's landings constitutes more than 10% of the EU TAC.

The data gathered to obtain stock-related variables is the following: Length data; Weight data; Sex data; Maturity data; Age data.

For 2011, Malta collected biological data on a number of Group 1 species. Also in 2011, the mixed boxes pilot study for boxes of mixed species landed was continued. This study aims to determine the proportion of the separate species present in boxes of mixed species landings. Stock-related variables for these species in the mixed boxes were collected.

The species were sampled from the market, from port sampling and/or on board vessels by field recorders/observers with subsequent laboratory analysis. Length measurements were carried out both in the field and in the laboratory. In 2011, 225 tuna spines were collected for age reading, while for dolphin fish specimens, 308 otoliths were extracted.

Economic data for the fishing fleet, fish processing and aquaculture sector.

The sampling frame for the collection of fleet economic data during the year 2011 was based on the Maltese fishing vessel register information as at 1 January of the reference year 2010. A sampling plan which included active and inactive, full-time (MFA vessel license holders) and part-time (MFB vessel license holders) vessels was implemented in order to achieve the estimation of all population requested parameters. The technique of stratified random sampling was used whereby the sample size was selected randomly from all the MFA and MFB vessel licence holders. This technique was used for all variables except for the value of landings per species and average price per species. Direct interviews based on questionnaires were used to gather the data needed. The planned number of vessels to be interviewed amounted to 692 vessels and the response rate is equal to 65%. The final data will be available in the first months of the year 2012.

Economic data in relation to fish processing activity carried out during the year 2009 was collected in 2011 from six fish processing companies. The sampling frame for the collection of economic data was based on the Maltese business directory and processed fisheries products. The technique of census was applied as all fish processing companies in the population were planned to be surveyed however due to difficulties encountered for the questionnaire to be completed, six fish processing companies were surveyed out of a total of ten. Direct interviews based on questionnaires and postal questionnaires were used to gather the data needed. The data was finalised and sent to the European Commission.

Economic data in relation to the aquaculture sector based on the activity which took place during the years 2008 and 2009 continued to be collected and was finalised. The sampling frame for the collection of economic data was based on the registered aquaculture operations with the Veterinary Regulations Fisheries Conservation and Control Division, as at 1 January of the particular reference years (2008 and 2009). The technique of census was planned and achieved as all six aquaculture companies in the population provided the data requested. Direct interviews based on questionnaires and postal questionnaires were used to gather the data needed. The data was sent to the European Commission.

Type of Survey	No. of interviews conducted	Survey design
Fishing Fleet	448	Stratified random sampling
Fish Processing Industry	6	Census
Aquaculture Sector	6	Census

In January 2011, Malta sent data to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) with regards to the Task 1.3 data, which deals with the economic component and includes the following variables; engine power (kW), employment, salary share as a percentage of income, landing weight, landing value, vessel value of total fleet, fishing days per year per vessel, fishing hours per day per vessel, cost of fishing per day per vessel and the yearly fixed costs per vessel.

Data Collection for the EC 1967/2006 Management plans

For Malta's Fisheries Management Plan 2011-2015 as required in part fulfilment of EU Member State obligations under EC 1967/2006, Malta started carrying out some biological sampling for gears that fell under these management plans. For some of the gears under management plans, data was already being collected as part of Malta's obligations towards the EU Data Collection Framework requirements, however for the *Lampara* and *Tartarun* gears, new sampling scheme were put in place to start sampling these gears.

For both the *Lampara* and *Tartarun* fisheries, pilot studies were carried out so as to obtain preliminary information on the catch species composition, information on discards, size of fish targeted and other relevant information.

The list of vessels that have these gears registered were extracted from the Maltese Fishing Fleet Register and a probability sample survey was employed whereby the fishers (chosen on a random basis) were contacted and asked to:

- Keep a proportion of the catch per species (that would have been landed, both target and by-catch species)
- Provide information on the actual amount (in kilograms) landed per species
- Keep all the discards (if any)

The proportion of the catches were then purchased, and the latter, together with the discards, were processed in the laboratories.

Sampling involved length sampling for both discarded and landed species. Moreover, samples were analyzed for stock-related variables, namely: Weight data; Sex data; Maturity stage data.

For the *Lampara* fishery, two trips were sampled in 2011, whereas for the *Tartarun* fishery, five trips were sampled.

In addition, the section started monitoring the *gangmu* fishery in December 2011. A pilot survey was first carried out, with three hauls of 30 minutes. The whole catch (target as well as by-catch) was retained and preserved for further studies. In addition a meeting was held with fishers in possession of a *gangmu* licence to plan the *gangmu* study in more detail. Fishers were issued with a logbook to record every fishing trip. Logbooks will be collected at the end of each month during the *gangmu* fishing season.

Data Processing and Analysis

Stock Assessments

In 2011, the joint stock assessment for pink shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) in GSAs 12-16 (which had been carried out for the first time in 2010) was updated by Maltese, Tunisian and Italian scientists, combining data collected throughout the Central Mediterranean. This stock assessment was conducted under the auspices of the MedSudMed project, and finalised at the 2011 GFCM demersal working group workshop. In addition, a joint preliminary stock assessment was carried out for hake (*Merluccius merluccius*).

Stock assessments were also carried out by Maltese scientists in collaboration with Italian scientists based at CNR-IAMC in Sicily for the following species: thornback skate (*Raja clavata*), giant red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*), red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*) and common Pandora (*Pagellus erythrinus*). These assessments were done at stock assessment working groups organised by the EC.

Maltese data was derived from the sampling activities in line with the EC Data Collection Framework (EC 199/08, EC 949/08), and the biological reference points used for all three assessments were F_{cur} and $F_{0.1}$. F_{cur} refers to the present fishing mortality, and $F_{0.1}$ refers to the target fishing mortality taking into account the precautionary principle. These reference points were chosen in order to be in line with current standard practices of the EU's Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) Sub-Group on the Mediterranean (SGMED), and the stock assessment working groups of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

Using $F_{0.1}$ as a target reference point, all of the assessed stocks were overexploited. In order to harvest stocks sustainably, a reduction of fishing mortality levels by 23, 83, 61, 41 and 40% are needed for pink shrimp, hake, giant red shrimp, red mullet and common Pandora respectively. However, when taking into account the Maltese share of total landings made in the Central Mediterranean (see table below) it becomes clear that any decision to reduce fishing effort needs to be taken together with the political authorities of neighbouring jurisdictions, in particular Italy and Tunisia.

English Name	Scientific Name	F_{2010}	$F_{0.1}$	Stock Status	Maltese Share of 2010 Landings (%)
Pink shrimp	<i>P. longirostris</i>	1.20	0.92	Overexploited	0.07
Hake*	<i>M. merluccius</i>	0.60	0.1	Overexploited	0.23
Giant red shrimp	<i>A. foliacea</i>	1.09	0.42	Overexploited	2.04**
Red mullet	<i>M. barbatus</i>	0.87	0.51	Overexploited	1.69**
Common Pandora	<i>P. erythrinus</i>	0.60	0.36	Overexploited	5.00**

* Preliminary assessment

** Excluding Tunisian landings

No new stock assessments were carried out for Mediterranean swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in 2011. For swordfish, further analysis in 2011 suggested that the implemented seasonal closures had beneficial effects and can move the stock condition to the level which will support MSY. Updates were also conducted for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in 2011, and have shown that although the recent fishing mortalities have declined, fishing mortality is still too high and the SSB too low

to reach convention objectives. Malta supplied data for both stocks through the ICCAT task I and task II forms.

English Name	Scientific Name	F ₂₀₀₉ /F _{0.1}	Stock Status
Bluefin tuna	<i>T. thynnus</i>	2.9	Overfished
Swordfish	<i>X. gladius</i>	1.52*	Overfished

* Value refers to F₂₀₀₈/F_{0.1}, catch data for Mediterranean swordfish for 2009 was deemed incomplete by ICCAT

EC 1967/2006 Fisheries Management Plans

Article 19 of EC 1967/2006 states that: Member States shall adopt, by 31 December 2007, management plans for fisheries conducted by trawl nets, boat seines, shore seines, surrounding nets and dredges within their territorial waters.

In 2011, Malta updated its fisheries management plan (2008-2012) for the following fleet segments: bottom otter trawlers, *lampuki* purse seiners, *lampara*, *tartarun* and *gangmu*. All scientific information currently available on these fleets was included in the plan, as well as an overview of current management measures. Stock assessment results were included in the sections on 'stock conservation status' of Malta's Fisheries Management Plan 2011-2015 wherever appropriate with regard to four different types of fisheries namely; *Lampara*, *Tartarun*, *Dolphinfish Purse Seiners (Lampuki)* and Bottom Otter Trawlers. Similarly fleet economic data for the years 2006-2009 collected by means of the annual economic surveys throughout the years was used during 2011 to calculate a series of social, economic and productivity indicators with regards to the fisheries included in the management plan. The results of the indicators together with the other raw data provided the basis of the economic sections of the Malta Fisheries Management Plan 2011-2015.

In addition, a number of additional management measures, as well as a detailed plan for future scientific data collection, were drafted and proposed to the EC. The submitted plan is for the period 2011-2015.

Balance between Fishing Capacity and Fishing Opportunities

As an EU Member State, Malta is required to submit an annual report on the national balance between fishing capacities and fishing opportunities. The report contains technical, biological, economic and social indicators, thus reflecting the EU's Common Fisheries Policy objectives of ensuring an exploitation that provides sustainable economic, environmental and social conditions. Stock assessment results from 2010/2011 were used to estimate biological indicators as part of Malta's annual report on achievements to reach a sustainable balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities. Data from the fishing vessel register and transversal effort data was used as the basis of the technical indicators and economic data collected under the Data Collection Regulation/Data Collection Framework were used to calculate economic indicators. In view of important fluctuations, both in economic parameters and stock/exploitation developments, a moving average across a number of calendar years was established for the purpose of indicator interpretation.

Fisheries Information System Database System development

During 2011, a National Data Collection Programme database requirements document covering all years of the Capture Fisheries Section as regards data collection was drafted, and after a series of meetings and reviews, followed by revisions to the draft document, the draft requirements document was finalised.

In particular, the Databases requirements document covers the following areas:

- Transversal data, concerning data collection of catches, landings and effort data through several sources such as from logbooks and from Catch assessment sampling surveys
- Biological data covering both fisheries-dependant and fisheries-independent data
- Economic data concerning data collection on fleet, fish processing industry and aquaculture sector.

Research Projects

MEDSUDMED (FAO Sub-Regional project)

This Italian-funded FAO project was launched at the end of 2001. Four countries participate in this project: Italy, Libya, Malta and Tunisia. The project aims to support scientific communities and countries in the development of a monitoring system for the studies of fisheries resources and ecosystems. The main objectives of the project are to increase the scientific knowledge on the ecosystems of the project area, strengthen national and regional expertise, and develop scientific cooperation in order to promote the standardisation of the methodologies used in fisheries research.

Following the work carried out so far by the project on the occurrence of shared stocks of the anchovy in the MedSudMed area, Malta sent genetic samples of this species (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) to the Tunisian project partners in June 2011. A genetic comparison between samples collected in three different zones of the project area is currently underway.

A MedSudMed and CopeMed II Workshop on Fisheries and appraisal of *Coryphaena hippurus* in the Projects area was held on 5 – 6 July 2011 in Palermo (Italy). Experts from Tunisia, Malta, Italy, and Spain participated to the meeting. The main objectives of the workshop were to define the state of the art of national activities carried out and/or currently implemented on *C. hippurus*, to explore the data available at national level on this species, and to initiate the process toward a joint stock assessment exercise.

The main gaps in the knowledge on *C. hippurus* in the south-central and western Mediterranean were identified. Likewise, the areas of investigation to fulfil these gaps were discussed and prioritised. MedSudMed and CopeMed II will coordinate the preparation of the data available, in view of a specific meeting to preliminary assess the impact of national fisheries on *C. hippurus*.

In addition, the project organised a second MedSudMed Working Group (WG) on Demersal Fisheries Resources in September 2011. The WG aimed to:

- progress in the definition of a management strategy for the fisheries targeting *Parapenaeus longirostris* in the MedSudMed Project area;
- progress toward the stock assessment of *Merluccius merluccius* in the MedSudMed Project area, and
- present the results and proposals for the Sub-regional Working Group on Shared Demersal Resources in the southcentral and western Mediterranean Sea.

The WG updated the stock assessment of *Parapenaeus longirostris* carried out jointly by the experts participating in the MedSudMed Project. This stock assessment had started in 2009 as a preliminary study, and further elaborated to a full stock assessment of pink shrimp in 2010. The yield per recruit in terms of economic values was calculated for each fleet considered in the study. On the other hand, a preliminary stock assessment for the hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) was started, using both slow and fast growth parameters, over which there is an ongoing scientific discussion of which of the two patterns does the hake follow. The results of this WG were reported on the GFCM SCSA stock assessment forms and presented to GFCM at the relevant fora.

The MedSudMed project in collaboration with the MRRA also held a training course on stock assessments in Malta between 12 and 16 December. The aim of the course was to give participants an introduction about fish stock assessments, and then to be able to perform simple assessments of a fishery and to prepare the corresponding assessment report.

CREAM Project (EU FP7)

The aim of the CREAM project is to coordinate research in support to application of EAF (Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries) and management advice in the Mediterranean and Black Seas. The project start date in Malta was 1 September 2011. In 2011, the focus of the CREAM project was on organising administrative

and financial issues; recruiting suitable staff for the project; and as part of CREAM Work Package 2, collecting information on all the existing activities (research projects, monitoring) on fisheries data collection currently being carried out in Malta. This was necessary in order to highlight the activities/projects dealing with aspects related to EAF (Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries) and the typology of data collected in this context by all the project participants. As a follow up to this identification of existing data, the Capture Fisheries is now carrying out an assessment of historical data, data access rights and a first evaluation of data quality as part of the CREAM project Work Package 3.

GAP Project (EU FP7)

GAP stands for bridging the GAP between science and stakeholders. The overall aim of the Maltese case study is to enhance the scientific knowledge base underpinning management decisions regarding the demersal resources of the Maltese 25 nautical mile FMZ through an integrated approach, with a view to improving the acceptance of future management plans by fishers.

In 2011, the focus of the GAP project was on organising administrative and financial issues; recruiting suitable staff for the project; and discussing a joint work plan with the case study partner.

A detailed 12-month survey of the Maltese trawl fishery will be carried out using a self-sampling approach, whereby fishermen would collect data on both catches and discards. The inclusion of other fishing sectors in the study is still being considered by the project partners, and will depend on the progress made with the trawl fleet study.

MESMA Project (EU FP7)

The MESMA (Monitoring and Evaluation of Spatially Managed Areas) project was launched on 1 November 2009, and has a duration of 48 months. 21 partners from 13 different EU countries are participating in this project with IMARES (Netherlands) being the project coordinator. The main aim of the project is to support the implementation of marine spatial planning in Europe's seas especially that of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) by producing guidance and tools. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between MEPA and MRRRA to enhance communication and facilitate the exchange of data between the two entities.

- Framework for monitoring and evaluation of the Spatially Managed Areas (SMAs) (Work Package 2)

A framework for monitoring and evaluating the spatially managed areas together with the protocol for implementation was developed in 2010. In 2011, all the nine case studies started to test it. At the end of the first run test (September 2011), feedback was provided to the Work Package (WP) leaders in order to revise the framework. Moreover, a matrix highlighting the level of uncertainty in the framework was also compiled very briefly from few of the case studies and this will be more elaborated next year. The final version of the framework is expected to be ready by March 2012.

- Case Studies (Work Package 3)

The first run of the framework that was developed in work package two ended in September 2011 and is currently in its second run.

In 2011, work mainly centred on steps 1 and 2. In step 1, both existing management plans and planned sectoral spatial initiatives were identified and mapped using ArcGIS (v. 10). Also the patterns of the different activities were described and institutional landscapes were identified. Where possible, maps were created and joined with those of the Sicilians. The Maltese Fisheries Management Plan was used to identify the goals, legal obligations and operational objectives of the trawlers. The latter were also assessed to identify if these were SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound). Once the SMART objectives were identified, these were ranked in order of importance depending on the higher level goals of the SMA.

In step 2, the relevant ecosystem components to the SMA were identified and spatial information was collected. The Marine Life Information Network (MarLIN) initiative was then used to identify the sectors and activities that are carried out in the Strait of Sicily. In addition, the pressures and impacts that sectors have on the marine environment were identified and each of them was listed either as a *probable* (very likely to happen) or a *possible* (*might happen*) effect. The following are some of the main impacts and pressures identified: fisheries, conservation, submarine cables, shipping, tourism, oil and gas exploration activities, aquaculture and marinas. The impact, persistence and resilience on the natural ecosystem component were also determined and maps started to be created for each sector. A map of the biocenosis found in GSA 15, using data collected during MEDITS, was plotted, and other maps were produced both from the spatial marine shape files given by MEPA, and from other shape files which were created from data found online. Finally, a document entitled 'Review of current spatial management measures in the Maltese Islands' was also produced for the last action of step 2.

- Development and Evaluation of Management Tools (Work Package 4)

The WP leaders, with the cooperation of the MESMA partners, listed all the tools being used for MESMA or any other projects or in departments to facilitate communication and interoperability. This list is currently available to all users at the following URL: <http://publicwiki.deltares.nl/display/mesma/tools>

Work Package leaders are also planning to develop an e-manual of the framework by March 2012. The MESMA case studies will then test this e-manual until September 2012 and provide feedback to the leaders.

- Data standards and infrastructure for the Monitoring and Evaluation of SMAs – (Work Package 5)

The WP leaders developed the MESMA geonetwork (which can only be accessed by participants), where each case study and sub-case study had to input the metadata available.

MAREA

The MAREA (Mediterranean hAlieutic Resources Evaluation and Advice) project consortium was formed following the publishing of the tender MARE/2009/05 – LOT 1 by the European Commission. The consortium is lead by CoNISMa, and the Capture Fisheries Section is engaged as a sub-contractor. MAREA will provide scientific advice and/or other specific preliminary services.

In 2011, the Capture Fisheries Section was involved in specific project number 1, MEDISEH (Mediterranean Sensitive Habitats), in collaboration with IAMC-CNR Sicily. Activities included:

- collating existing information on the location of sensitive habitats in GSA 15 (with particular reference to *P. oceanica* beds, maerl grounds and deep water corals);
- updating existing maps of critical habitats for key commercial species. The focus in this task is on the location of nursery/spawning sites a number of species.

Pilot study to better estimate the number and weight of bluefin tuna at the point of capture and caging

The ICCAT Commission at its 17th Special Meeting of the ICCAT Commission (November 2010, Paris) adopted ICCAT Recommendation 10-04 to establish a multi-annual recovery plan for Bluefin Tuna (BFT) in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. ICCAT Recommendation 10-04 calls for Contracting Parties and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (CPCs) to initiate pilot studies on how to better estimate both the number and weight of bluefin tuna at the point of capture and caging including through the use of stereoscopic systems. The results should be reported to the ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS). Malta committed itself to follow this recommendation and subsequently purchased a stereoscopic camera which was delivered to the Maltese Fisheries Control authorities in June 2011. A one-week intensive training course on the stereoscopic camera was organised in Malta followed by the use of the camera in full scale commercial caging operations during the 2011 Bluefin Tuna season. All Bluefin Tuna cage transfers to Maltese registered

farms during the 2011 season were covered by the use of the stereo-camera system. This provided valuable information on the suitability of the stereo-video systems in operational conditions.

DATA SUBMISSIONS

In 2011, Malta submitted data collected within the framework of the European Union Data Collection Framework to the following international bodies

- Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission:
 - Call for fleet economic data
 - Call for landings, catches, length and age compositions, effort and trawl surveys in the Mediterranean
 - Call for capacity, landings, effort and economic data
 - Call for economic data concerning the EU aquaculture sector
 - Call for economic data concerning the EU fish processing industry
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT):
 - Form I fleet characterisation
 - Task I nominal catch estimates
 - Task II catch and effort statistics
 - Task II size sampling
 - Task II catch at size estimates
- General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM):
 - Dolphinfish annual reporting form
 - Task I statistical matrix

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Plant Health Directorate

BACKGROUND

The Plant Health Directorate is the National Plant Protection Organisation set up within the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs to prevent the introduction into the community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products or their spread within the Community, in line with the Community's plant health regime.

The Plant Health Directorate is also responsible to monitor the market of propagation material in the Maltese territory with the aim of having available in circulation high quality propagation and planting material. The Directorate also deals with plant variety rights and the conservation of plant genetic resources.

INTRODUCTION

In 2011, the Plant Health Directorate (PHD) continued to implement measures with the aim to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms in the community.

During the year, the Directorate continued with its efforts to monitor and inspect palm trees and also continued with the eradication of the pest through palm felling. This PHD is also in its final stages in a programme to eradicate an outbreak of *Citrus tristeza* virus in the island of Gozo. The areas of San Blas and *Dahlet Qorrot* were put under contingency after a number of citrus trees were confirmed infected with CTV in March 2009.

During 2011, the PHD also continued its effort to fight the Leaf miner Moth (*Tuta Absoluta*). The main actions taken mainly focused on the dissemination of information and further education on the pest.

LEGISLATION

A number of directives, regulations and decisions that were adopted during the year were either transposed or adopted directly. Seven legal notices and three government notices were issued in 2011.

EU AFFAIRS

The Plant Health Directorate continued to participate in EU meetings for discussion of new proposals. Instructions notes and justification of country positions and reports were drawn up. A number of officials attended the meetings organised by the EU Commission and other EU structures.

Communications

Feedback on various issues that fall under the remit of the Plant Health Directorate was sent to the Commission throughout the year. In addition, the PHD continued to report on a number of directives and decisions in line with its reporting obligations.

Notifications

During this year, 20 notifications were sent to the European Commission, 18 through the online EUROPHYT database, and two notifications were sent according to article 16(2) of Council Directive 2000/29 EC. These notifications were related to infringements of wood packaging material, which were not stamped in accordance with ISPM No 15 Standard; finding of PepMV and CTV, and missing information on the phytosanitary certificates and plant passports.

Notifications from other Member States on the availability of seeds/derogations to market seeds, which do not satisfy the minimum germination capacity specified in EU legislation, modifications to the status of already listed varieties of seeds of agricultural plants and vegetables that are authorised for marketing at EU level and new varieties accepted at national level and which eventually will be marketed in the EU were reviewed daily.

Communication was held with the EU regarding draft complete editions and supplements of the Common Catalogues of varieties of agricultural plant and vegetable species that are issued from time to time.

EU Documentation

A Survey on quarantine diseases was forwarded by the French Bureau, on fruit tree phytoplasmas and their prevalence in the EU, instruction notes drafted on the draft Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 866/2004 relating to the lifting of restrictions on Turkish Cypriot potato producers to only grow second crop potatoes from certified seed, instruction notes on the appointment for the post of President of the Community Plant Variety Office and the Alternate Chairperson of the Board of Appeal and clearance/comments given on the letter of the Council Secretary General as a reply to the appeal against Council Decision 2011/C of 12 July 2011 appointing the President of the CPVO, list of derogations that were obtained by Malta as regards the EU legislation on seeds and other propagation material, review of the draft country profile of Malta on the organisation of food safety, animal health, animal welfare, and plant health control systems and comments with respect to the seeds and other propagation material sector and the draft European Commission Working Paper, in view of the EU coordination in preparation for an OECD Advisory Group meeting on seed schemes, consultation of MCCA with stakeholders on the draft national legislation transposing Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides were drafted or existing ones were reviewed and comments forwarded as requested.

A number of documents sent by the EU Affairs Directorate were reviewed throughout the year, and comments were forwarded when requested.

MULTILATERAL, INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Plant Health Directorate continued to respond to questionnaires and take part in consultations on draft standards and other items circulated for members' opinion by the International Plant Protection Convention Office and the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation.

Communication was held between the Seeds and Propagation Material Unit (SPMU) and the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO), and comments were provided by the former mainly on revised entrustment requirements for the examination offices, availability of facilities in Malta and relevant technical experience to carry out examination of new plant species and varieties, various draft technical protocols used for the examination of varieties, the EU legislation that covers the quality of plant material for examination, vacancy posts with the CPVO, and national contributions to the case law database of the CPVO.

Literature review and instruction notes/memoranda were carried out or drafted for FAO Coordination meetings in view of meetings on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Global Plan of Action. Communications were also held with the European and

Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO), and information and comments were provided by this Directorate on the re-evaluation of some A2 listed organisms, the revision of the National regulatory control system on *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *Sepedonicus* Country - consultation on Standards from the series PM9, the revision of the National regulatory control system on *Ralstonia solanacearum* – country consultation on Standards from the series PM9, the New National regulatory control system on Potato spindle *tuber viroid* on potato - country consultation on Standards from the series PM9, draft EPPO standard from the series PM9 on the official control of *Agrilus planipennis*, reply regarding three draft EPPO standards from the series PM 7 Diagnostics: *Ceratitis capitata*, *Ceratitis cosyra* and *Rhagoletis completa* and electronic format for pest reporting. In September 2011, Malta was also elected to serve on the Executive Committee of EPPO.

The Plant Health Directorate continued to participate in a number of national committees including the Plant Protection Board, Pesticides Control Board, National Accreditation Board and the Food Safety Commission.

DIAGNOSIS AND CONTROL

Monitoring and Surveys

As in previous years, in 2011, the Plant Health Directorate continued its programme of annual surveys to assess the local situation with respect to emerging pests. The monitoring and testing of certain quarantine and harmful organisms is also regulated by Council Decisions and Directives.

During 2011, a total of 18 surveys were carried out in relation to the following areas of diagnosis – virology, bacteriology, mycology, entomology, and nematology covering approximately 349.60 hectares, during which a total of 2,795 samples were collected, and a total of 3,083 tests were performed. A more detailed list of the surveys conducted in 2011, including details of the commodity surveyed, the inspection sites, the number of inspections carried out and the area covered, as well as the number of samples collected, is found in Annex 1 and Annex 2.

Outbreak of Pests

There were no new outbreaks of pests recorded during 2011.

Contingency, Emergency and Eradication Plans

During 2011, action plans for the following pests and diseases were drawn up: Leaf Miner Moth (*Tuta Absoluta*), *Citrus Tristeza* Virus and Red Palm Weevil. This action plan was also submitted to the Commission.

Control of Red Palm Weevil

As in previous years, the control against Red Palm Weevil continued. On 16 November, Malta was awarded an additional amount of €865,835.28 covering the financial year 2011, with a digression rate of 40% amounting to €346,333.76. The aim of this funding is to control the spread of the Red Palm Weevil pest as part of a new EU plant health programme. These funds will co-finance the ongoing programme being carried out in Malta to combat the RPW and to prevent it from further spreading. According to a survey carried out in Malta a few months ago, the problem is under control although the pest is still active.

Citrus Tristeza Virus Contingency Plan

Another important effort made by the Plant Health Directorate for the control of harmful organisms is the eradication of *Citrus Tristeza* Virus (CTV) in the contingency area of San Blas and Dahlet Qorrot Valley

in Gozo. These areas were put under contingency in March 2009 after a number of citrus trees were confirmed infected with CTV. Measures were intensified, which included the intensive monitoring of the area, laboratory testing, and eradication of positive plants continued during 2011. A total of 1,898 trees were sampled in the mentioned area.

Tuta Absoluta Control Scheme

In 2011, the Plant Health Directorate continued with its endeavours to fight this pest. One of the most important actions taken by the PHD in 2011 was the dissemination of information and further education about *Tuta absoluta* through direct contact, and the use of information material such as leaflets about the pest and its control, posters and published articles. The Directorate also encouraged tomato growers to make use of the PHD freephone to make contact and also to make use of the advisory and diagnostic services if needed. Tomato growers were also solicited to make use of pheromone traps, together with the other recommended measures in the guidelines as part of an integrated programme, since it proved to be very successful during 2010. Furthermore, the PHD continued with the monitoring inspections for *Tuta absoluta* in collaboration with APS Consult Ltd.

SEEDS AND OTHER PROPAGATION MATERIALS

Inspections/visits at nurseries and suppliers

During the year, 44 physical and documentary inspections (some of which were follow-ups) were carried out on plant material being produced and/or marketed in Malta and Gozo. On the whole, minor shortcomings were noted. Information was gathered in one of the visits on the local production of fruit trees. The detailed reports on each inspection were drafted and forwarded to the relevant supplier/producer.

Communication was held between PHD and relevant entities/persons such as the SIU, PARKS, foreign experts and local nurseries/growers on the re-packaging abroad of seeds, the Common Catalogues of varieties of vegetable that can be marketed at EU level, plant passports, the sale of locally produced citrus, the importation and introduction of seeds of various species and forest reproductive material for marketing purposes, the importation of seeds from a third country for research purposes, the introduction of seeds of aromatic plants in Malta for distribution to amateurs, the timing of the inspections in relation to the plant material available at different periods of the year, problems being encountered on the marketing of cereal seeds in Malta and on possible modification of a plant passport/supplier's document of nurseries, suppliers' documents of fruit trees, correct labelling of seeds belonging to various categories, and the setting up of a business consisting of importation of seeds to Malta from Italy.

Genetically-modified organisms

The PHD updated its internal list of the genetically-modified maize that are included in the 29th complete edition of the Common Catalogue and its supplements, which can be marketed at EU level. The PHD commented on the invocation of Luxembourg on the safeguard clause on the ban of the cultivation of the genetically-modified potato variety Amflora. Its comments were based on the current rules on the marketing of genetically-modified potato varieties for sowing purposes. Communication was held with the Environment Protection Directorate of MEPA regarding the importation of particular genetically-modified carnations from Australia and their presence in the wild. Information was requested by the foreign supplier of such carnations.

Guidelines on invasive plant species

The PHD forwarded comments on the draft MEPA guidelines for the management of invasive plants and the restoration of native plant communities, in view of a consultation seminar held on 4 November 2011, and communicated with the other PHD units on this matter.

European Cooperative Programme on Plant Genetic Resources (ECPGR)

The PHD communicated with the national focal points for the ECPGR working groups on avena, barley, wheat, forages, grain legumes, potatoes and medicinal/aromatic plants in order to collect information on the continuation of participation of such focal points in such groups.

Agri-measures and rural development funds

Agri-environmental measure 3

Seed samples were analysed for purity in connection with agri-environmental measure 3 of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 and the respective test reports were issued. Relevant farmers were made aware if a significant number of weed seeds and the presence of the fungal disease (common bunt) were noted in their samples during testing.

Agri-environmental measure 9

166 old carob and citrus trees were registered with the PHD by eight farmers during this year, in connection with agri-environmental measure 9 of the Rural Development Programme that provides financial aid on old fruit trees that are in danger of genetic erosion.

Measure 214

Two projects were applied for by the PHD under Measure 214 of the Rural Development Programme related to the support for the conservation of genetic resources in agriculture.

SURVEILLANCE AND INSPECTORATE

Registration

During 2011, there were 13 new entries in the Traders Registration as per LN 97/2004 regulation 6. Thus, the total number of importers, traders of various agricultural products and timber imports now amounts to 289.

Certification

During the year, 55 inspections took place in nurseries and garden centres in accordance with LN 97/2004 regarding the annual inspections for plant passport. A total of 1,071 plant passports and 27 export phytosanitary certificates were issued. No re-export phytosanitary certificates were issued in 2011.

Market Surveillance

All consignments imported in Malta are subject to documentary checks. A total of 299 documentary checks took place in 2011, all of which were also inspected both for identity and for phytosanitary checks. In addition, all consignments containing any wood packaging material (WPM) which varies from dunnage to pallets were also physically inspected. These were inspected to check if they conform with the ISPM no.15 standards (WPM) and for the presence of Pine Wood Nematode and *Monochamus* spp.

Inspections, eradication and enforcement

During 2011, a number of inspections were carried out in relation to quarantine harmful organisms, and samples collected. These were sent to the various laboratories within Directorate for further analysis.

The surveillance of Red Palm Weevil continued, and there were 421 inspections, of which 350 were in private residences, 61 in public areas, and 10 in government entities. During these visits, the stakeholders

were informed about pesticide treatment which could be utilised for control purposes. Inspections were carried out during the different stages of growth. A total of 729 palms had to be destroyed as a consequence of red palm weevil. In total, 230 registered enforcement letters were sent to various individuals for palm removal.

Also as part of its enforcement endeavours, during 2011 the SIU continued to follow court cases and also issue warning letters and implemented enforcement measures with regards to the illegal felling and movement of palm trees, movement of other plants without a prior written approval from the PHD, and surveillance on palm planting to ensure that all the planted palm trees have the required plant passports.

A tender for the felling, removal from site, transportation and disposal of palm trees infected with the Red Palm Weevil was awarded to ECM Ltd of Mellieha in December 2011.

During 2011, 134 inspections took place with regard to *Tuta Absoluta* and tomato viruses. 61 inspections took place on the market place, whereas 73 inspections were conducted in greenhouses and open fields. In 2011, the Plant Health Directorate issued one destruction notice to destruct the infested plant material. This was the case since the infestation was higher than 50%.

In the market places, five were found having infected tomatoes, and these were informed to destroy the infected material. Following the notification and destruction notices, all the farmers and traders respected the instructions given and the destruction was carried out by themselves.

LABORATORIES

Diagnostic Laboratories (Harmful Organisms)

The diagnostic laboratories within the Plant Health Directorate are responsible for the detection and identification of plant diseases caused by plant pests and pathogens with special reference to Council Directive 2000/29/EC and the Plant Quarantine Act 2001. Diagnostic techniques implemented in the laboratories are in accordance with EU Directives and EPPO standards where applicable.

During 2011, a total of 2,795 samples were collected, and a total of 3,083 tests were performed in relation to the following areas of diagnosis – virology, bacteriology, mycology, entomology, and nematology.

Seed Testing Laboratory

In 2011, the Seed Testing Laboratory continued seed testing for purity determination. This is being carried out in connection with the use of high quality local seeds of cereals and fodder plants for which financial aid is being given to local farmers under agri-environmental measure 3 of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. The number of samples received in the first batch and that were submitted between October 2010 and April 2011 was 182, on which 182 tests were carried out. The second batch of seed samples started to be submitted in October 2011. Till the end of the year, 188 samples were received, of which 26 were tested. This testing shall be continued in the coming year.

Tissue Culture Lab (*In vitro* Laboratory)

Ornamental plants:

Micropropagation of the ornamental plants, Boston ferns and African violets continued during 2011. A total of 265 Boston ferns and 182 African violet plantlets were produced and then acclimatised in the glasshouse, while a number of other plants are still being grown in the laboratory. *Ex situ* conservation *in vitro* of local tulips and orchids was also continued throughout the year.

Globe artichokes:

A request was received by the Directorate from a third party for the micropropagation of globe artichokes (*Cynara scolymus*) at the Tissue Culture Lab. Meetings were held on this issue during which it was agreed that a trial would be held locally. Literature review for the identification of the appropriate method of sterilisation and micropropagation was carried out, and the trial commenced following the supply of the initial material. Various attempts at surface sterilisation were made, however these were not successful due to bacterial contamination. The healthy plantlets were then successfully multiplied and rooted *in vitro*.

Sanitation of local varieties

With regard to sanitation of local citrus species through somatic embryogenesis, the trial, which had commenced in November 2010 on local lemon explants, was continued, and a second trial on grapefruit explants was commenced in November of this year. Explants from both trials produced callus; however no somatic embryogenesis was observed. Towards the end of the year, a project proposal on the clonal and sanitary selection, and sanitation of local citrus species, was submitted under measure 214 of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013.

Communication was held this year between the Plant Health Directorate, the Agricultural Directorate and the Viticulture Unit, so as to discuss the way forward with regard to the attempted sanitation of the local vine accessions of *Girgentina* and *Gellewza*, which forms part of an FP7 project on the valorisation of the vine varieties of Malta. Initially, the micropropagation work on the vine plantlets available at the laboratory was carried out by the lab officials, but the person responsible for the project was then trained on *in vitro* techniques by Plant Health Directorate's staff and all transfers are now being carried out by the Viticulture Unit within the Directorate's premises.

ADVISORY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

During 2011, the PHD continued to assist farmers and the general public on a number of phytosanitary issues. Most queries are resolved by the telephone, by email and others investigated on site and samples taken when necessary.

In addition, the Directorate organised meetings and information seminars in 2011 for stakeholders as part of awareness and information campaigns, as indicated in the list hereunder. Officials also participated in a number of local television and radio programmes.

In 2011, the Directorate published a number of press releases and notices as well as updated and published a number of leaflets on plant health pests and diseases of local importance.

The Soil and Irrigation Water Laboratory at Ghammieri hosted two groups as part of a project organised by WasteServ Malta and other entities entitled *Care creates change in people's lives and the environment*. This project was launched by the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. The same group also visited the Tissue Culture Laboratory at Ghammieri. Students following the MCAST Agribusiness course visited the Soil and Irrigation Water Laboratory in order to familiarise themselves with the services provided by this lab. The Soil and Irrigation Water Lab was also in contact with local private entities who requested to make use of the lab's facilities. An Italian student from the Leonardo da Vinci Project visited the Soil & Irrigation Water Lab. He familiarised himself with some soil and irrigation water procedures by doing some hands-on experience in the ongoing routine analysis carried out in such lab. A University of Malta student continued with her familiarisation experience at the Soil and Irrigation Water Lab on 10 August, and 20 and 27 September 2011, in order to gain experience on the work performed in such lab. Following communication with a university student (BA (Hons) Geography) and her tutor, the student commenced the determination of organic matter in soil at the Soil and Irrigation Water Lab.

The Tissue Culture Laboratory was visited by students from various educational institutions. The laboratory also hosted an Italian student who was participating in the EU Leonardo da Vinci programme. The Directorate also granted permission to a university student to carry out part of her thesis within the laboratory. Other students also made use of the facilities offered at the various labs within the Plant Biotechnology Centre and the Plant Health Laboratories at Ghammieri.

A foreign university student also carried out a work experience with the Plant Health Directorate from 18 May to 31 July, 2011. In summer, four other university students also carried their work experience with the PHD.

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

During 2011, the Directorate continued taking part in the evaluation of the Community Plant Health regime, on the Community *acquis*, on the marketing of seeds and other plant propagation material and the Community Plant Variety Rights Regime commissioned by DG SANCO.

Consultation with relevant stakeholders was carried out on draft legal notices transposing various Commission Decisions and Council Directives.

PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY CENTRE MANAGEMENT

Facilities Management

- Several maintenance works and services were carried out at the PBC premises (Tal-Kmand, Lija) related to the upkeep of the laboratories, offices, glasshouses and ancillary equipment. Routine work such as general cleaning, cleaning of benches and pots, application of pesticides and fertilisers, weeding, pruning and propagation were carried out in the glasshouses, screen houses, shade house, mother block and outdoor areas. Routine works for the upkeep of the PBC grounds formed also part of the work carried out, including general cleaning and maintenance, caring of the various plants and trees situated around the premises, weeding and cultivation of fields.
- Wheat sown in the fields forming part of PBC was later harvested and donated to Ghammieri farm.
- Ornamental plants were continually cared for with regular applications of insecticides where necessary to control pests. Continuous conventional propagation of various ornamental plants was also carried out within the glass house. Other work consisted in the acclimatisation of ferns and African violets transferred from the Tissue Culture laboratory.
- A continuous production of herbaceous indicator and indexing plants for virus diagnosis was continued throughout the whole year. Apart from the regular herbaceous plants, cucumbers and tomatoes were also grown as indicator plants. Works for this production include regular sowing, transplanting, repotting, irrigation and spraying with pesticides for the control of insect pests such as sciarid flies, thrips, whiteflies, caterpillars and red spider mites. Hygiene measures such as cleaning of benches, floors and pots as well as discarding of old material, were maintained throughout the year.
- The production and upkeep of herbaceous indicator mother plants which are kept for seed collection was continued during 2011. These plants were given regular care. Maintenance work was also carried out on the benches inside the plastic house.
- The screen houses containing healthy and infected plants/trees required regular irrigation, pruning, weeding, application of pesticides and drenching with fungicides for the control of pests and fungal diseases.

Sale and Donation of Plants

In 2011, the PHD sold a total of 167 plants amounting to €617. In addition, a total of 1,240 ornamental plants were donated to various entities of the Ministry, government and non-government organisations. Moreover, 1,529 *Myrabolan* plants were donated to the Ministry of Gozo, while another 138 plants were lent to various government and non-government organisations for the various activities held throughout the year.

162 wheat bales from the wheat grown on PBC grounds were donated to the Animal husbandry section at Ghammieri, 60 *Chaemaerops* seedlings were donated to Nature Trust Malta, while another 150 *Chaemaerops* seedlings were donated to the Parks and Initiatives Directorate.

Participation in Fairs

The PHD participated in several fairs organised by MRRA and these included the *Festa tal-Ħalib* in April, the Mnajra event in June, the Fishfest in September, and the *Festa tal-Majjal* in December. During these fairs, plants propagated and grown at PBC were exhibited and sold.

Risk Assessment within the PBC

Following the commencement of a Risk Assessment within the PBC in 2010, during 2011 the Directorate took action and implemented numerous necessary changes as requested in the risk assessment report. These included fitting of eye wash stations, first aid boxes, fire extinguishers, new ergonomic chairs and footrests, procurement and distribution of PC tower stands in accordance to the H&S requirements, safety boots and helmets, heavy duty aprons and waterproof raincoats, adequate H&S signage, fire detection system, as well as other safety measures introduced according to the enlisted risks including a fire drill under the supervision of the risk assessor in order to evaluate the performance. A Health and Safety Policy is now displayed in the entrance of the PBC.

Other reports were drawn up for the Border Inspection Post at the Malta International Airport and the Ghammieri premises and work on them is to commence in 2012.

Other activities

The PHD has been following the MEPA application submitted in July 2008 for the extension of the Diagnostic Laboratory. Various reports, including an application for an Environmental permit and another application for the renewal of the Public Sewer Discharge Permit were requested prior to the final approval and issuing of the permit. Eventually, an operational permit valid for four years was issued by MEPA regarding the proper use and disposal of chemicals and waste. The MEPA permit bearing number PA 03691/08 for the extension to the laboratory at PBC, was granted during the board hearing held on 11 March 2011. The tenders for the construction of the laboratory extension will be drafted by the Project Design and Engineering Directorate and are planned to be issued in the beginning of 2012.

Restoration works on Tal-Kmand historic arch and pillars were finalised at the PBC by the Restoration Unit. The structures were professionally restored, thus re-enhancing the historical value of the site.

During 2011, various meetings and consultations were held for the setting up of a proposed public garden within the PBC. An application was submitted to MEPA for this project.

OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

Human Resources Development

A number of officials within the Plant Health Directorate attended courses, both locally and abroad in a wide range of topics, including management and leadership skills, EU affairs, ICT skills, fire fighting, team building and use of pesticides. Technical staff also attended a number of courses and meetings specific to the area under their responsibility, these included courses organised by Better Training for Safer Foods under DG SANCO.

An EU-Mediterranean Forum on Plant Health and Plant Health Protection was held in Malta and a training session on Union Controls in member States and Third Countries in Ireland.

In-house training was also organised within PHD. These included a workshop on EU documentation, training course on Reverse-Transcriptase-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) Diagnostic Procedure for the testing of *Citrus Tristeza Virus*, a training course on Mycology & Bacteriology, and a number of workshops for the PHD inspectors on Import and Internal Controls.

Income

During 2011, the Plant Health Directorate had a total income of €22,075.82 from laboratory testing, sale of plants and import inspections.

Audits

During the year, an external audit on the official controls was carried out, as provided by Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, in order to verify that the required system of control is in place and is being effectively implemented. The audit on monitoring and control was carried out by the MCCA.

In October, a full Data Protection audit of the PHD was carried out by the Data Protection Unit, OPM. This audit entailed an investigation of all aspects of the Directorate's activities and which are affected by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2001. This audit was carried out to review the extent of compliance with the said Act, identify resulting gaps, highlight any observations, as well as specify any corresponding necessary corrective actions.

Customer Care

During 2011, an Associate Consultant from the Management and Efficiency Unit conducted a monitoring exercise on the PHD's compliance with Directive 4. All communications with the public, stakeholders and customer complaints were reviewed.

Green Measures

In 2011, the Plant Health Directorate continued implementing and discussing green measures amongst which a number of fittings and lights were changed to energy saving ones both at the PBC and at Għammieri, all electric water heaters at PBC were fitted with an electronic timer in order to reduce their electricity consumption while still having hot water available, and some PIR sensors were installed to light fittings. A short energy audit meeting was attended by the Directorate's Green Leader. During 2011, the Directorate's Green Leader also continued with his efforts in raising awareness about environmental measures to be followed at the workplace.

Memorandum of Understanding

In 2011, the Ministry for Gozo (MGOZ) and PHD drafted a MoU to facilitate monitoring of pests and diseases in Gozo. A training workshop was also held by PHD in July to MGOZ staff (44 participants) as part of this MoU.

Website of the Plant Health Directorate

During 2011, the PHD website was updated as necessary on a regular basis. Such updates included uploading of various news items, legal notices, government notices, various guidelines, PHD posters and leaflets as well as implementing necessary corrections.

DR MARICA GATT
Director (Plant Health)

Project Design and Implementation Department Office of the Director General

LEGAL OFFICE

The Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, the Project Design and Implementation Department and the Cleansing and Maintenance Department, comprising the various directorates within, constantly consult the Legal Office, and request its assistance with respect to drafting and vetting of contracts, vetting of insurance cover, assistance before the Public Contracts Review Board, in Arbitration proceedings, as well as in judicial proceedings before the Law Courts, in order to safeguard their interests.

The Legal Office assisted the various departments within the Ministry, as well as the Ministry itself, in approximately 35 cases, before the Law Courts, as well as in arbitration proceedings before the Malta Arbitration Centre and filed approximately 50 judicial acts in Court during 2011, for the various departments within the Ministry. As a result of such legal action, the departments recouped the sum of circa €49,730.

The Legal Office was also involved in the drafting and amendment of laws falling within the competence of this Ministry.

Advocates within the Legal Office attended a number of seminars and conferences held locally.

DOOR NUMBERING UNIT

Door numbering exercises were carried out in the following localities during 2011:

Locality	No of Streets
<i>New Streets (Re-numbering exercise)</i>	
Birkirkara	4
Burmarrad	3
Fgura	1
Guardamangia	4
Gzira	1
Hamrun	1
Luqa	1
Madliena	1
Marsascala	4
Mqabba	1
Msida	1
Pieta'	2
Qormi	1
San Ġiljan	1
San Ġwann	1
Santa Venera	4
Valletta	1
Xghajra	1
Żejtun	2
Żurrieq	3
Total	38

Locality	No of Streets
<i>Prolongation</i>	
Birkirkara	1
Hamrun	1
Luqa	1
Qormi	1
St Paul's Bay	1
Żurrieq	1
Total	6
<i>Amendments/Corrections</i>	
Boni Consigli	1
Burmarrad	2
Marsa	1
Naxxar	1
Santa Venera	1
Tarxien	2
Total	8

The Door Numbering Unit received a total of 85 queries and these were inspected on site.

The Unit carries out its work with the full cooperation of the Electoral Office, the Commissioner of Police, the Water Services Corporation, Maltapost and the local councils.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT (WORKS)

Restoration works at the Auberge de Castille Valletta

The general refurbishment works of the Auberge continued through 2011. The restoration works on the second section of the façade on Merchant Street was completed, whilst the works on the main façade on Castille Square were taken in hand and are in progress.

The works on the first floor level, St Paul Street wing, were finalised and the refurbishment works on the second floor level, St Paul Street wing, were also taken in hand and completed.

Alternative Wind Energy

Following the submission of three MEPA Outline applications for the development of three wind farms and additional applications for the installation of wind monitoring masts, the necessary studies required by MEPA are presently being carried out. These studies include Environmental Impact Assessments, Appropriate Assessments and other Additional Studies.

Refurbishment and Restoration works on Palazzo Parisio, Valletta

General restoration/refurbishment works are ongoing on this palace. Moreover, it is planned to replace the existing lift to better serve the need of these offices. A tender document was prepared for these works and the tender issued and adjudicated. It is envisaged that this work will be completed in the first half of 2012.

Football Ground at Birzebbuga

A MEPA application for the construction of a new football ground in Birzebbuga was submitted. This ground will serve the need of all the football teams in the locality. Tender documents for the works are also being prepared.

Ta' Qali Family Park

The family Park at Ta' Qali has been developing over the years and in view of the recent developments within the same park it was felt that the Master Plan had to be revised. The final draft of this Master Plan was prepared and submitted to MEPA for approval.

The Master Plan and proposed extensions will include the formation of a 3.5km cycling/jogging lane, children/toddlers play areas, jogging track, water park, new parking areas, upgrading of existing infrastructure and the separation of vehicles from pedestrian areas.

Young Offenders Unit Rehabilitation Services (YOURS)

During 2011, plans for a new YOURS facility were prepared. The finalised plans should be submitted to MEPA for approval in the first quarter of 2012.

Mtarfa Day Care Centre

The MRRA coordinated and carried out extensive works relating to this government facility so as to improve accessibility within the centre and provide for better recreational facilities for all its clients.

Customs, Freeport

The envisaged extension of the customs offices within the Freeport was taken in hand and due to be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

Refurbishment works for the new PPCD and FAPD offices in Santa Venera

During 2011, the necessary documents were prepared for the complete refurbishment of the new premises to be occupied by the PPCD and FAPD (Office of the Prime Minister) in Santa Venera. The works will include the complete refurbishment of the premises to be occupied by approximately 100 employees of these two divisions. It is envisaged that the works will be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

Upgrading of Sliema Front (The Strand)

It is planned to continue with the upgrading of the Sliema Ferries area through the laying of new pavements, upgrading of the parking facilities, etc. This work will also include the upgrading/relocation of all the underground services. The necessary coordination between all non-governmental entities was taken in hand during 2011, so that the initial phases of this upgrading will be taken in hand in the first weeks of 2012.

RAYMOND FARRUGIA

Director General (Project Design and Implementation)

Project Design and Implementation Department

Project Design & Engineering Directorate

INTRODUCTION

During 2011, the Project Design and Engineering Directorate maintained its role as the principal design arm of the Project Design and Implementation Department for projects originating from the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs and for projects originating from other ministries and departments.

The main projects that originated MRRA were embellishment projects aimed at enhancing the environment and quality of life of the local population and visiting tourists. Projects worthy of particular mention are Bisazza Street pedestrianisation, Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq public garden, Marsaxlokk promenade embellishment and the works on Vjal Santu Wistin, Rabat.

The set-up of the directorate for 2011 included the:

- Architectural and Structural Design Unit incorporating the Architectural and Structural Engineering Office responsible for design and project management, the Drawing Office, the Records & Archives.
- Electrical and Mechanical Services Unit incorporating the Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Office
- Land Survey Unit responsible for carrying out land surveys and related works.
- Quantity Surveying Unit responsible for the preparation of tender documentation (pre-contract) and measurement of works carried out (post-contract).

ARCHITECTURAL AND STRUCTURAL DESIGN UNIT

Embellishment Projects on behalf of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs

Completed works

- Ghargħur: Embellishment of area around local council monument at Misraħ il-Knisja - This involved the embellishment and upgrading of the area around the first local council monument in the main square of the village. The previous monument, including the hedge surrounding it, together with the paving and kerbs, were removed and the street furniture dismantled. The paved area, including the kerb, was upgraded and repaved with natural hardstone and a two-tiered pedestal for the monument, also in hardstone was installed. These works were taken in hand in April and completed in May.
- Gżira: Embellishment of Mount Carmel Parish Church parvis - This involved the embellishment of the church parvis and consisted of the removal of the existing parapet wall and cement paving tiles, earthworks to reduce the height of parvis floor area from the level of the existing surrounding footpaths, the laying of reinforced concrete foundations for the new parapet wall, the laying of service pipes and the repair of the existing lamp posts. The project also included the construction of a new parapet wall (including a wrought iron railing), staircases and paving in natural local hardstone. It gave a richer appearance to the church parvis as only natural materials were used and the paving was laid on a geometric pattern. The project was taken in hand in October 2010 and completed in April 2011.
- Marsaxlokk: Embellishment of promenade at Xatt Is-Sajjieda (Phase 3) - This involved the continuation and completion of the project consisting of the paving of the promenade area near l-Għajn tal-Ħasselin. Purpose-built utility service pillars were installed along the promenade to provide electricity and fresh water to the fishing community and for more organised activities related to sale of fresh fish by fishmongers on a pre-payment basis. The project also included the extension of street lighting in Xatt is-Sajjieda, the installation of matching decorative lanterns on the landward side and the illumination of

features (monument and canopy). The existing canopy near l-Ghajj tal-Ħasselin which was in a bad state of repair was replaced and picnic benches were placed under it. The underlying floor which included the local council emblem was paved with granite tiles. A concrete bench, which also serves as a wave-breaker, was installed along the promenade near the Kavallerizza area. Underground ducts were also laid in Il-Magħluq area for the future installation of service pillar boxes intended to serve the larger boats located in this area. The project was completed in June.

- Marsaxlokk: Repaving of Pjazza tal-Knisja and church parvis - This involved the re-paving of the square in front of the parish church and included the replacement of the existing water mains and main sewer together with the laying of ducts and the construction of a reservoir in connection with the installation of a water jet fountain. The existing hardstone paving was replaced by porphyry slabs and granite cubes. The church parvis was also repaved, using granite tiles, whilst the stone balustrades and steps were replaced. Cast iron bollards were installed to limit vehicular access to the square and new timber benches and flower pots were also installed. The project was taken in hand in February and completed in June.
- Sliema: Paving and landscaping works at Bisazza Street - This involved the paving of Bisazza Street in porphyry and granite to create a pleasant pedestrian environment where the public can stroll and enjoy this busy shopping area. A number of overhead electrical power cables were diverted underground and new water and drainage mains were installed. New planters, benches, litter bins, bollards, street lighting and fountains were installed. Works on the project were taken in hand in January and completed in June.
- Sliema: Replacement of pavements in lower part of Triq Manwel Dimech - This involved the taking up and replacement of the pavements on both sides of Triq Manwel Dimech from the seafront up to Triq Santa Marija and the replacement of the underlying water mains. A tender was awarded and works were started in February and completed in April.
- St Julians: Embellishment of steps at Triq Angelo Pullicino - This involved the replacement of a stretch of concrete staircase 45 metres in length by 6 metres in width. It also included the paving of the stairs, the construction of planters and the provision of decorative street lamps together with the resurfacing of the street between Triq Alfred Gauci and Triq Angelo Pullicino. The relocation of various services was also necessary. Works on this project had started in November 2010 and were completed in May.
- Valletta: Refurbishment of Saluting Battery, Upper Barrakka Gardens - The project involved the removal of existing vegetable soil and loose material from the site and the installation of a waterproof layer and the construction of a culvert, prior to reinstallation of same, in an attempt to resolve the problems of water ingress in the vaulted structures beneath the battery. The project also allowed for a number of modifications to the current landscaping design and involved new paving works. Works were taken in hand in January and completed in July.
- Żebbuġ: Replacement of pavement in front of St Philip's Parish Church - This involved the replacement of the old pavement in front of the Church. The old pavement was in a bad state of repair and was taken up and replaced by new hardstone kerbs and lava cubetti tiles. Prior to the laying of the cubetti, a reinforced concrete sub base was constructed to eliminate the possibility of any settlement. Works were carried out by government workers between September and November.

Works in Hand

- Naxxar: Development of a recreational area in front of Madonna tal-Angli Parish Church, Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq - This involves the development of a vacant site in front of Parish Church into a recreational area. The proposal allows for a direct vertical access from the church parvis to the proposed garden and incorporates different levels, multiple access points and a number of walkways. Landscaping works include trees, shrubs and floral displays. The garden includes an interactive water feature, play areas complete with play equipment and safety flooring, benches, light fixtures and other furniture. The recreational area is fully accessible and includes sanitary facilities. An underground water reservoir has been constructed for the collection of surface water runoff and the use of the water for irrigation of the landscaped areas. The relevant MEPA permit was issued and tenders for works were prepared and adjudicated. Site works commenced in June and will be completed in January 2012.
- Rabat: Upgrading of Triq Santu Wistin/Misrah L'Isle Adam - This involved the re-paving with lava of Misrah L'Isle Adam and Triq Santu Wistin and paving with hardstone and lava of Vjal Santu Wistin. The project was subsequently extended to include an alley in Triq Santu Wistin and another alley forming part of Triq Doni, which were also paved with lava slabs. The works started in Vjal Santu Wistin progressing

towards Saqqajja. New water mains were laid and all house services were replaced. Part of the existing lava in Triq Santu Wistin was removed, cleaned, stored on site and re-used to replace the old lava slabs which were missing. The other parts of this street were paved with new lava slabs by a private contractor. An independent archaeologist was commissioned to monitor works for the possible discovery of archaeological remains. These works started in July and will be completed in January 2012

Works still to start

- Attard: Embellishment of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish Church parvis - This will involve the upgrading of the parvis through the removal of the existing cement tiles, the laying of a reinforced concrete sub-base and the repaving of the area using natural materials. These will include hardstone and granite paving in different sizes laid according to a simple geometric pattern thus creating visual interest without being in conflict with the church architecture. A new lighting scheme will also be provided. The existing access steps leading to this parvis will also be replaced and repaved in hardstone. Proposals were drawn up and the development application is expected to be sent to MEPA in early 2012.
- Cospicua: Upgrading of pinetum in Sur San Pawl - This will involve the upgrading and landscaping of the pinetum and public open space in the vicinity of St Paul's Bastion. A preliminary design was prepared and is awaiting further feedback before proceeding with submission of the development application to MEPA.
- Cospicua: Development of a public garden adjacent to Cospicua Rangers Boċċi Club at Triq San Ġwann/Triq Santa Liena - This will involve the development of a public garden at Triq San Ġwann in accordance with plans prepared and the MEPA permit obtained by Cospicua Local Council. A tender was prepared and published but will have to be re-issued in early 2012.
- Dingli: Construction of a panoramic belvedere in Dingli Cliffs - This will involve the construction of a wide belvedere alongside the panoramic road at Dingli Cliffs. Great care will be taken to conserve the informal and indigenous character of the area as well as rendering it accessible to disabled people. A proposal was prepared and submitted to MEPA. Tender documents were drawn up and this will be published in January 2012. The MEPA permit is also expected to be issued in January 2012. Works are scheduled to start in March 2012.
- Floriana: Upgrading of pinetum in Triq l-Indipendenza - This will involve the upgrading and landscaping of the pinetum and public open space in Floriana close to Valletta and Pieta'. The proposal includes better delineation of existing passage ways by timber logs on either side hammered in the soil, the installation of timber platforms with seating areas, the installation of timber benches and timber barbecue tables, the installation of trim trail equipment and the installation of low level lighting bollards to passageways. The intervention will be kept to a minimum and the existing passageways will be retained. These will be in compacted earth and timber will be used for all street furniture. Proposals were submitted to MEPA for consideration.
- Floriana: Upgrading of War Memorial Roundabout - This will involve the upgrading of the roundabout in order to give greater value to a space dedicated to the fallen of the two World Wars. It will also address issues related to space requirements in connection with memorial ceremonies held on the site. The proposal involves the installation of two ornamental flames fuelled by LPG gas, with bronze supporting structures, an increased area of hardstone paving and the redesign of the landscaped areas. It also includes the restoration of the monument and the installation of six new 12 metre high flagpoles. The MEPA permit was issued and the relevant tenders for works were drawn up, published and adjudicated. Works will be taken in hand in January 2012 and are intended to be completed in March 2012.
- Gudja: Embellishment of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish Church parvis - This will involve the replacement of the perimeter balustrade together with the replacement of damaged paving and steps. The limestone paving of the parvis is generally still in a very good condition and will thus be retained. However, some areas have undergone substantial deterioration, while others have been damaged by chasing to create ducts for electrical conduits. The paving slabs in these damaged areas will be replaced. Some of the stone steps leading up from the road to the level of the parvis have also deteriorated and will be replaced with new hardstone steps. The balustrade surrounding its perimeter was originally constructed in stone but there was a misguided attempt at repairs which resulted in the *sottobank* being covered in terrazzo, the stone pilasters replaced by concrete ones (which are spalling badly in places) and only the original stone capitals being retained. The balustrades shall

be reconstructed completely in hardstone and remedial work will be carried out on the existing railings as well. Proposals were drawn up and the development application is expected to be sent to MEPA in early 2012.

- Kalkara: Embellishment of St Joseph Parish Church parvis - This will involve the upgrading of the parvis as well as the construction of an underground store beneath the parvis which will be accessible from the Parish Centre situated on the left hand side of the Church. The existing cement tiles on the parvis will be replaced with paving tiles of differing sizes manufactured from natural materials such as granite and porphyry. The existing concrete benches will be replaced with new timber and steel benches, whilst the existing concrete steps will be reconstructed and clad in granite to achieve an aesthetically unified design. The area of steps and flooring which will be repaved is approximately 830m². A new lighting system will also be installed to highlight the architectural features of the façade of the church. Care has also been taken so that accessibility for all is ensured by providing necessary ramps. Proposals were drawn up and the development application was submitted to MEPA. Works are expected to be taken in hand in July 2012.
- Marsa: Embellishment of Holy Trinity Parish Church parvis - This will involve the upgrading of the Parish Church parvis through the removal of the existing cement tiles, and the replacement by natural hardstone material. This project will give a richer appearance to the church parvis as the paving will be laid in a geometric pattern and the up-lighters will be introduced to enhance the appearance of the church façade at night. Proposals were drawn up and the development application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012.
- Marsaxlokk: Development of a National Park at Delimara - This will involve the development of the area from Fortizza ta' Delimara to Ponta ta' Delimara into a national park. The design proposal includes the upgrading of the parking area above the bay, the improvement to existing passage ways, the installation of safety railings where necessary and the installation of street furniture (signage, benches, barbecue tables, timber bollards). It also involves the construction of gazebos and belvederes at strategic viewpoints, the rehabilitation of existing rubble walling, the reconstruction of a collapsed ditch wall around the fort, the rehabilitation of World War II anti-aircraft batteries, the rehabilitation of existing military buildings and the provision of better access to the existing rocky beaches. The project will also entail the construction of a Visitors Centre, the construction of a small adventure park and other related works including the provision of underground services where required. The intervention on this site will be kept to a minimum and the predominant material to be used will be timber. Plans of this development were submitted to MEPA and details of the proposal were discussed. The project will be carried out in three phases, with the first phase expected to be taken in hand in late 2012/early 2013.
- Mtarfa: Upgrading of the existing playing field at Triq l-Imtarfa - This will involve the development of a recreational area at Mtarfa Street, in accordance with plans prepared and the MEPA permit obtained by Mtarfa Local Council. This will replace the existing playing field which is in a poor state. The first phase shall consist of excavation for an underground reservoir and pump room and excavation for foundations of the toilet block, fountain and boundary wall. It also includes construction of reservoir, toilet block, boundary wall, fountain and pump room as well as finishing of reservoir. At a later stage, the area will be paved with concrete paving blocks and rubber matting beneath new play equipment. Hedges will be planted along the boundary, old olive trees will be retained and a kiosk will also be incorporated in playing field together with a gazebo in olive grove. Tenders for the construction of the reservoir and toilet block were prepared, published and adjudicated. Works are expected to be taken in hand in early 2012.
- Naxxar: Embellishment of Our Lady of Victories Parish Church parvis - This will involve the upgrading of the parvis through the removal of the existing cement tiles and the repaving of the area with granite and hardstone slabs. The low perimeter wall of the parvis will also be replaced by a hardstone wall to complement the existing hardstone stairs leading from the pavement to the level of the parvis. The concrete ramp leading to the side door on the left hand side of the Church will be replaced with a more appropriate steel and timber ramp and railing which will also be in conformity with accessibility guidelines. A new lighting layout will also be provided to enhance the main architectural features of the Church façade. Proposals were drawn up and the development application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012.
- San Ġwann: Construction of club rooms for San Ġwann Football Nursery at Misraħ Lewża - This will involve the construction of club rooms adjacent to the football ground at Misraħ Lewża. Proposals were drawn up and a development application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012.

- San Ġwann: Redevelopment of Karen Grech public garden at Vjal ir-Rihan into a recreational area and community facilities - This will involve the upgrading of the existing garden and the construction of community facilities at the lower end of the site (Triq il-Kappella). This will also involve the relocation of the existing bocci club and pitch complex to a site further up the road at Taż-Żwejt. The community facilities will incorporate new local council offices accessible from Triq il-Kappella and a multi-purpose hall (area 217m²) accessible from Triq il-Kappella and Triq Pepprin. The public garden will include paved walkways, a central assembly area with a ground fountain, the re-instatement of Karen Grech monument, the provision of secondary walkways, shaded seating areas, a playing field with safety material, kiosk, toilets etc. The existing gradient from Triq L-Iskola down to Triq il-Kappella will be utilised such that the local council offices will be only two courses below street level in Triq il-Kappella. Proposals were drawn up and the development application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012.
- San Ġwann: Construction of a *boċċi* club and pitch at Triq id-9 Ta' Frar 1799, Taż-Żwejt - This will involve the relocation of the *boċċi* complex affected by the project in Ġnien Karen Grech. The project will consist of the construction of a *boċċi* pitch measuring 17 metres by 17 metres including seating (capacity 68 spectators) and the construction of club house. This club house will include a bar, bar kitchen, public toilets and a committee room. Proposals were drawn up and the development application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012.
- Siġġiewi: Development of Annabel Vassallo Meditation Garden at Tal-Provvidenza - This will involve the development of a meditation garden in an area adjacent to the chapel of Our Lady of Divine Providence in the limits of Siġġiewi. It will replace a complex built for military purposes between 1947 and 1957, probably as ancillary facilities to the nearby San Niklaw/Qrendi airfield. The site was subsequently used for farming and the existing buildings consist of dilapidated Nissen huts and stone buildings which are in a better state. The project will consist of a garden designed in a simple and uncluttered manner, incorporating a sense of enclosure, intended for contemplation and reflection. It will include curved pathways, a labyrinth (made up of 1.5 metre hedges), a pond, a Zen garden, a circular cloister, multi-purpose rooms, a childcare area, public toilets, underground reservoirs and pump rooms. A number of existing stone buildings will be retained together with one of the Nissen huts which will be reconstructed due to its deteriorated state. Proposals were drawn up and a development application was submitted to MEPA. The site was cleared from rodents and a tender was issued for the removal and disposal of the asbestos contained in the dilapidated Nissen huts. These works will be carried out in January 2012.
- Sliema: Construction of an underground car park at Qui-Si-Sana - This will involve the construction of a car park on three floors, two situated below the ground and a third being a surface car park. These will be sited in the area currently used as a surface car park adjacent to the newly constructed public garden and will provide parking for approximately 90 cars. The car park will compensate for the loss of parking resulting from the enlargement of the public garden. It will also include a bring-in site facility within the surface car park. Proposals had been prepared and submitted to MEPA in 2010 and structural details were drawn up in 2011 but the application was still pending by the end of the year.
- Sliema: Paving and landscaping works at Ix-Xatt ta' Tigne - This will involve the paving of part of Ix-Xatt ta' Tigne (between Bisazza Street and St Anthony Street in porphyry and granite. The project includes the installation of underground services. The works (which were included in the tender for paving works at Bisazza Street) will be taken in hand and completed in February 2012.
- Sliema: Paving and landscaping works at The Ferries - This will involve the paving of part of The Ferries (between Triq it-Torri and Triq San Piju) in porphyry and granite. The project includes the installation of underground services. The works (which were also included in the tender for paving works at Bisazza Street) will be taken in hand and completed in March 2012.
- St Julians: Paving and landscaping works, construction of storm water culverts at Pjazza Spinola - This will involve the re-routing of traffic in this popular location to create two large pedestrian areas. The existing Sacred Heart of Jesus statue which is currently sited in the roundabout of this busy traffic junction will be relocated to a new position where it can be better appreciated. An old horse drinking trough will also be relocated and will be incorporated as an attractive feature in the new scheme. The design will allow for the possibility of closing off the area to vehicular traffic on special occasions and new street furniture, lighting and two ground fountains will be installed. As the site is notoriously prone to flooding, a number of culverts will be constructed to cater for storm water. In addition, a maze of cables and pipes located below the road surface will have to be diverted. Thus, consultations with utility service providers

were carried out to plan for such diversions and the installation of new services. A development application was submitted to MEPA and a tender for the relative works was prepared for publication in early 2012. Works are scheduled to start in April/May 2012.

- St Julians: Upgrading of Scicluna steps, Balluta - This will involve the upgrading of Scicluna steps in the vicinity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church at Balluta. The staircases will be retained but landings will be introduced and the central ramped area will be converted into a cascading fountain. Ceramic tiling similar to those used in Angelo Pullicino steps will be the main finishing material. Proposals were drawn up and the development application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012.
- St Paul's Bay: Construction of a water park on the sea shore at Buġibba - This will involve the construction of a water park on the sea shore, and it will seek to provide an interactive attraction for children of various ages. The facility will also be of benefit to locals as well as to the tourism operators in the area. The project will consist of the water play area and ancillary facilities including a guard room, toilet, pump room and an underground water reservoir. The water playground was specifically designed for children of all ages, with safety being of utmost importance. The enclosed space will have a total site area of approximately 970m². The development permit for this project was issued by MEPA and tenders for civil works and the provision of the equipment proper were prepared, published and awarded. The works are expected to start in early 2012.
- Swieqi: Embellishment of St Andrew's Parish Church parvis at Tal-Ibraġġ - This involves the upgrading of the parvis through the removal of the existing cement tiles, and the repaving of the area utilising natural materials. This will include granite and porphyry of differing sizes and colour, which will be laid according to a geometric pattern thus creating visual interest. A new lighting scheme will also be provided. The existing parapet wall which is capped with an unsightly concrete coping will also be upgraded. It will be finished with a moulded stone coping and a low railing will be provided on its top edge. Proposals were drawn up and the development application is expected to be sent to MEPA in January 2012.
- Swieqi: Development of a Civic Centre and Recreational Area at Triq il-Keffa - This will involve the development of a civic centre, ancillary facilities and a recreational area and is spread on a site measuring approximately 2,300m². The civic centre includes offices for Swieqi Local Council, a police station and a multi-purpose hall, among others, and is partly sunken below the level of the road. The recreational area is located predominantly at street level and includes spaces with soft landscaping, play areas complete with play equipment, safety flooring and a water feature. The garden also includes a reservoir for the irrigation of landscaped areas. The access to different levels will be through staircases and ramps and the project was designed in such a manner that the garden and roof garden will be integrated. The development application was submitted to MEPA and the project is scheduled to start in early 2012.
- Ta Xbiex: Upgrading of promenade (from *Mamma Mia restaurant* to *Black Pearl restaurant*) - This will involve the upgrading of the whole promenade between the Mamma Mia and Black Pearl restaurants. On the seaward side, works will include a new pavement and lighting poles. On the landward side, works will include new pavements/retaining walls, bollards, railings, street furniture, light fixtures, an underground bring-in-site and a water feature. The whole area will be made safer for pedestrians by including new road markings and street crossings. A development application was submitted to MEPA and tenders for the supply of materials were issued. Works will be carried out both by contract labour and government workers and are planned to start in early 2012.
- Żebbuġ: Embellishment of St Philip's Parish Church parvis - This will involve the upgrading of the Parish Church parvis through the taking up of the existing paving and replacement by granite/lava tiles. Works will also include a new rainwater drainage system, a new electrical system, the addition of up-lighters, shifting of lamp posts, a new timber ramp for access of disabled persons, new handrails and replacement of mosaic steps by hardstone steps to match the original ones still on site. A development application was submitted to MEPA and a tender for the replacement of the mosaic steps was issued and awarded. A tender for the engagement of an archaeological monitor to ensure compliance with MEPA conditions was also awarded. Preliminary works will be carried out by government workers whereas paving works will be carried out by layers engaged by the church authorities. Works are expected to start in early 2012.

Other Projects on behalf of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs

Completed works

- Gharghur: Widening of Triq ix-Xghajrat - This involved the widening of a stretch of road leading to Wied id-Dis at Gharghur. A number of structural alternatives ranging from cantilever projections and retaining walls were considered. Eventually, a retaining wall of a height varying from five metres to ten metres was constructed within a disused quarry. The wall was built using masonry blocks and rubble walls to harmonise with the rural environment within which the road was sited. The works were carried out between September and December.
- Vittoriosa: Replacement of flagpoles at St John's Cavalier - This involved the installation of 20m high flagpoles to replace the existing system which jarred with the environment. The new system will allow for the removal of the bases of the flagpoles so as to minimise any visual intrusion. Structural engineering services were provided to the Restoration Directorate in implementing the project. Works were carried out between June and August.

Works in hand

- Attard: Upgrading of the FCCS (Farmers' Central Cooperative Society) shed at Pitkalija, Ta' Qali - This involves the upgrading of the shed used by the FCCS including the replacement of the corrugated iron roof by a new insulated and more aesthetically pleasing roofing system. It also involves the replacement of the existing paving by a resin-based concrete floor. Separate tenders were issued and awarded for such works with those on the roof taken in hand in October and completed in December. The works on the replacement of the flooring are expected to be completed in January 2012.
- Attard: Construction of a Petting Farm at National Park, Ta' Qali - This involves the construction of a petting farm to complement the national and adventure park. The farm will house a number of buildings where domestic animals and birds will be farmed for the enjoyment of the public. A butterfly building also forms part of the farm. Structural engineering services were provided to the Parks Directorate which is implementing the project. The works will be completed in early 2012.
- Mdina: Consolidation of historic ramparts - This involves the EU-funded project for the Consolidation of Terrain and Historic Ramparts of Mdina. Although this is a Restoration Directorate project, the PDED provided technical assistance in liaison with the geotechnical engineering and project management consultants. These were engaged for their specific experience in ground consolidation in order to address the problems resulting from the fragile terrain underlying the bastion walls and historic palaces of the walled city of Mdina. Ground investigations were carried out under Vilhena Palace, Magazine Curtain wall and Despuig Bastions. The investigations consisted of a number of cores with and without recovery, installation of ground inclinometers and piezometers, crack gauges and tilt-meters and ultrasonic tests. The resultant data and the ground investigations results provided the basis for the design proposal for Magazine curtain wall and Despuig Bastions. The works consist in the construction of bored concrete piles, micropiles, strand anchors, capping beams etc to consolidate the fragile fortification walls. A structural design for a ground slab to support the traverse tunnel wall was prepared and the structural concept design for the strengthening of St. Paul's bastion was designed in-house. A design and build tender was prepared for the consolidation and restoration works of Magazine curtain wall and the magazines and Despuig bastions. The tender is EU funded and the funds committed are 4 million Euros. Works underneath Vilhena Palace and St Paul's bastion were completed. The tender was adjudicated and awarded and works will start in 2012 and be completed in 2013.
- Żabbar: Upgrading of recreational facilities at St Joseph's Home - This involves the refurbishment of the yard at St Joseph's children's home before the installation of new play equipment which will be procured by the Dominican Sisters administering the home. The works include the demolition of several redundant structures, the introduction of collection system for rain water runoff, the building of a store room, the provision of new floor finishes and new protective fence along the play area perimeter. Works were taken in hand in June 2010 and were carried out by government workers. A tender for the supply of safety material and artificial turf was prepared and will be issued in early 2012.

Works still to start

- Attard: Reorganisation and redevelopment of the Pitkalija, Ta' Qali - This will involve the construction of two new blocks within the existing sheds at the vegetable market at the Pitkalija. They will house a new transaction system aimed to increase efficiency and eliminate any existing malpractices. Various preliminary proposals were drawn up and it was decided to choose the option whereby the operations would be conducted on two levels. Detailed proposals are to be drawn up and the development application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012.
- Attard: Relocation of a steel canopy to Pitkalija, Ta' Qali - This will involve the relocation of a disused steel canopy that housed the former government fuel station at Kirkop to a new location at the entrance of the Pitkalija where it will provide shade and shelter to the security personnel manning this entrance. A MEPA application was submitted and granted. Structural drawings were prepared and works will be carried out by the Manufacturing and Servicing Directorate in early 2012.
- Dingli: Finishing works of three farmhouses at Buskett - This will involve finishing works on three dilapidated 17th century farmhouses which are being restored by the Restoration Directorate. Each farmhouse was planned for a specific use. Razzett tal-Baghal will be used as a visitors' interpretation centre and as an information office for the area's flora and fauna, its history and other characteristics. The Razzett tal-Ispirtu is to be used as a showcase of local produce and to provide facilities for ecological wardens. The Razzett tal-Bosk is to be used as a workshop for small groups of students wishing to conduct experiments on biodiversity and rural sciences. Interior design layouts were prepared and referred to private engineering consultants to draw up the tender for mechanical and electrical works which was published and adjudicated. Works are expected to start in January 2012.
- Floriana: Installation of a back-up electrical generator at MRRRA offices in Block B - This will involve the installation of a back-up electrical generator for Block B, MRRRA, including all necessary ancillary works (base, fencing and trenching) A MEPA application was submitted to install this generator adjacent to Block B but this was refused. Alternative locations were thus considered. Works are to be carried out by contract labour and are expected to be completed by mid 2012.
- Lija: Construction of conservation garden and ancillary buildings at the Plant Biotechnology Centre - This will involve the construction of a garden which will promote the conservation and sustainable use of local varieties of agricultural plants and vegetables. The project will also include an ancillary three storey building within the precincts of the Plant Biotechnology Centre to house a visitors' centre, offices, a sample division preparation area, a plant material room, a seed germination room, a seed purity room as well as a controlled temperature store. Proposals were prepared and a development application was submitted to MEPA.
- Lija: Construction of an additional storey at the Diagnostic Laboratory at the Plant Biotechnology Centre - This will involve the construction of an additional storey as an extension to the existing laboratory building to house the chemistry laboratory, seed testing laboratory, viticulture and oenology laboratory together with the Surveillance and Inspectorate Unit and a Conference Hall within the grounds of il-Ġnien tal-Kmand. A MEPA permit was submitted and granted and the preparation of tender documents was taken in hand for publication in early 2012.
- Luqa: Construction of the new offices of the Paying Agency at the Government Experimental Farm, Ghammieri - This will involve the expansion of the facilities of the existing paying agency at Ghammieri Luqa through the demolition of an existing building adjacent to the current paying agency offices and the construction of new premises consisting of a semi basement, ground floor and first floor. A MEPA permit was obtained and a turnkey tender was prepared and published. The tender is expected to be awarded in early 2012.
- Luqa: Construction of a prototype windmill at the Government Experimental Farm, Ghammieri - This will involve the construction of a prototype windmill to form the basis of a study on the possible use of a number of disused windmills (Chicago type) around the island to generate electrical energy. In this respect, the wind vanes would need to be changed and structural alterations would have to be made on the towers to render the project viable. This work is being done in collaboration with a team of experts from the University of Malta. A MEPA permit was obtained to install the prototype windmill. Structural verification how to install part of the tower on the roof of a university workshop was also carried out. A site investigation was carried out and works will commence in early 2012, following further testing of the

tower by computer models and wind tunnel testing being carried out in collaboration with a university team.

- **Marsa: Relocation of the Fish Market and construction of fish processing facilities at Triq il-Biċċerija/Triq Troubridge, Alberttown** - This will involve the construction of a new fish market to replace the existing one situated in Grand Harbour as the current building will eventually be converted into a boutique hotel as part of the Grand Harbour regeneration plan. The present fish market building in Valletta lacks basic amenities such as cold storage for fish, crate disinfection facilities, changing rooms for auctioneers and other workers, ice-making facilities and management offices (some of these are currently inconveniently housed in a building across the road from the existing fish market). A number of options were considered as alternative sites but each had to be discarded for a number of technical or practical reasons. The site eventually chosen at Marsa is adjacent to the Civil Abattoir and situated in the corner between Triq il-Biċċerija and Triq Troubridge, formerly used to house a Reverse Osmosis plant. It was also decided to incorporate within the project a small parcel of land formerly occupied by Marsa Shipbuilding. The proposals envisage the demolition of the Reverse Osmosis plant and the construction of a fish market instead. The new building will also include an area for fish processing situated at first floor level. Works will necessitate the re-siting of the existing Enemalta substation, the shifting of the existing main sewer to an alternative site within the civil abattoir and considerable excavation works. It will consist of the market hall, middlemen's rooms, a number of chillers, a garbage room, cash office, security room, loading areas and staff toilets/changing rooms. The first floor will comprise the main fish processing and packaging areas, confiscated goods area, fish receiving area, toilets, storage space and offices but there will be separate access to this floor so that the two floors can function independently. The new fish market building shall thus be a combination of public structures (wholesale fish market with auction sales hall) and private structures (fish processing and storage warehouses) designed to concentrate the various production chain activities, from product landing at the wharf to its transfer to the end sales or export point. This will be in full compliance with EU hygiene/health regulations. The MEPA permit was granted and a turnkey tender for its construction and finishing was published. Works are expected to be taken in hand in April 2012.
- **Marsa: Demolition of a reinforced concrete water tower at the Civil Abattoir** - This will involve the demolition of a disused concrete water tower situated near the main building of the Civil Abattoir. The structure consists of a cylindrical water tower supported by several tall square reinforced concrete columns and is situated in an open area within the abattoir compound. The site is to be cordoned off by erecting scaffolding around the perimeter of the site to the full height of the water tower. This shall be screened to attenuate dust, noise and visual intrusion. The roof of the tower and vertical walls will be demolished by hand held tools and reinforcement cut in situ by hot works. Adequate shoring will be carried out to prevent collapse. The columns will be demolished by excavation/demolition machinery. The routine operations of the civil abattoir will not be interrupted as a result of these works. A tender was re-issued but the possibility of restoring the structure is being evaluated. A decision is expected in early 2012.
- **Marsa: Construction of Archery Bridge at the Marsa Sports Club** - This will involve the construction of a 13-metre road/pedestrian bridge within the precincts of the Marsa Sports Club. The site conditions necessitate a bridge with a very low structural depth and a flat soffit and thus it was decided to opt for a structural steel through-girder bridge which will provide this requirement. A MEPA permit was granted
- **Naxxar: Finishing works on Ximenes Redoubt, Salini Rehabilitation Project** - This will involve the finishing works on Ximenes Redoubt which will be converted into an Interpretation Centre. This redoubt, built by Grand Master Ximenes in 1715, is one of the major buildings of the Salini project. The restoration works are being carried out under the direction of the Restoration Directorate, whereas the finishing works will be carried out under the supervision of the PDED. These will include the removal of internal structures (accretions), the breaking up of the existing floor, the construction of a new concrete subfloor, laying of a laminate flooring system, tiling works, sanitary ware including fittings and accessories for restroom, fixing of a CCTV and a fire detection system, fixing of timber doors and windows, fixing of wrought iron security grilles, fixing of aluminium framed skylights, plastering works, electrical works, drainage works and the installation of a data and telephone network system. The tender for such works was prepared and published and is expected to be awarded in early 2012. Finishing works are expected to start shortly afterwards, i.e. as soon as the restoration works taken in hand by the Restoration Directorate in November are complete.

- Naxxar: Construction and finishing of an underpass, Salini Rehabilitation Project - This will involve the provision of a pedestrian link between the Ximenes Redoubt and the Salini Park Visitors at the Ximenes Redoubt (Interpretation Centre) would be able to walk some 50 metres before they reach a small freestanding structure housing a passenger lift and a staircase which will take them to the underpass tunnel, 3 metres below. Once the lift reaches the tunnel level, visitors would be able to walk safely to the landscaped area of Salini Park through this underpass. The civil works will include excavation, concrete and masonry work whilst the finishing works will include rendering of walls and ceilings, painting, tiling, electrical works, fixing of aluminium-framed windows and doors, fixing of a stainless steel railing, fixing of a wrought iron gate, underground pipe-work for services, cladding of the façade with hardstone slabs and fixing of stainless steel lettering. The tender for such works was prepared and published and is expected to be awarded in early 2012.
- Naxxar: Finishing works at Visitors' Centre (Hut B), Salini Rehabilitation Project - This will involve the finishing works to one of three timber huts which shall be reconstructed Huts A and B shall be used to process and store salt. These huts, built during the British period, had eroded over time and were restored with materials that did not complement the original designs. These will thus be rebuilt according to the original plans, whereby one will be used as a Visitors' Centre, which will house exhibits and video presentations on salt production. The Visitors' Centre will also house a small cafeteria. The finishing works of the Visitors' Centre include the laying of tiles, installation of sanitary ware including fittings and accessories for restrooms, fixing of a CCTV and a fire detection system, fixing of timber doors and windows, fixing of stainless steel railings, plastering works, electrical works, drainage works and the installation of a data and telephone network system. The tender for the rebuilding of the three huts was prepared by private consultants and was awarded with works expected to start in January 2012. The drawing up of the tender documents for the finishing works of Hut B was taken in hand and the tender is expected to be published in February 2012. Once the rebuilding of the three huts is complete, the finishing works can be taken in hand.
- Naxxar: Construction of storm water reservoir, Salini Rehabilitation Project - This will involve the construction of a reservoir within the park at Salini. The technical assistance was provided to the Parks Directorate in connection with the structural design of the reservoir. The preparation of the relative tender documents was taken in hand and the tender is expected to be published in early 2012.
- Rabat: Construction of Electricity sub-station at Tal-Fiddien - This will involve the construction of a sub-station adjacent to Tal-Fiddien *reservoir*, in connection with the project for the installation of PV panels on public buildings. A development application was submitted to MEPA and the permit was granted.

Projects on behalf of other Ministries and Departments

Completed works

- Floriana: Various works at the Department of Contracts Offices (DOC) - This involved the civil works in connection with the installation of a passenger lift and minor alterations to façade at the offices of the Department of Contracts offices in Floriana. A MEPA permit was obtained and works were carried out by government workers between August and December.
- Floriana: Provision of additional office space in one of the vaults within the Police General Head Quarters (Police) - This involved the construction of an intermediate floor to be used as offices. Structural details were prepared and civil and finishing works were done by the Police using in-house direct labour and completed in September.
- Luqa: Replacement of concrete slabs and masonry columns at Luqa Barracks (Sgts' Mess) (AFM) - This involved the demolition and reconstruction of concrete slabs and masonry columns at the Sergeant's Mess as these were declared to be dangerous. A tender was issued and awarded and works were taken in hand in October 2010 and completed in March.
- Floriana: Landscaping works at the Environmental Upgrade Committee offices in Sa' Maison (EUC/OPM) - This involved the upgrading of external areas adjacent to the new EUC offices. Works included the reconstruction of hardstone stairs/walls from the promenade to the building, new railings, granite tiling works, resurfacing of car park, construction of rubble walls, plastering/painting works, new light fixtures and soft landscaping. Works were carried out both by contract labour and government workers between April and August.

Works in hand

- Birżebbuġa: Roofing of Vehicles Shed at Ħal-Far (AFM) - This involves the roofing of an internal courtyard at Ħal-Far by a 10-metre span lightweight portal frame steel structure to provide shade and to protect military vehicles from environmental elements. Structural designs were prepared and works were taken in hand using AFM soldiers. These are expected to be completed in early 2012.
- Floriana: Refurbishment of offices of Expatriate Affairs Department at Sa' Maison (MFA) - This involves the refurbishment of the premises formerly used by the Joint Office into the offices of the EAD. Works include structural alterations and complete refurbishment of the building. Works were being carried out by government workers but were put on hold, pending a final decision on the proposed use of the building.
- Siġġiewi: Construction of a new Police Academy at Ta' Kandja (Police) - This involves the construction of new buildings to house the Police Academy at Ta' Kandja as the existing buildings at St Elmo have to be vacated by the Academy in connection with the Grand Harbour regeneration project. A MEPA permit was obtained and detailed drawings were prepared. These included the detailing of the reservoirs, the Administration and Lecture Block, and all the detailing regarding Infrastructural Works including all services, road works etc. A number of tender documents were also prepared namely for the excavation and construction of reservoirs and for the construction and finishing of the administration and lecture block. The preparation of tender documents for the execution of infrastructural works was also taken in hand for publication by mid-2012. The tenders for the excavation and construction of *reservoirs* were issued and awarded. Excavation works were in fact carried out in December whilst works on the construction of the reservoirs are expected to start in early 2012. The tender for the construction and finishing of the Administration and Lecture block was published by the Contracts Department and is expected to be awarded in early 2012.

Works still to start

- Ghargħur: Minor alterations to Local Council offices (Ghargħur LC) - This will involve minor works to render the local council offices accessible to the disabled following an enforcement notice by MEPA. An application to sanction the premises as built including the proposed alterations was submitted to MEPA.
- Luqa: Conversion of Astra Theatre into Search and Rescue Training Centre at Luqa Barracks (AFM) - This will involve the conversion of the Astra Theatre at Luqa Barracks into a search and rescue training centre. The proposed design respects the heritage of the building by preserving the proscenium, theatre foyer and projection room and at the same time incorporating a double storey independent and reversible steel light weight frame structure to house the requirements of the training school. The school incorporates a number of lecture rooms, lecture halls and simulation rooms. MEPA has approved the development and the plans are being discussed with American Military Architects to obtain approval and funding from the American Government, so that works can commence in 2012 following an international call for tenders.
- Luqa: Construction of an accommodation block for Search and Rescue Training Centre at Luqa Barracks (AFM) - This will involve the construction of an additional storey to an accommodation building built by the British Military forces at Luqa Barracks to house the accommodation unit related to the search and rescue training centre. The building consists of 16 double bedrooms with private facilities and common areas. A MEPA development permit was obtained and the plans were discussed with American Military Architects to obtain approval and funding from the American Government, so that works can commence in 2012 following an international call for tenders.
- Luqa: Alterations and additions at the AFM Coin Depot Luqa Barracks (AFM) - This will involve alterations and additions to the Coin Depot in Luqa Barracks to accommodate the new operations AFM building. A major requirement is to make the building earthquake resistant to keep being operational in case of natural calamities. Discussions were held with AFM officials and service engineers to develop a brief. A structural appraisal of the structure was carried out to study how the building may be strengthened and altered to meet these new requirements.
- Luqa: Construction of an Aircraft Hangar at Luqa Barracks (AFM) - This will involve the construction of a steel hangar to house the two new Maritime Patrol Aircraft being procured by the Armed Forces of Malta. The project covers an area of approximately 1,030m² and includes hangar space, a workshop, a pump room, sanitary facilities and the construction of an underground water reservoir. Related investigations included a study of existing historic structures on site and soil investigations. A tender for

such works which will be co-financed by the EU was issued and evaluated and works are expected to start in January 2012.

- Luqa: Repairs to roof at Officer's Mess Building, Luqa (AFM) - This will involve repairs to the Officer's Mess building roof which has suffered considerable damage due to water infiltration. Tests were carried out to determine how to best preserve and strengthen the roof.
- Luqa: Alterations and repairs to Accommodation Block 247, Luqa Barracks (AFM) - This will involve repairs and alterations to the central core of the three storey accommodation block that houses the ablutions, changing areas and shower area which has suffered considerable damage due to faulty services and water infiltration. Preliminary investigations were carried out and an application will be submitted to MEPA in early 2012 to replace all the dangerous structures and carry out minor alterations.
- Marsa: Conversion of ex-Sea Malta Building into new offices for Customs Department (MFEI) - This will involve the conversion of the former Head Office of Sea Malta into offices for customs personnel as the existing Customs House in Valletta has to be relocated as part of the plan for the regeneration of the Valletta sea front (Xatt Tal-Belt). Another floor will be constructed above the existing building located on the quayside and the appropriate alterations to the existing building i.e. installation of new services and partitions, to accommodate all the Customs Department staff will be made. The project also requires site investigation of the existing quay foundation. A development application was submitted to MEPA and the site investigations were taken in hand.
- Mellieha: Dangerous Roof replacement at Kamp ta' Ghajn Tuffieha (Salesians) - This will involve the replacement of dangerous roofs on behalf of the Salesians Boys Brigade. A MEPA permit was obtained for such works and a tender will be prepared in early 2012.
- Pembroke: Refurbishment of premises for Pembroke Scouts (Scouts) - This will involve the conversion of existing buildings into premises where Pembroke Scouts and Girl Guides can congregate and carry out their activities, including meetings, social events and sleepovers. These consist of four single story limestone buildings formerly used as barracks by the British Forces garrison. Proposals were prepared and a development application was submitted to MEPA.
- Pembroke: Construction of spectator stand and underlying facilities (Luxol) - This will involve the construction of a spectator stand adjacent to the Luxol grounds, including the related underlying ancillary facilities and spaces. Proposals were prepared but the project was put on hold.
- Safi: Construction of a Heavy Vehicles Workshop at Safi Barracks (AFM) - This will consist of the construction of a new heavy vehicle workshop for the AFM at Safi Barracks in order to improve existing facilities. A MEPA permit was granted for such works.
- Sliema: Conversion of a house in Mrabat Street into residential units for the homeless - This will involve the conversion of an old house in Sliema into a hostel comprising seven independent units intended for providing temporary shelter to homeless persons. A MEPA permit was granted for such works.
- Valletta: Conversion of a dilapidated building into the new offices for Attorney General (AG) - This project will involve the relocation of the offices of the Attorney General's Agency from their present location in the Presidential Palace and in the Main Guard building in Valletta to a new location a short distance away in Strait Street. The new location will offer the opportunity to restore and re-use a number of buildings that have been abandoned and dilapidated for decades. A planning application had been submitted to MEPA in 2009, but a number of major changes to the plans were effected in 2011 to comply with MEPA and KNPD requirements. Fresh drawings for this project were drawn up and submitted to MEPA but another re-design of the project had to be carried out. Plans to start works in 2011 had to be put on hold pending resolution of these long-standing issues.

ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES UNIT

Electrical Services

Embellishment Projects on behalf of MRRA - Completed Works

- Floriana: Installation of security and decorative lighting outside EUC Premises, Sa Maison - This involved the installation of security and decorative lighting of the driveway leading to EUC premises in Sa' Maison.
- Marsaxlokk: Replacement of street lighting in Xatt is-Sajjieda (Phase 2) - This involved the replacement of the street lighting installation and the installation of decorative lighting for the parish church façade,

monument and historic canopy as part of the embellishment project. A number of service pillars to provide electricity supply and fresh water to the fishing community for maintenance of small vessels as well as to fishmongers for hygienic display, processing and disposal of seafood were also provided. This service is on a pre-payment basis and is being partly financed by EU funds.

- Rabat: Installation of lighting in Vjal Santu Wistin - This involved the installation of recessed LED luminaires to illuminate architectural features, the replacement of street lighting installation and the removal of overhead lines and supporting masts. The façades of the St Augustine Church and Priory were also illuminated. These formed part of the embellishment project.
- Sliema: Installation of CCTV and Wi-Fi systems in Bisazza Street - This involved the installation of a new CCTV system along Bisazza Street as part of the pedestrianisation project. An additional high resolution camera was later installed for the ceramic three-actor statue. Two Wi-Fi access points were installed for public free internet.
- Sliema: Installation of lighting in Bisazza Street - This involved the installation of decorative and functional lighting of the pedestrianised street and adjoining square, including new electricity service. This is the first public street lighting installation in Malta using LED technology and also the first to automatically switch to a lower lighting level at night.
- St Julians: Installation of decorative lighting in Angelo Pullicino Street - This involved the installation of decorative lighting consisting of lamp-posts and low-level luminaires recessed in new planters to enhance the ambience, safety and security of the stepped street. Works formed part of the embellishment project.

Works still to start

- Kalkara: Installation of decorative lighting at Rinella Promenade - This will involve the installation of 30 new lampposts on existing bollards to illuminate the promenade and part of the bay. Decorative lighting for the promenade was designed and work will start in early 2012
- Marsaxlokk: Installation of service pillars in Xatt is-Sajjieda (Phase 2) - This will involve the installation of pre-paid electricity and fresh water service facilities for maintenance of sea-crafts to the Magħluq area by installing more service pillars. This will better service the needs of the fishing community having vessels berthed in this area.
- St Julians: Installation of pavement lighting at St George's Bay (Golden Mile Phase 2) - This will involve the installation of new LED recessed lighting along a 150 metre stretch of the promenade at Xatt ta' San Ġorġ. Colour changing lamps will be installed near main entrances of touristic areas.
- Sliema: Installation of decorative lighting at Xatt ta' Tigne - This will involve the new lampposts on existing bollards replacing the old lamp post to illuminate the promenade. Decorative lighting for the promenade was designed.
- Żebbuġ: Installation of lighting within Parish Church parvis - This will involve the shifting of the electricity poles, providing additional LED recessed lighting strips and including service sleeves for occasional and festive decoration lighting and temporary cabling. A new lighting layout was designed.

Works outsourced to private consultants

- Mtarfa: M&E works in new public garden at Mtarfa - A tender for the provision of M&E services by private consultants was drawn up, published and awarded.
- Naxxar: M&E works in new public garden at Baħar iċ-Ċaġhaq - A tender for the provision of M&E services by private consultants was drawn up, published and awarded.
- Siġġiewi: M&E works in new meditation garden at Siġġiewi - A tender for the provision of M&E services by private consultants was drawn up, published and awarded.
- Swieqi: M&E works in new public garden/civic centre at Swieqi - A tender for the provision of M&E services by private consultants was drawn up, published and awarded.

Other Projects on behalf of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs – Completed works

- Lija: Installation of lighting at former Our Saviour Parish Church - This involved the installation of decorative lighting for the façade and surrounding garden and the provision of an upgraded lighting installation in the interior as part of the restoration project on the former Parish Church.

Works still to start

- Attard: New electrical and lighting installation at Petting Farm, Ta' Qali - This will involve the provision of a new electrical and lighting installation to be erected at the site which will provide the opportunity of interaction with live animals in the tranquil setting of Ta' Qali National Park. Decorative and security lighting will be installed and electricity supplies provided for the various structures via a new underground cable management network. These works will form part of the project being carried out by the Parks Directorate.
- Floriana: Installation of standby generator for MRRA Block B - This will involve the procurement and installation of standby generating equipment for MRRA offices in Block B. A tender was issued and awarded but works put on hold in view of MEPA's refusal of the development permit application. The location was revised and the equipment will be installed in early 2012 at its new location.
- Floriana: Installation of lighting at War Memorial - This will involve the enhancement of lighting on this prominent landmark and its surroundings as part of the embellishment and upgrading works which will be undertaken in early 2012. This will include the provision of electricity supply to the proposed eternal flames and lighting of the proposed flagpoles.
- Naxxar: Installation of Ximenes Redoubt at Salini Rehabilitation project - This will involve the installation of a new electrical and lighting system as part of the project involving the restoration and rehabilitation of the building. This will highlight the exhibition spaces as well as the exterior of the historical edifice. Other services (CCTV, data, telephony, etc) will also be installed to suit the intended use. The installations will respect the architectural value of the building.
- St Paul's Bay: Installation of decorative lighting at Triq San Pawl tal-Ħġeġ, Bugibba - This will involve the extension of the decorative lighting installation at Bugibba to cover Triq San Pawl Tal-Ħġeġ.
- Valletta: Installation of electrical system in Fortifications Information Centre (Biagio Steps) - This will involve the provision of a new electrical installation within the Fortifications Information Centre being developed within a hitherto disused building in Biagio Steps by the Restoration Directorate. The installation of the electrical system together with ELV services (CCTV, telephone and data networks) within the proposed annexe and the existing vaults were designed. The new electricity service will cater for the various facilities including lifts, air-conditioning and ventilation. The display areas will feature track lighting systems. The tender for such works was prepared and awarded and these will start in early 2012, after the masonry and restoration works have been completed.
- Valletta: Installation of a standby generator electrical system in Fortifications Information Centre (Biagio Steps) - This will involve the installation of a standby generator for this centre to cater for any eventual shutdown of the main electrical supply. A tender was prepared and is to be published in early 2012.

Projects on behalf of other Ministries and Departments - Completed Works

- Balzan: Installation of decorative lighting in Kitchen Garden at San Anton Palace (President) - This involved the installation of a new electrical and lighting system at the site, forming part of the President's complex behind San Anton Palace and inaugurated in early 2011. All cabling was passed underground and electricity supply was provided to the various structures and equipment, including cafeteria and fountains. The decoratively lit and newly-landscaped gardens may be enjoyed by families also in the evenings. In conjunction with the project, the overhead lines and supporting masts along the approach road were reorganised.
- Birżebbuġa: Electrical supply to Customs Container X-Ray Scanner at Ħal-Far (MFEI) - This involved the provision of the electrical supply to an X-ray container scanner brought from a Chinese company by the Customs Department. Various site meetings were held with the department and the Chinese Engineer to devise the best supply scenario and to avoid the possibility of collisions between the scanner and vehicles moving out of the designated area after scanning is completed. Thus the electrical supply was designed in accordance with such requirements and the X-Ray scanner became operational on the new electrical system.
- Valletta: Centralisation of electricity services at the Presidential Palace (President) - This involved the provision of centralised electricity services and main switchgear to cater for the entire Palace. These were commissioned and put into operation.

Works still to start

- **Luqa:** Electrical Installation in new Air Squadron Hangar (AFM) - This will involve the provision of electrical centralised electrical services, data/telephone, fire alarm and public address systems within a new hangar to be developed by the AFM. This project which will be partly funded from EU will include a 40m by 22m hanger large enough to accommodate two Hawker Beechcraft King Air maritime patrol aircraft, tailored to the needs of the AFM. Each twin-engined aircraft costs just over €9.6million, mostly financed by the EU External Borders Fund. Additional items such as a new plant room, data room and technician's workshop will also be installed. A design and build tender was issued and awarded and works are expected to start in early 2012.
- **Siggiewi:** Electrical installation in new Police Academy Administration Block, Ta' Kandja (Police) - This will involve the installation of electrical and ELV (data and telephone networks, fire alarm, intruder-detection systems) systems in the new administration block at the new Police Academy at Ta' Kandja were designed. These will be installed in each floor and a new centralised electricity service and main switchgear will also be installed. Such works were included in a turn-key tender prepared in late 2011, and expected to be published by the Department of Contracts in early 2012.
- **Siggiewi:** Infrastructural area in new Police Academy Administration Block, Ta' Kandja (Police) - This will involve the provision of an infrastructural area designed to cater for and provide all electrical services to the three planned blocks (administration block, dormitory and auditorium). New power cables, empty sleeves of different sizes and services inspection chambers will be installed for future installation of these services. This is a cost saving exercise to avoid the retrenching of new constructed ring road system. Light poles and lighting bollards will be installed to illuminate this new police campus. The designs will be included in a tender to be issued by the Department of Contracts in mid-2012.

Mechanical Services

Embellishment Projects on Behalf of MRRA - Completed works

- **Sliema:** Installation of fountains and irrigation system at Bisazza Street - This involved the construction of two fountains and a number of planters. The M&E works consisted of the installation of the fountain equipment and irrigation equipment for the planters. This project was completed in June 2012. However, the fountain nozzles and luminaires were subsequently redesigned. The lance jet nozzles were replaced by ground fountain type nozzles with incorporated LED lighting.

Works still to start

- **St Paul's Bay:** Installation of water park equipment on the sea shore at Bugibba - This will involve the installation of the Water Play equipment and features which from the main aspect of the water park to be constructed at Qawra/Bugibba. This shall include a number of interactive features which will allow for water play. The park area will include about 14 water features and pieces of equipment. They will be specifically produced from non-corroding materials and finished in bright colours. A tender was issued and awarded and works are expected to start in early 2012. Another tender for project finishes will be prepared. This will include plumbing for toilets, drip irrigation for planted trees and simple electric installation for the toilet and guard rooms.

Other Projects on behalf of MRRA - Works in hand

- **Luqa:** New Cold Rooms at Border Inspection Post at MIA - This involves the replacement of six in number chillers and cold rooms located within the Border Inspection Post at Luqa Airport. The original rooms were defective and the internal panelling was separated at the seams and also between the panel insulation and the cladding. The outdoor units were also ruined beyond feasible repair. Works were taken in hand.

Works still to start

- **Luqa:** Mechanical Services for the new offices of the Fisheries Control Division, Ghammieri - This will involve the installation of a passenger lift and split-type air conditioning units within the new offices of the

Fisheries Control Division. Preparation of the tender documents was taken in hand for publication in early 2012.

- Lija: Mechanical Services for the extension of the Diagnostic Laboratory - This will involve the installation of air conditioning, domestic hot and cold water supply and gas installations within this extension which consists of an additional floor over the existing building. Preparation of the tender documents was taken in hand for publication in early 2012.
- Marsa: Replacement of Cold Room Equipment at Civil Abattoir - This will involve the replacement of the entire system including all the components in the plant room, the pipe work and the units within the cold rooms themselves will be replaced. The works are expected to start in early 2012.
- Valletta: Mechanical Services for the Fortifications Interpretation Centre at Biagio Steps - This will involve the installation of mechanical services within the premises including two in number passenger lifts, air conditioning and ventilation for the large halls at ground and first floors. The lifts themselves were ordered and the actual installation is to begin in January 2012 as will the works on the AC Ventilation system. The two lifts, although located adjacent to each other serve totally different purposes. One of them serves the building and allows access to all levels of the centre. The other is intended for public use and connects the lower road level with the upper level at the rear of the centre.
- Marsa: Installation of new vaporiser for the pork production line at the Civil Abattoir - This will involve the provision of a new vaporiser to replace a much smaller unit which would not be able to supply the required amount of gas to the new singeing machine which was purchased by the Civil Abattoir. A tender is to be published for the supply, installation and maintenance of this equipment.

Projects on behalf of Other Departments – Completed Works

- Balzan: Various works in Kitchen Garden, San Anton Palace (President) - This involved the provision of technical assistance to assess the air conditioning requirements for the cafeteria and also the kitchen equipment used in the cafeteria.
- Floriana: Air Conditioning of various offices at Education Division (MEEF) - This involved the installation of split-type air-conditioned units in various offices at the Ministry in Floriana and in the French Resource Centre located within the Junior College grounds. The Resource Centre consists of two large halls and supporting offices. Works were completed.
- Marsaxlokk: Installation of a Ground Fountain (Marsaxlokk Local Council) - This involved the design of a ground fountain in the main square comprising seven in number, nozzles incorporating water, and LED lighting. A pump room and reservoir were constructed near the church and another receiving tank was buried underground near the fountain itself. The water used in the feature is collected in the lower tank and then pumped to the upper tank by means of a submersible pump. The fountain display is programmable and both water and lights are continuously changing. Tender documents were prepared, but the tender was eventually issued by the Local Council which also funded the works through MEPA's UIF (Urban Improvement Fund). Works were completed.
- Pieta': Mechanical Services for Administration Block, AFM Maritime Squadron (AFM) - This involved the air-conditioning of the entire block. Due to site restrictions in the height of the floors, the proposed system had to be replaced with an alternative arrangement. A lift, mechanical ventilation in bathrooms and toilets and fire fighting equipment were installed, and boosted domestic hot and cold water systems were also introduced. Works were completed.
- Pembroke: Solar Water Heating Systems at Martin Luther King Hall (ITS) - This involved the installation of two solar heating plumbing systems to replace the old systems which used electric water heaters. The building is divided in two halves or sections, one primarily housing the cleaning laboratory and the other housing the chocolate school. Works were completed.
- Valletta: Air conditioning of Data Centre, Auberge de Castille (OPM) - This involved the provision of a standby generator set and a close control air conditioning system to the data centre. The generator set will be dedicated solely for this area due to its high importance. The close control unit was designed to maintain constant conditions within the area both as regards temperature and humidity. It was also a specialised air conditioning system. Separate tenders were prepared and works were completed.
- Valletta: Air conditioning of CCAU 2nd Floor, Auberge de Castille (OPM) - This involved the provision of air conditioning utilising split type inverter driven AC units within an entire wing, comprising about 15 offices. Works were completed.

- Valletta: Air conditioning of conference room at the Commerce Department (MFEI) - This involved the provision of technical assistance to the Commerce Department to establish the cooling capacity needed and the type and positioning of the air conditioning units required for this room. The Department was also provided with the air conditioning layout together with an estimate of the proposed works. The Department then commissioned the works directly after a call for quotations.

Works in hand

- Valletta: Overhaul of two traction type passenger lifts at No 3 Castille Square (OPM) - This involves the overhaul of two in number passenger lifts. All the mechanical and electrical systems are going to be replaced as well as the lift motors themselves. The lifts will be upgraded to modern EU standards in line with current legislation.
- Valletta: Replacement of two passenger lifts at Auberge de Castille, Merchant Street side (OPM) - This involves the replacement of two lifts which have been functioning for quite a number of years and are in dire need of replacement. The old lifts together with the lift facades were dismantled and the two new traction type lifts installed. The lift cabins and structures were fixed whilst works on the fixing of the facades were taken in hand.

Works still to start

- Floriana: Eternal Flames at the War Memorial (OPM) - This will involve the provision of two gas fired eternal flames to be located in bronze fixtures to be installed at the War Memorial in Floriana. Mechanical works will include the installation of a gas system including a buried gas tank, pipes and the burners themselves. The system will include a number of safety features all connected with such a gas supply system and required by law. A tender was prepared and awarded and works are to be taken in hand in early 2012.
- Floriana: Passenger lift at the Department of Contracts (DOC): This will involve the installation of a passenger lift at the Department of Contract to connect the various levels of the building and make it accessible for all. A tender was prepared and published.
- Luqa: Mechanical Services for new Aircraft Hangar (AFM) - This will involve the provision of mechanical services for the hangar including a very elaborate fire fighting systems, including fire hydrants on the exterior of the building, hose reels and a foam system on the inside of the hangar, domestic hot and cold water and second class water for washing purposes, air conditioning in selected areas, compressed air, and a travelling crane. These works form part of a turnkey tender which was prepared issued and awarded and works are to start in early 2012.
- Luqa: Mechanical Services for New Command Centre (AFM) - This will involve the provision of mechanical services required for a central command block which is to be built at Luqa barracks utilising an existing building and extending this as necessary. Services will include Air Conditioning, lifts, ventilation plumbing, and other specialised systems as required.
- Rabat: Passenger lift at the National Archives (MEEF) - This will involve the installation of a passenger lift on the premises which would serve all the floors including roof level and allow access for all in the building.
- Siggiewi: Mechanical services in new Police Academy Administration Block, Ta' Kandja (Police) - This will involve the provision of domestic hot and cold water, air conditioning and lift systems to be installed within the new administration block at the new Police Academy at Ta' Kandja. Domestic hot water will be produced using solar panels and the air conditioners will be individual, inverter driven split type units, providing maximum energy savings. Such works were included in a turnkey tender prepared in late 2011 and expected to be published by the Department of Contracts in early 2012.
- Siggiewi: Mechanical Services for New Police Academy, Ta' Kandja (Police) - This will involve the provision of fire fighting system for the entire complex including a hydrant system for the area and fire hose reels within the individual blocks. Designs for such systems and for the inclusion of a decorative fountain were prepared. These will be included in a tender to be issued by the Department of Contracts in mid-2012.
- St Venera: Air conditioning of refurbished PPCD Office Block (OPM) - This will involve the air conditioning of offices which are spread over three floors using three separate VRF/V systems and also

utilising a number of split type units which were already installed on site. These are to be carefully removed, serviced and re-installed. A design was prepared and a tender published.

- Valletta: Replacement of passenger lift and lift shaft structure at Palazzo Parisio (MFA) - This will involve the replacement of a passenger lift at Palazzo Parisio, as the present lift is considered too small to cater for the requirements of the Ministry workforce. A tender was published for the installation of a new, larger lift together with the relative lift shaft structure. This tender was evaluated and is to be awarded. Works will commence in the first quarter of 2012.
- Valletta: Replacement of two passenger lifts at the Law Courts (MJHA) - This will involve the replacement of two passenger lifts at the Law Courts in Valletta. One of the lifts connects the lock-up at basement level with the Criminal Hall and the other is intended for use by the Judiciary. The tender was prepared and is to be published in early 2012.

ANTON CAMILLERI

Director (Project, Design and Engineering)

Project Design and Implementation Department

Restoration Directorate

The Restoration Directorate is the main government entity which implements and executes restoration works on public property. It is responsible for planning and drawing up restoration projects, preparing tenders, and supervising their execution. It also offers specialised assistance to various public entities and institutions, including ministries, departments, voluntary organisations, and local councils.

The Restoration Directorate consists of the Restoration Unit and the Rehabilitation Projects Office (RPO) which coordinates the rehabilitation of Valletta, Mdina, and the Cottonera area.

The Restoration Directorate boasts a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, technicians, and skilled workers specialising in restoration. The Directorate also has a Documentation Section with the required technical know-how to prepare rectified surveys and deterioration mapping and a pool of historians, archaeologists, and other technical staff trained in heritage skills. Over the years, the Restoration Directorate carried out numerous restoration works on many historical buildings, and is currently also involved in the restoration implementation of a major restoration project on the historic fortifications of Valletta, Mdina, Vittoriosa and the Gozo Citadel as part of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF 0039).

PROJECTS CARRIED OUT

Restoration Unit

Restoration works on the fortifications, which form part of the project co-financed by the European Fund for Regional Development, a project with a total expenditure of €42 million, continued throughout 2011. The first three projects, which were started in Vittoriosa, Valletta and Mdina, were completed during the second half of the year. These projects had a total value of €4 million (exc VAT). Works on another 21 contracts having a total value of €18 million (exc VAT) are currently in hand in the four localities. Tenders for all other planned restoration works will be issued during 2012.

During 2011, restoration of the historical building and the reconstruction of the storey that had been demolished as well as the extension building which are to house the Fortifications Interpretation Centre at Biagio Steps in Valletta were completed. Towards the end of the year, works on the services and finishes were also taken in hand. The overall expenditure of this project, which is to be inaugurated during 2012, will amount to €2.1 million.

The necessary MEPA permits were also obtained for the paving of the *Collachio* in Birgu (also part of the ERDF039 project), and for rehabilitation of the Ditch in Mdina, which will extend from the Greeks' Gate up to Council Square. Works on both projects will start in 2012.

Besides projects that are co-financed by ERDF, various other initiatives for restoration works on sections of bastions of Valletta, Floriana and Cospicua, both through calls for tenders as well as through direct orders, were carried out by Restoration Directorate workers. Reconstruction of the Notre Dame Bastions in Floriana, which collapsed in 2009 due to bad weather, was completed. Restoration of the San Salvatore Bastions in Marsamxett, Valletta, were also completed, and restoration of the German Curtain and St

Sebastian were taken in hand. St Christopher's Bastion in Valletta are also being restored, and works should be completed during 2012.

Several other restoration works on historical buildings in Valletta and other localities were continued by the Directorate's direct labour workforce. Works continued on the façades of the Auberge de Castille and the Presidential Palace. Works were also taken in hand to restore the façades of the Civic Centre in Siggiewi, the Ghajn Żnuber Tower in Mellieħa, the Immaculate Conception Chapel in St Julians, the Safi Parish Church, the Aqueducts in Mrieħel and those in Xemxija.

Rehabilitation Projects Office

During 2011, works were carried out on the paving and embellishment of the Saluting Battery, and on the restoration of two monuments found inside the Upper Barrakka in Valletta. Restoration works also continued on other historic buildings in Valletta, such as the Pinto Clock Tower and façade inside the Presidential Palace Courtyard where works were concluded in November 2011. Other restoration works included the restoration of the Niche dedicated to Our Lady of Pompeii, that dedicated to San Corrado, the Sciortino Monument in Floriana, and the Great Siege Monument. Maintenance works were also carried out inside the Notarial Archives.

The first phase in the restoration of the Carapeccchia's *Kaxxa Rizzi*, which is found in the Sacristy of St Paul's Shipwreck Church, that is that sponsored by Grandmaster Vilhena, is currently being concluded. The second phase of the restoration, which includes the restoration of the part sponsored by Grandmaster Pinto, should be concluded by the middle of 2012. Together with Heritage Malta, the restoration of some oil on canvas paintings found inside the Jesuits Church was carried out.

Works were also carried out on a number of churches, including works at St Catherine's Church, where the roof of the sacristy was replaced, scaffolding was erected in the internal part of the church, maintenance works were carried out on the external part of the dome, and the restoration of the façade overlooking Merchant Street was concluded.

The Rehabilitation Projects Office also carried on with the maintenance and management of the pedestrian zones in Valletta. These works included the maintenance of faulty paving, the repair of architectural lighting, and the management of St George's Square. During 2011, outside catering modules and planters were designed and installed in Merchants Street.

As part of our obligations towards the World Heritage Status of Valletta, a Management Plan has just been concluded. This draft is currently being discussed internally prior to being published for public discussion.

Design proposals were made for the rehabilitation of the Old Abattoir in Valletta. Plans are at an advanced stage and a MEPA application will soon be submitted. Proposals were also made for the rehabilitation of the Old Market Building. Another project which is also on the drawing board is the redesign of the parking area in the Valletta Landfront Ditch, and the introduction of a new access into Valletta through one of the Sally Ports found inside the Bastions.

NORBERT GATT
Director (Restoration)

Project Design and Implementation Department

Projects Implementation Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The Projects Implementation Directorate (PID) is made up of a number of project teams. The 'tar-Robba' Quarry also falls under the responsibility of this Directorate.

The works carried out by the Projects Implementation Directorate consists mainly of the execution of several projects designed by Project Design and Engineering Directorate.

Main projects undertaken by the PID

Nature Park & Sustainable Development Centre – Xrobb l-Ghagin

The works consisted in the completion of the Administration and Dormitory Blocks including plumbing, laying of tiles, fixing of sanitary fittings and skirting. Works on the reservoir, which included the sewage treatment plant, were also concluded. This project was officially inaugurated early in the year.

Bisazza Street, Sliema

Bisazza Street Project consisted mainly in the complete re-construction of the road, which was eventually transformed in a pedestrian zone. The works mainly consisted in the changing of part of the sewage system, the water supply, electrical cables were laid below street level, and a system of ducts for telecommunications purposes was also laid below street level. Natural material paving was also laid on a concrete bed and a small water reservoir for irrigation was constructed. To further enhance the area, two new fountains were installed, and various items of street furniture such as benches, litter bins and planters were fixed on site. A new system of decorative lighting was also installed to enhance the pedestrian area during night time.

Bahar ic-Caghaq Project

This project mainly consisted in the transformation of an abandoned open space into a garden. Works included the construction of a water reservoir for irrigation purposes, the construction of a public convenience, the laying of tiles on a bed of concrete, landscaping, the installation of a large fountain, the fixing of playing field equipment, decorative poles, railings, and garden furniture.

Golden Mile – Phase II Project

This project comprises the embellishment works at Triq ix-Xatt, St George's Bay, St Julians. The works included the widening of the existing pavement, installation of telecommunication services underneath the paving, installation of decorative lights and in placing and fixing of new litter bins.

Triq Manuel Dimech, Sliema

This project mainly involved the reconstruction of existing pavements. Works included the installation of a new water supply system and ducting for telecommunication services underneath the paving.

Saluting Battery

The main objective of this project was to stop water from seeping into the War Rooms from the overlying Saluting Battery. It was necessary to excavate the existing paving and any material underneath it, followed by the casting of an extensive concrete slab, the laying of water proofing protection and paving works using as much as possible of the original hard stone slabs. A new system to divert rain water run-off was also implemented.

Vjal Santu Wistin, Rabat

This project consisted in the paving with lava materials of the square in front of Santu Wistin Church, L'Isle Adam Square, Vjal Santu Wistin and Triq Santu Wistin. During the works, part of the old lava paving damaged some years back by third parties was restored using identical old lava paving. Works included a new water supply system, electrical cables were laid below street level, and a system of ducts for telecommunication purposes was also implemented. Underneath the paving, a concrete sub-floor was cast. This project also included installation of decorative lighting and the fixing of new benches in Santu Wistin square.

Widening of Road in Gharghur

This project consisted mainly in excavation works in a deep quarry up to foundation level in order to widen an adjacent road. The works included the laying of concrete foundations and the placing of large *franka* stone blocks. Adjacent road was re-surfaced and rubble walls were also reconstructed.

Embellishment in Gharghur Square

Works consisted of upgrading of pavements in Gharghur village square.

Robba Quarry

Apart from the usual cutting of *tal-franka* stone blocks, the quarry workers were also employed on extending the quarry floor by a considerable area. This is part of an ongoing process to render the quarry area usable for the production of stone used in MRRA projects.

Materials issued from Tar-Robba Quarry during 2011 were the following:

Material	Qty
<i>Blokki Kbar</i> (2' x 3' x 4')	563
Masonry blocks (<i>Kantun</i> 6", 7" and 9")	70,489
Slabs (different sizes)	6,868
<i>Vazi</i> (different sizes)	554

PAUL CINI

Director (Projects Implementation)

Cleansing and Maintenance Department

Office of the Director General

INTRODUCTION

The last quarter of 2011 brought a change in the responsibilities of the Cleansing and Maintenance Department (CAMD). The Building Regulation Office (BRO) was hived off from the CAMD and temporarily put under the direct responsibility of the Permanent Secretary, whilst the remaining directorates and units that form part of CAMD were temporarily put under the responsibility of the Director General (Project Development and Implementation).

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL CONTROL UNIT

This Unit takes care of the registry for file movements and correspondence, inventory, record of sick and vacation leave, together with daily attendance notifications of employees. It also takes care of financial transactions and provides backup for initiatives undertaken by the other units within the DG's Office, such as the holding of courses and public events that are organised by the BRO, talks and meetings that are held by the OH&S Unit, and the maintenance of the area of Beltissebħ and offices at Project House, together with organisation of facilities for meetings in Project House. One of the officers also acts as the green leader for the office. During 2011, transactions done by this Unit for the provision of services and materials amounted to around €22,000 and some 1,500 files were processed.

BUILDING REGULATION OFFICE

The main activities of this Unit in 2011 focused on three main topics, the enforcement of CE marking for new lift installations, Energy Performance of Buildings Certification, and the enforcement of the Environmental Management of Construction Sites Regulations. The Office also took an active role in the piloting through Parliament of the Building Regulation Act.

Implementation of the Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates

Following the development of the methodology and software for the energy certification of dwellings, the Office in coordination with the British Research Establishment proceeded with the work for the development of the methodology and software for certification of non residential buildings. This contract, which is estimated to cost around €276,000, experienced some delays due to unforeseen circumstances and will now be completed by the 1st quarter of 2012. Following consultations with MRA, MEPA and the Inland Revenue Department, the offices started to issue notices to commission and register such certificates. Up to the end of the year, 342 notices were issued and 308 certificates were registered.

Participation in the Concerted Action II Project

The DG and a Chief A&CE from BRO participated in the Concerted Action III project, which was specifically set up under the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme to help Member States in the implementation of the Recast of the Energy performance of Buildings Directive. During 2011, two plenary meetings, one in Luxemburg and another in Vienna, were held. During these meetings, several topics of technical, legal and administrative nature on matters concerning the Recast were discussed.

Piloting in Parliament of the Building Regulation Act and drafting of other legislation

The Office provided back-up to the Ministry for the piloting in Parliament of the Bill in connection with the Registration of Building Contractors and New Building Regulations. The Bill was in fact passed through Parliament in July. Officials from the Building Regulation Office continued with work on drafting new legislation by participating in technical committees dealing with Safeguarding of Third Party Rights during construction works, subsidiary legislation for the Registration of Building Contractors, and new regulations for the issue of licences to Masons.

CE Marking of New Lift Installations

The unit responsible for market surveillance of lift installations within the BRO continued with its work on the scrutiny of a substantial number of MEPA applications to determine possible new lift installations in Malta and Gozo, and again in the course of this year made around 50 site inspections per week to check on the progress of such installations and see that proper CE marking on installations that are put into use are carried out. The information that was gathered was incorporated in the BRO's database on lift installations that have been installed since July 2002. 481 inspections were carried out, during which 283 lifts were found to have the required CE mark, whilst 73 were found to be lacking this mark. Notices to owners to comply were issued.

Environmental Management of Construction Sites Regulations

During the 1st quarter of 2011, the responsibility for the monitoring and enforcement of the Environmental Management of Construction Sites Regulations was transferred from MEPA to the BRO. Up to the end of 2011, some 831 site inspections were carried out. A telephone line dedicated to receive complaints on a 24x7 basis was also set up. Work was also done on the re-drafting of the existing regulations to update these to the new responsibilities of the BRO and other technical issues.

Other Work and Initiatives

During the summer months, BRO again participated in a summer schools programme to increase awareness of school children on matters of energy conservation and climate change. These talks were also followed by a course on the subject of energy conservation as part of the in-service training programme for teachers. The Office gave a talk on energy efficiency in buildings in a seminar organised by a leading concrete blocks manufacturer and another seminar organised by a leading M&E Services installer. Each week, various members from the Office were invited to participate on different radio and TV programmes, in order to explain the regulations dealing with the Energy Performance of Buildings and the certification process.

Officers from the BRO also took part in committee meetings of the Building Industry Consultative Council, and the Department of Health General Services Board. A chief A & CE participated in meetings of the European Commission's Energy Demand Management Committee, another officer from BRO continued to participate in a study commissioned by the EC's DG Enterprise and Industry on Future Qualifications and skills in the Construction Industry, and another officer from BRO continued with work as a member of the Masons Board which examines candidates that apply for a Masons licence.

The BRO also runs a technical library for use by employees of the MRRA and others who want to do technical research and provided support to the Ministry's EU Affairs Directorate on matters dealing with the recasting of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, matters dealing with the Free Movement of Services, Mutual Recognition of Qualifications and Education and Training in the Field of Architecture.

ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT

National Flood Relief Project

The project will address the notorious flooding problems of the Lija-Balzan-Birkirkara-Msida localities, and will also include other project components that will provide the same level of flood relief to six other urbanised flood-prone areas, namely Qormi, Marsa, Żebbuġ, Gżira, Żabbar and Marsascalea.

During 2011, work was concentrated on the finalisation, issue and award of the tenders for the provision of

- Project Management Services and Site Supervision estimated at €2.8m
- Design & Construct of the B'Kara-Ta'Xbiex tunnels component, which is estimated at around €33m
- Design & Construct of the Żebbuġ Tunnel component estimated at around € 4.6m
- Design & Construct of the Qormi-Marsa component estimated at €5.85m,
- Construction of the Gżira Soakaway Reservoir component estimated at €1.74m.

The MEPA permit in connection with the Żabbar-M'Scala component was finally obtained in December and work on the finalisation of the necessary tender documents for this component, the finalisation of the formal application for the EU co-funding and public information and publicity tenders was continued.

QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT

During 2011, this Unit carried out 128 concrete tests on different sites of work and projects which were undertaken by the different departments within the Ministry. It also made 24 tests on kerbstones, eight tests on lava flagstones, 32 tests on concrete paving blocks, five set of tests on hot asphalt, one set of tests on coated, 30 tests on road sub-base, and 84 core cuts in concrete or asphalt.

HEALTH & SAFETY UNIT

This Unit continued with its very important work in order to promote health and safety awareness and enforce H&S measures among the employees of MRRA and render the work environment of departments within the Ministry as safe as possible.

Apart from taking care of issuing a number of tenders for the provision of the required H&S accessories and equipment for the various departments and sections within the Ministry, the Unit organised several talks and courses for different categories of employees working in the different departments and units of the MRRA.

The work carried out by the Unit is summarised below:

- 245 site inspection
- nine risk assessments
- nine investigations on different incidents
- organised courses on First Aid (2), Fire fighting, (5) Training the Drivers of Heavy Duty Equipment (1)
- organised a one-day seminar on H&S for the MSD Fuel Station operators
- prepared specifications and evaluation reports for tenders for the supply of sun protection lotion, knee and half knee safety boots, pest control, toilet soap, servicing of fire extinguishers, hard laundry soap, first aid boxes and items, ankle safety shoes and insect repellent.

Officers from this Unit attended also a number of training courses, seminars and conferences to keep themselves updated on H&S matters.

VALLEY MANAGEMENT UNIT

Works in Valleys

During 2011, the Valley Management Unit (VMU) continued with its programme of maintenance and rehabilitation work in the following valleys:

- Part of Wied iċ-Ċawsli, Qormi
- Part of Wied il-Kbir, Qormi
- Part of Wied is-Sewda, Qormi
- Part of Wied Ħesri, Siġġiewi
- Part of Wied tal-Isqof, Siġġiewi
- Part of Wied Qannotta, Burmarrad
- Part of Wied Mofru, Żebbuġ
- Part of Wied Baqqiegha, Żebbuġ
- Part of Wied Qlejġha (Chadwick Lakes), Rabat
- Part of Wied Liemu, Rabat
- Part of Wied Ta' Ċampra, Attard.
- Canal bordering the Marsa Race Course

In total, 16,234 tons of material were removed from these sites and deposited in licensed dumping quarries. Apart from this, 392 truckloads of soil were removed and either re-deposited in fields close to these valleys or at the Agricultural Research and Development Centre in Ghammieri.

Works on Reservoirs

The work carried out by the Unit consisted in the repair, where necessary, of a number of open stormwater reservoirs and the removal of material that was deposited in them through illegal dumping or that was carried into them by the rains. The material removed amounted to 1,161 tons and 41 truckloads of soil. The following reservoirs were tackled: Triq il-Wied (Msida), Tal-Ħlas (Żebbuġ), Tal-Providenza (Siġġiewi), Ta' Garnaw (Santa Luċija), San Klement (Żejtun), Addolorata Cemetery (Paola), Tas-Silġ (Marsaxlokk).

The Unit continued also in gathering and recording data on reservoirs that belong to Government and inserting this information in a database.

MARINE AND STORM WATER UNIT

Marine Works

The unit is entrusted with projects which entail studies, designs, drawing up specifications and quantifying works and the implementation of, supervision of contracted works and carrying out by its ever depleting direct labour force were possible these marine related projects. Service was rendered to a number of ministries and departments in the course of 2011.

The following list gives an indication of the works carried out on the inspection and reporting of damaged of coastal defences and slipways, quays, and, storm water flood relief structures:

Structure	Location	Dep/Ministry
Shallow water quay	Mellieħa	MRRA
Slipway	Mistra	Fisheries
Veċċa Slipway	San Pawl Il-Baħar	Fisheries
Għajn Żejtuna slipway	Mellieħa	Fisheries
Landing facilities	Mġarr, Gozo	Fisheries
Landing facilities	Marfa	Fisheries

Grand Harbour Landing facilities	Marsa	Fisheries
St George's Bay Slipway	St Julians	MTA
Ex-Sea Malta premises at Flag stone Wharf	Marsa	Customs
Breakwater & Menqa wall	M'Forn, Gozo	Ministry for Gozo
Repair of two slipways	Qawra	MARRA

A tender for the monitoring of archaeological remains was also prepared and issued for the two slipways at Qawra. The Unit also prepared and issued a number of tenders for hydraulic studies and data collection and held a number of presentations and meetings with stakeholders on the following projects:

- Marsalforn Gozo - Coastal defences for Marsalforn, complete with preparation and issue of tender for hydrodynamic studies mathematical and physical, on various optional positions of the breakwater structure, including a proposal for a submerged breakwater, and a proposal for beach nourishment;
- Marsaxlokk - Repair and extension of breakwater arm at Delimara, building of a new breakwater arm at Tal-Qrejten, and the formation of a breach for sea water circulation purposes by connecting a channel between il-Maghluq and M'Xlokk Bay.

The Unit also prepared and submitted to MEPA applications for works at Marsalforn (construction of coastal defences, M'Xlokk – Construction of breakwater arm at Il-Ponta Tal-Qrejten, an extension of breakwater arm at Delimara and formation of breach in Menqa, and the construction of cold stores at Tal-Qrejten, M'Scala, dredging of Il-Maghluq, and improvement of water circulation, and the repair of the slip-way in Ghajn Żejtuna, Mellieħa. Tender documents including specification, BOQ's, structural drawings, finishes, and mechanical installation drawings for the following projects were also prepared by the Unit for the following projects:

- St George's Bay, St Julians –slipway stabilisation
- B'Bugia - Raised pool at the Water Polo pitch
- Marsa – Geo-technical investigation for ex-Sea Malta premises at Flagstone Wharf.

The following are works that were implemented by direct labour or contracted out during 2011:

- M'Xlokk – Modification of existing slipway into a wet dock and widening of arms, reclamation of two-thirds of the length of the slipway and construction of ground slabs over the reclaimed area, together with the construction of a rain water culvert, .pipe laying for rain water for a storm water system;
- Valletta WPC – Repairing of damaged sea wall, grouting of cavities, installation of additional pipes for better water circulation in the pool, casting of ground slab at the north east end of the pool;
- Pembroke - Removing and fixing of storm water man holes and grids, investigating and cementing cracks in culvert where water was seeping into private garages and houses;
- Xemxija - Survey of shallow water quay;
- Bugibba - Transporting and mooring of water fountain, cables and mattresses and dismantling of same in the end of the summer season;
- Civil Protection Refugee Centre Shipwright's Wharf - Cleaning and removing material, levelling and casting of ground slab, construction of rain water culver, and cleaning other existing culverts;
- St Julians - Diving surveys and recovering a broken foot bridge from the sea;
- Cospicua - Diving survey, inspection of rain water culvert, closure of underground storm water tunnel from the seaward side for cleaning of same tunnel;
- Mellieħa - Diving survey of quay and slipways;
- B'BugiaWaterpolo Pitch - Removal of concrete wall and stairs;
- Sliema Font Ghadir - Marine repairs to eroded concrete wall separating a shallow pond from deeper water;
- Marfa - Fixing vehicle non-access barriers on the quay to prevent vehicles from falling into the sea.

Storm Water Works

Various inspections and surveys, together with reports on a number of flood prone areas, were done during 2011 in various localities which included, Fgura – Pjazza Patri Redent; San Ġwann - B' Kara Road; Bidnija - Triq ir-Raba; Hal Farruġ - Triq Gandott; Mosta - Main Street; Swieqi - Triq il-Qasam; Żebbuġ - Triq il-Hali; Gharghur - Triq San Ġwann; Cospicua - Pjazza Gavino Gulia and Triq ix-Xatt.

Designs, BOQs and tenders for new storm water culverts were prepared, and works were implemented at San Ġwann - B'Kara Road, and Pembroke. At Wied il-Kbir, Qormi, excavation, cleaning, leveling work and slab base formation for a large retaining wall, were done.

Various designs and calculations for new storm water systems in various catchment areas such as St Julians Spinola area, Swieqi area, Good Sheppard Street, Balzan, San Ġwann Street, Gharghur, Hali Street, Żebbuġ and Vjal Cottoner, Fgura were also made. Together with the already mentioned works, MEPA permit applications and related designs and studies were made on the following projects:

- Magħtab Storm Water Culvert
- Retaining wall at Wied il-Kbir, Qormi
- Storm water culvert for Spinola Square project
- Upgrading of Pieta' Boċċi club.

The Unit amended drawings for the construction of an 80,000 c.m water retention project at Wied il-Ghasel, Salini, together with the preparation of a Power point presentation for this project and a presentation of the Ghajn Rihana storm water mitigation project.

The Senior A&CE in this Unit also participated in the adjudication boards for major works tenders including amongst others, the NFRP Żebbuġ Stormwater Tunnel, the rehabilitation of the Salini Huts, the M'Xlokk Hardstanding for the travelling crane for fishing trawlers, and the Storm Water Mitigation Measures in the water course at Wied il-Ghasel.

CARMELO MIFSUD BORG

Director General (Cleansing and Maintenance)

Cleansing & Maintenance Department

Manufacturing & Services Directorate

The Manufacturing and Services Directorate carries out engineering works within the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. The Directorate incorporates the following trades: carpentry, metal trades, plumbing and electrical installations and repairs, traffic lights section, lifts and air-condition servicing, cooperative for traffic signs and road marking, and vehicles and plant repairs. All trades are located at Marsa, except for vehicles and plant garages, which are situated at Kordin.

MSD is now also responsible for the maintenance of vehicles and plant of the Agriculture Department, operating from the Ghammieri farm, and other vehicles deployed at other departments

MARSA BRANCH

The Marsa Branch of MSD continued to serve the Ministry by providing the technical works for various embellishment projects carried out by the Ministry, and at the same time providing maintenance services to other departments, both within and outside this Ministry.

During 2011, 708 new jobs were initiated in all the sections. In the meantime, 623 jobs were closed during the same year. A job is considered open till all paper work is compiled and concluded. The table below summarises the jobs handled by the various sections, excluding Koptasin. Jobs closed can be opened in previous years but completed in 2011.

	New Jobs	Jobs Closed
Carpentry	109	109
Aluminium	79	82
Metal Trade	158	143
Air condition	82	91
Lifts Section	30	39
Electrical	172	152
Plumbing	78	87
Total	708	703

Carpentry Section

The Carpentry Section manufactures and installs timber works and carries out restoration works on old apertures as instructed by architects in charge of project works. The Section manufactures also public garden furniture such as benches, litter bins, gazebos and shadings. These are used at sites that are embellished by our Ministry. The Section carried out 109 new jobs during 2011.

The main works carried out during the year were:

- maintenance of 11 doors and 17 windows at St Catherine's Valletta
- maintenance works on apertures at Siggiewi Local Council
- maintenance works on apertures at Ta' Liesse project
- maintenance works on apertures at the Palace
- maintenance, manufacture and alterations of apertures at the Auberge de Castille
- maintenance on wooden doors at Qui Si Sana Project
- maintenance, and manufacture of support poles of Pinto clock bell

- maintenance works of kiosk's roof and bench at Gudja Garden
- maintenance works and repairs of wooden animals at Sliema Independence Garden
- maintenance works on apertures at Public Service Commission office
- maintenance works on apertures at Mater Dei Hospital
- manufacture of doors and furniture at Mater Dei Hospital
- manufacture and install wooden benches in various projects and sites
- manufacture of five kitchen doors for San Anton Palace
- repairs to the Palace Balcony, Valletta
- manufacture of furniture at CMD offices
- manufacture of gates for various localities
- manufacture of oak furniture at CDO offices

Aluminium Section

The Aluminium Section carries out manufacture and installation of aluminium apertures and fixtures as needed by clients. Further, it carries out works with gypsum and false ceilings (soffits). All clients are government department and entities. The section carried out a total of 82 jobs during 2011.

Major works were carried out at:

- Aluminium works at Project House
- Aluminium works at Buskett Winery
- Wasteserv, M'Scala
- Animal Welfare, Ta' Qali
- Aluminium works at Biotec Centre Lija
- Department of Agriculture, Buskett and Floriana
- Paying Agency Pitkali
- Works at Hal Far (Peace Laboratory)
- Aluminium works at St Luċija Football Ground
- Works at Information Management Unit office
- Ta' Qali National Park offices
- Soffit at Blk B, Floriana
- Door and Partition at Hal Far
- Qui Si Sana Garden, Sliema
- The Palace, Valletta

Metal Trades

The works carried out by this section during 2011 included the manufacture and installation of steel articles, the restoration of existing steel articles, the installation of flagpoles in connection with state visits and national holidays, the installation of the Christmas Tree in Pjazza San Ġorġ, and various other works.

The major works completed during this year included:

- the embellishment of Bisazza Street, Sliema
- extensive steel works at Mater Dei Hospital
- manufacture of planters for Merchant Street, Valletta
- manufacture of Shelter Cover for Sant'Ubaldesca Square, Paola
- manufacture of various steel works for the Baħar iċ-Ċaġħaq recreational area
- metal works i/c/w the embellishment of Santu Wistin Church parvis and Pjazza l'Isle Adam, Rabat
- manufacture and installation of a security railing along the Valley Road Bridge
- restoration works of steel articles at the Presidential Palace and Auberge de Castille, Valletta
- manufacture and installation of a decorative steel canopy at San Anton Gardens

Plumbing Section

The works carried out by this section during 2011 included the installation or modification to hot and cold water domestic installations, the installation of irrigation systems, the repair or maintenance of fountains in

various public areas and the installation and repair of chain link fencing in various localities. During this year, there were 78 new jobs opened and 87 jobs were carried out.

The major works completed during the year included:

- the installation of chain link fencing for security purposes at the Wind Mast Site at l-Ahrax tal-Mellieha, Ghar Lapsi and the working site of the Bahar iċ-Ċagħaq recreational area
- the installation of chain link fencing around football grounds and other premises in Żejtun, Pace Grasso Paola and at St Joseph Institute Żabbar
- the laying of water mains at Tal-Qrejten Point and Il-Magħluq M'Xlokk, Manuel Dimech Street and Bisazza Street
- new plumbing installations at the Gżira football ground dressing rooms, the Bonsai Culture Club, the St Joseph Institute Żabbar and the Chinese Residence at Hal Far
- the installation of a new water cistern at M'Xlokk
- the installation of handrails at Xrobb l-Għaġin, Ghajn Żnuber Mellieha and Biagio Steps Valletta

Air Condition Section

The Air-condition Section caters for the maintenance and repairs of some 2,200 split-unit air conditioners and 15 centralised plants in government offices, health centres and hospitals. The Section is most busy during the warmer months of the summer, where it attends to repairs and breakdown of the units. During autumn and spring, when many air-conditioning units are not used, the Section carries out the maintenance required on the units to prepare for the months of high usage.

The Section attends to about a thousand calls for repairs every year. On a number of cases, AC units are dismantled and installed in a different place as needed by clients. The Section also inspects systems and draws up condition reports on AC equipment and provide technical advice about maintenance/replacement of equipment.

Lifts Section

The Lift Section maintains and repairs about 64 lifts and hoists in various government buildings, offices, hospitals and health centres. This service includes emergency interventions as needed and is offered seven days a week.

The Section services about 320 calls per year. The works includes repairs, maintenance, upgrading of specific lifts, routine maintenance and assisting in carrying out engineer's certification. Repairs and medications as specified in engineer's report are carried out. The Section assists government departments to keep abreast with the new lifts legislation by offering advice on the maintenance of same lifts.

Electrical Section

The Electrical Section carries out electrical installations in public gardens, promenades, government offices and at other public spaces. It incorporates also a section that caters for all traffic lights installation and repairs, as instructed by Transport Malta.

Main works on pelican lights were carried out at: Mill Street, Qormi; Triq Burmarrad near Museum; Triq il Kostituzzjoni, Mosta; Tower Road, Sliema near Diplomat; Psaila Street, B'Kara near Choppers supermarket; Triq Bella Vista San Ġwann; in front of Tecknopark Mosta; Mriehel near Oxford House; Triq Nazzjonali, Blata l-Bajda; Dawret Hal Għaxaq; Bir id-Deheb, Mile End, Hamrun; Mattia Preti Square, Żurrieq, Abate Rigord Street, Ta' Xbiex; Triq Ghajn Tuffieha, Mgarr; Triq il-Wileg, Qawra near the football ground; Fleur-de-Lys Road, B'Kara; Notabile Road, B'Kara; Triq Hal-Warda, Attard; Notary Zarb Street, Attard.

The main activity remains the repairs, alterations and upgrading of installations being requested within government buildings and offices, mainly in the Floriana and Valletta area. However, a considerable amount of work is carried out in various offices within our Ministry in various localities.

The main works included:

- electrical installation at Hal-Lija old Parish Church
- electrical installation at Victoria Gate, Valletta
- electrical installation at San Anton kitchen garden
- installation of rope lights in benches at Bisazza Street, Sliema
- electrical installation at Bonsai Culture Club, Sa Maison
- installation of *festum* lights at Għadira Bay
- electrical installation at Gżira Parish Church parvis
- electrical installation at Saria Junction and VMS at St Mark Street, Valletta
- installation of Bugibba fountain and dismantle same
- installation of fluorescent luminaries at Old Salvatur Church, Lija Phase 2
- electrical installation at and wiring light up palm trees at Xatt is Sajjieda, M'Xlokk
- electrical installation at Marsa Civil Protection offices
- repairs of electrical installation at Medicines Authority

Apart from new installations, maintenance works is carried out as requested to the lighting of gardens, promenades, traffic lights and lighting bollards in the traffic islands.

KORDIN

Workshops

The Workshops are organised into five sections, namely Light Vehicles, Auto Electricians, Heavy Vehicles, Heavy Plant and Miscellaneous (comprising spray painting, panel beating, upholstery and vulcanising works). The jobs performed range from routine maintenance to overhauling and body work on light cars, vans, trucks and heavy plant equipment such as shovels, bulldozers and road rollers. The Workshops cater for vehicles and equipment owned by the MSD, as well as equipment owned by other departments. It is very common for heavy plant and equipment to be serviced on site whenever this is possible due to the logistic difficulties in bringing the equipment to the garage. Various other departments make use of these services, the major customers being the Cleansing Directorate (CD), and the Projects Implementation Directorate (PID).

The Fleet Management Section is responsible for identifying the transport needs of the various sections within the Ministry and deploying vehicles accordingly. The section is also responsible for hiring vehicles whenever the need arises and also includes a surveyor who investigates all cases of traffic contraventions and collisions involving vehicles owned by the MRRA. The services of the surveyor are sometimes sought by other ministries and departments when their vehicles are involved in collisions or when they need to have his recommendations as to the disposition of particular vehicles within their respective fleets. The Fleet Management Section also incorporates the operations of the MSD fuel station and is responsible for the deployment of the computer-based Fleet Management System for the allocation of fuel to the various vehicles. This system also allows for closer monitoring of the fuel consumption of the vehicles owned by the directorate.

The Workshops carried out a total of 2,932 jobs during 2011, the total value of repairs being €415,565 distributed as follows:

Section	No of Jobs	Material Cost	Labour Cost	Total Cost
Heavy Plant	401	€20,023	€44,876	€64,899
Heavy Vehicles	563	€51,151	€142,051	€193,202
Light Vehicles	403	€23,287	€29,276	€52,563
Auto Electrical	653	€20,623	€18,031	€38,654
Miscellaneous	912	€35,278	€30,970	€66,248
Total	2932	€150,362	€265,204	€415,566

The MSD fuel station supplies Unleaded Petrol, Diesel and Biodiesel to all vehicles and plant in use by the cleansing and Maintenance Directorate and Project Design and implementation Directorate. Whenever possible, this is done at the station itself, but a bowser is used for distributing diesel to heavy plant and equipment located on the various work sites throughout the Island. In fact, 221,071 litres of diesel have been delivered by this service. The table below summarises the consumption figures for the various types of fuel supplied during the year:

Fuel Type	Amount (litres)	Cost
Unleaded Petrol	237,373	€327,972
Diesel	811,821	€1,052,237
Bio Diesel	12,089	€15,302
Total	1,061,283	€1,395,511

The above fuel consumption figures show a minimal increase of 3% by volume but more significant increase of 25% by cost, with respect to the consumption figures for the previous year.

MSD Kordin also manages period contracts for the hire of vehicles and plant used to supplement the government owned fleet. Around 72 cars and eight vans were hired throughout the year. Other plant, such as cranes, wheel shovels and excavators, are hired for a short duration as required.

The administration of the workshops is also responsible for drawing up specifications for tenders related to the running of workshops that are issued by the Directorate. These include the purchase of equipment by the MSD and its customers, period contracts for consumable parts and materials that are regularly used at the workshops, hiring of plant and machinery as needed, and also for towing/recovery services for small vehicles and plant equipment.

The equipment purchased through tendering procedures in 2011, together with the respective prices is tabulated below:

Two in number street washing vehicles	€210,000
Refrigerated truck for Civil Abattoir	€61,667
Truck with crane (hi-up) for Civil Abattoir	€41,300
Total	€312,967

Slab lifting equipment for slab laying and fork lift attachments were also procured to facilitate the manual construction work on various sites. Other actions requiring commitment at a higher level of the management structure were identified. The most important of these is the need to create more working space, especially since the fleet of vehicles serviced is growing steadily.

Vehicle and Plant Operations

This section caters for the vehicle and plant fleet of the whole Ministry. The aim is to have better coordination between the various departments in deploying the available vehicles to maximise the usage and output. This shall lead to greater efficiency and lower operating costs.

The Section will be responsible to distribute the vehicle resources on the various projects and work sites as needed. Hiring of vehicles, fuel issue and monitoring, and other matters related to the vehicle fleet operations are catered for by this section.

MAINTENANCE UNIT, GHAMMIERI FARM

Workshops

During 2011, the Maintenance Section carried out the normal day-to-day maintenance and repairs at the various sections of the ministry namely: National Agricultural Research and Development Centre, Ghammieri, Ministry and Block A at Floriana, Fisheries and Ex-Ministry offices at Barriera Wharf Valletta, Plant Biotechnology Centre at Lija, Civil Abattoir, Extension Service Offices at Żabbar and Water Reservoirs in limits of Żabbar and Żejtun, Pitkali Markets, deprived stores at Ras Hanzir, Border Inspection Posts, and Info Centre at Valletta.

Besides these works the section carried out the following works:

<p>National Agricultural Research Development Centre (NARDC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning of foul water reservoir • Plastering and painting of main entrance to Farm • Refurbishment to offices at main entrance • Repairs and water proofing of all barn roofs • Refurbishment of ex-Canteen for new offices for Life and InfoNitrates • 12 Gazebos for Promotion and Information Unit • One gazebo for 34U – Tree for You Campaign • Canopy near ex-canteen • Design and Cut panels for the manufacture of 36 lockers for Hands-on Farming project to be assembled by TREE Centre personnel • Manufacture of 15 barn owls' nests • Refurbishment of offices and boardroom at Blk A • Refurbishment of old-canteen for FAS Consortium offices • Changing of drainage pipes along main road in front of Chapel – 60 metres • Works at Maltese cows yard: extension to canopy, alterations to manger and concrete flooring
<p>Plant Health Directorate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alteration to ramp for access to disabled persons • 250 Palm weaver traps • Change of broken <i>franka</i> stone roof for reservoir at in-vitro lab • Building of damaged high rubble wall after screenhouses – 62.5cu. mtrs (12.5 x 5 x 1 mtrs)
<p>Border Inspection Posts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of area at Airport and Freeport • Plastering and painting works at BIP – Freeport
<p>Marsa/Kordin (MSD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment to some offices, toilets and workshops • Dismantling of air vent • Repairs to garage roof prior to membrane works
<p>Qui Si Sana Gardens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting works on handrails and benches
<p>Maintenance Section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of Shower rooms, toilets and restroom for Blacksmiths Workshop • Refurbishment of new office for Principal Technical Officer • New electrical distribution - Maintenance Offices • Electrical supply for Vulcaniser and Mechanics Garage
<p>Pitkali Markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitewashing of offices at Administration • Repair and upkeep of all flower beds • Painting of offices and apertures • Day-to-day maintenance work and purchasing • Works such as plastering and painting, membrane, cleaning • Plumbing, upkeep of Pitkali premises, etc • Supply and installation of main water supply and water tank reservoir

Ras Hanżir
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment works and maintenance • Plastering and painting of room at BIP - Ras Hanżir
Exhibitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erection of the Climate Change Exhibition, Recycle Tuesday and 34U (Tree for You) stands at various localities around the island. Erection of wooden gazebos in connection with activities organised by the Ministry

Mechanical Garage Section

During the year, 655 job requests were opened with regard to daily repairs and maintenance to vehicles, rotary cultivators and agriculture machinery amounting to €53,882.76, which is subdivided as follows:

Light Vehicles	€23,280.63
Heavy Plant Vehicles	€21,946.68
Agriculture Machinery	€1,248.32
Garage/Store/upkeep	€3,862.26
Rotary Cultivators	€3,544.87

PHILIP BUGEJA

Director (Manufacturing & Services)

Cleansing & Maintenance Department

Cleansing Directorate

During 2011, the Directorate worked incessantly and performed all the relevant tasks which fall within its responsibility to maintain cleanliness throughout the whole country. This campaign, led by the Directorate, was continuously coordinated with the local councils and further coordinated by other directorates and entities concerned so as to perform the necessary tasks pertaining to cleansing which did not fall under the Cleansing Directorate.

During the year, all efforts were invested in changing the mentality of the CSD workforce by introducing new working methods such as handling of modern equipment. This is producing more effective results in the overall cleanliness of roads and street furniture.

Cleansing of Arterial Roads

Work pertaining to Arterial Roads is as follows:

	2011
Mechanical Sweeping	20,987.30 km
Manual Sweeping	1,926 km
Grass Cutting	170 tons
Removing of Dead Animals	1,514 carcasses
Cleaning of Culverts	21,476m
Illegal Dumping Removal	3,811 tons
Emptying and washing of Litter Bins	270,000 bins
Removal of illegally fixed Adverts and signs	3,652 adverts/signs

During the course of the year, 250 litter bins were procured for installation in arterial roads and in public spaces, bringing the total figure of fixed litter bins to 850.

In order to improve cleanliness in arterial roads, the Directorate introduced the concept of assigning employees with strategic routes and zones. Some instances include the traffic lights situated both near the Addolorata Cemetery, in Bulebel, near the entrance leading to Paceville, and those in Pembroke amongst others. The duties of such officer consist of managing the upkeep of the particular route assigned to him on a daily basis. A marked improvement was noted in litter picking throughout these zones. Progress was also registered in grass-cutting activities in regions falling under the responsibility of central government.

Apart from these duties, the Directorate was also responsible for every state visit wherein cleaning up took place prior to and after each event.

Cleansing of Public Places and Open Spaces

During the year, this Directorate performed regular cleansing tasks at the following locations: Valletta Bus Terminus, washing and cleansing of tunnels situated in Hal-Kirkop, tal-Qroqq, St Venera, St Julians and Ghajn Dwieli. The Directorate also performed clean-up operations in the subways at Floriana, B'Kara Bypass and Old Mill Street, Qormi. The washing of the Floriana arcades and cleaning up after the hawkers' open-air markets namely in Vittoriosa, the Farmers' market at Ta' Qali, and the Sunday market at Floriana (near the Park & Ride) were also the responsibility of the Directorate.

With the introduction of more open spaces like the Ġnien George Bonello du Puis, Pjazza St Anna, Pjazza San Ġorg, the Ta' Qali Adventure Park and Triq Bisazza, Sliema, the Directorate introduced a new flexi-time system in which the cleaning of these zones could be carried out all day long. A new programme of works was established concerning the removal of chewing gum from promenades, public and open spaces. This has been accomplished with the investment of new equipment (gum-busting machine).

Zones concerned in the removal of gum included the Vittoriosa Waterfront where about 900 chewing gums were removed. Another 3,500 gums were removed from under the St Anne's Street arcades. The Sliema and St Julian's promenades were also given gum-busting treatment where about 5,000 gums were removed. Another 6,000 gums were removed from Republic Street, Valletta. Work was also carried out at Triq Bisazza, Sliema.

Maintenance and Cleaning of Public Conveniences

Throughout the island there are 16 public conveniences which fall under the responsibility of the Central Government. This Directorate maintained the day-to-day cleansing of these premises. Besides being washed by the attendants, these premises are cleaned by means of a power-wash unit operated by employees within the same Directorate.

During the year, the Directorate effected extensive refurbishing works in the public conveniences situated in the Ġnien Argotti at an expense of €13,885.00. It is to be noted that special consideration was given to make the premises accessible to persons with a disability.

Services rendered to Local Councils and other Entities

During 2011, the Directorate provided several local councils with the relevant services consisting of cleansing of urban roads, cleansing of public conveniences and collection of bulky refuse. Apart from this, the Directorate rendered services to several entities where CSD employees were assigned several other operations, for instance, cleaning up after several concerts and mass events, all the relevant cleansing pertaining to Carnival as well as cleansing during and after the *Notte Bianca* and so forth.

Total Revenue Collected for 2011

Description	€
Local Councils	257,250.48
Landfills	8,967.95
Extra Services *	252,478.66
Others **	9,059.71
Bulky Refuse Collection	45,281.00
VAT	94,257.05
Total	667,294.85

* Extra services include works performed which were not included in the original contract

** Others include Materials & Supplies paid by local councils and legal fees

Telephone Calls Received	Bulky Refuse collection 2011 (amounts)							
	Metal Products	Wood	Mattresses	Sofas	White goods	Computers and Televisions	Glass/ others	Total
9,658	4,415	4,678	1,541	796	3,787	2,028	6,579	23,824

Removal of Illegal Dumping

During the year, the Directorate removed tonnes of all types of inconceivable refuse which was illegally deposited in several sites all over the island. Various sites where cleansing took place are listed hereunder:

City/Village	Location	Amount of waste
Marsa	Xatt il-Mollijiet	6 tons
Dwejra	Triq Dwejra Kalafrana	3 tons
Cospicua	San Ġwann t'Ghuxa	11 tons
Burmarrad	Kennedy Drive	4 tons
Bulebel	Triq il-Hofra	42 tons
Siggiewi	Triq Ghar Lapsi	3 tons
Mellieħa	Majjistral Park	6 tons
Marsa	Xatt il-Mollijiet	6 tons

Washing-up of Promenades and Recreational Spots

The cleansing of several promenades and recreational spots was also performed throughout the summer season. The washing-up of these sites was carried out more accurately and professionally by means of floor scrubbers resulting in a more efficient positive outcome. The tasks were carried out at the Vittoriosa Waterfront, St Julian's, Sliema, St Paul's Bay, Bugibba, Qawra, the commercial centre in Valletta, and Paceville.

During the months between June and September, Central Government assigned the Directorate to assist the St Julian's Local Council with the cleaning of the locality of Paceville due to the high tourist frequency during the summer peak season. The works entailed regular sweeping of roads especially during the afternoon hours from 14:00, and from 18:00, from Monday to Sunday.

Furthermore, cleaning up was also carried out along Paceville's pedestrian zones during the night with the aid of a high pressure washer. The Directorate's tasks did not affect the obligations of the St Julian's Local Council private contractor.

Cleaning of Beaches and Coastal Shores

The cleaning of beaches and coastal shores takes place not only during the summer months, but is an ongoing process all through the year. This year the tasks undertaken consisted of:

Winter period operations

- maintenance of beach furniture
- removal of seaweed which amounted at 4,100 tons
- emptying of wheelie bins on a daily basis, and removal of bulky material from bays
- installation of beach furniture (consisting of 1,100 wheelie bins, 242 ladders and handrails, and 250 charcoal bins) prior to the summer months (April/May) and removal at the end of summer (October)
- eight wooden carpets, five pontoons and two bridges

Summer period operations:

During the summer period the beaches were classified into three categories namely, A, B and C based on touristic strategic priorities and general use. Work performed related to cleansing and maintenance during summer was as follows:

- Category A: From Monday to Sunday from 6:00 to 18:00
- Category B: From Monday to Friday from 6:00 to 14:00. Saturdays and Sundays from 6:00 to 10:00.
- Category C: From Monday to Friday from 6:00 to 14:00.

All 1,100 wheelie bins, scattered along the beaches and coastal shores, besides being continuously emptied, were washed regularly.

Target Cleansing

Whereas the cleansing responsibilities of the Directorate are mainly concerned with the arterial roads, the Directorate went beyond, by taking ownership of the cleaning treatment of all sites/roads of the island. Site inspections, for locations identified by third parties through our free phone, e-mails, and newspapers or by directorate officers themselves, were carried out. Upon confirmation of the service need, a fast track cleaning programme was carried out in the sites concerned. The areas which fall under our responsibility were dealt within 48 hours, whereas those which fall under the responsibility of other entities such as local councils, Environmental Landscaping Consortium, Transport Malta etc, were cleaned within a week, following a three-day notice to the respective entity.

Procurement of Machinery

In order to enhance its level of quality service in cleansing, during this year the Directorate invested €188,433.00 on the procurement of two high pressure jet street washers. These are used to wash pedestrian zones, open spaces and public areas in a more professional manner requiring less human resources. In 2011, a gum busting machine was procured at a cost of €5,995.00.

Cleansing works at the Addolorate Cemetery

During October, the Directorate was instructed to carry out a clean-up operation at the Addolorata Cemetery - 54 tons of waste was removed during this period. The CSD also had the responsibility to monitor the general upkeep of the cemetery during November and December. For this reason, the CSD engaged the temporary services of 12 asylum seekers to manage the day-to-day upkeep.

Customer Care Services

The Quality Service Charter awarded to the Directorate is revised continuously and the levels of quality of services rendered by this Directorate have excelled considerably. All complaints raised were immediately tackled and solved in a shortest time possible. As a model, the Directorate is following Directive 4 issued by the Office of the Principal Permanent Secretary earlier this year.

The following table shows the number of complaints raised by the public and received by the Directorate through the Customer Service Free phone.

2011							
Customer Care - Freephone Line 80076608							
<i>Freephone</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Fax</i>	<i>Newspaper Cuttings</i>	<i>Complaints referred to Local Council</i>	<i>Carried out by CSD on same day</i>	<i>Carried out within one week</i>	<i>Referred to other Depts/ Authorities</i>
1,564	397	0	30	178	1,358	303	152
Total				1,991			

Emergency Services

The CSD is frequently involved in the provision of emergency cleansing services following heavy storms. The Directorate provides the necessary human resources and plant and machinery in its inventory to assist the Civil Protection Department (CPD) in certain tasks.

Directorate employees are immediately deployed after a heavy storm to remove all the debris which accumulates along the roads. The removal of the material in a coordinated operation with the CPD allows easy flow of traffic especially in the rush hours.

Oil Pollution Response Module (OPRM)

In February 2011, the Directorate was informed that the management of the OPRM would be assigned under its remit. The Directorate embarked on a task to determine the functions of this unit. A report was concluded in March recommending certain decisions that needed to be taken to make the OPRM more effective.

Washing of Pitkali Crates

During the months January to May, the Directorate was asked to provide its resources in the washing of Pitkali crates. In fact, 16 CSD employees were assigned to work using CSD machinery in the process. It is estimated that 720,000 crates were washed during this period. All expenses related to the utilisation of CSD employees were settled by the Directorate responsible for the Pitkali.

CHARLES ZAMMIT
Director (Cleansing)

Cleaving and Maintenance Department

Maintenance Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The Maintenance Directorate is made up of the following units:

- Regular Maintenance Unit
- Lija Workshop
- Waterproofing Services
- General Administration

REGULAR MAINTENANCE UNIT

The Regular Maintenance Unit is composed of seven geographical zones (formerly districts) and the Tenements Section. The Tenements Section carries out works in government tenements by means of tenders. Works carried out by the seven zones include repair and maintenance of pavements and gardens, patching of roads with cold mix, cleaning and repair of culverts, general repairs to government buildings, painting, plastering and tiling works, erection and repair of boundary walls and other miscellaneous works.

Works carried out in 2011

Joint Venture Scheme

This Directorate carried out works on behalf of the local councils upon request. Most of these works were carried out according to the agreement with the councils, in terms of which the councils provide the material and 30% of the labour cost. In 2011, the Directorate carried out €93,356.47 worth of works requested by the local councils under this scheme. Of these, only €29,487.22 were due to be paid by the councils. The councils had thus benefitted from €63,869.20 worth of works. Most of these works were carried out by direct labour.

Non-Council Tasks

This Directorate carried out works which were requested either by government departments or by other entities. These are called non-council tasks and all the expenses were borne by this Directorate. The value of these works amounted to €63,869.20. Most of these works were carried out by direct labour.

Maintenance Works on Government tenements carried out by tender

These works were carried out by the tenements section and most of them were either carried out on behalf of other government departments or local councils.

Works carried out by the Seven Zones- Joint Venture Scheme and Non-Council tasks

ZONE 1

- Alterations at Ex-Joint Office, Floriana
- Repair works at EUC premises, Floriana
- Repair and tiling works at the abattoir, Marsa
- Refurbishment works at Bonzai premises, Floriana
- Painting and plastering works at Maintenance Directorate head office, Floriana

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paving works at the Saluting Battery, Valletta • Alterations and additions at the department of Contracts, Floriana
<p>ZONE 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masonry, tiling and other works at Government Experimental Farm, Ghemmieri • Maintenance works at Marsascala promenade • Maintenance works at Xghajra promenade • Maintenance works at Kalkara Playing Field • Masonry, tiling and plastering works at St. Joseph Institute, Zabbar • Repair of road retaining walls at Labour Avenue, Zabbar • Patching and plastering works at Hockey Club, Corradino • Tiling works at St Lucia Football Ground • Erection of walls at Farmer's Market (adjacent addolorata cemetery) , Marsa • Reconstruction of Cross monument, Fgura • Maintenance works at Ġnien Cottonera, Cospicua • Laying of large stone blocks, erection of walls and cleaning of valley at WasteServ premises, M'Scala • Asphaltting, erection of walls and painting and plastering works at Xghajra Tornados premises, Xghajra
<p>ZONE 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance works at Birzebbugia promenade • Maintenance and repair works at Nature Park, Xrobb l-Ghagin • Painting and plastering of walls and ceilings at Border Inspection Post, Kalafra • Refurbishing of Bush/Gorbachov monument, Birzebbugia • Painting and plastering of walls and ceilings at Border Inspection Post, Luqa Airport • Asphaltting of various streets, Delimara, Siggiewi and Birzebbugia <p>ZONE 3B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erection of boundary walls at Island Carting Club premises, Hal-Far • Repair of pavement at Mqabba Bypass, Mqabba • Masonry works at Dingli Football ground, Dingli • Demolition of roofs at Siggiewi Local Council premises • Erection of rubble walls at Ghajn Tuffieha road, St Paul's Bay • Patching of various roads at Siggiewi • Repair of pavement at Locker Street, Sliema • Repairs of jetty at Tal-Veċċ, St Paul's Bay
<p>ZONE 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance works at Gzira and Sliema promenades • Erection of boundary walls, Triq il-Qasam, Swieqi • Miscellaneous works at Gzira Church Parvis • Repair works to various pavements at Gzira and Sliema • Painting and plastering of walls and ceilings at Zone 4 office, Pembroke • Demolition of roofs of toilets at Bahar ic-Caghaq caravan site • Erection of boundary walls, Swieqi playing field, Swieqi • Miscellaneous works at Angelo Pullicino Steps, St Julians • Maintenance works at Ġnien l-Indipendenza, Sliema
<p>ZONE 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erection of walls and cleaning works at Basketball arena, Ta'Qali • Concreting of trenches at Farmer's market, Ta'Qali • Erection of rubble walls at Ghajn Tuffieha Road, St Paul's Bay • Repairs to paving at Triq Villagaigon, Mdina • Repairs to walls at Triq l-Infetti, Mdina • Patching of various streets at Naxxar • Repairs to pavement at Triq Ferdinand, Gharghur • Repairs to masonry pilasters 'Plieri' at Rabat Road, Siggiewi • Laying of wall and floor tiles at Stella Levantina band club, Attard • Painting and plastering works at Pitkalija crate rooms, Ta'Qali • Repairs to pavement at Triq R Barbaro, Attard • New pavement at Ta'Qali Road., Attard , near reservoir • Cleaning and repair works at Verdala and Sant Anton reservoirs
<p>ZONE 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erection of rubble walls and concreting works at Family Park, Selmun • Patching of various streets at Ghadira and Mellieħa • Repair of pavement Triq Katerina Vitale, Mellieħa

- Cleaning works and removal of material at Tal-Qarbuni, St Paul's Bay
- Repair of bolards and railing at Ghadira promenade
- Painting and plastering of Il-Bitha tas-Santwarju Mellieħa
- Removal of dangerous rock face at Qawra Coast Road
- Levelling works at Triq Mons. Schembri, Mellieħa
- Levelling works at Bajda Ridge Road, Mizieħ

Works carried out by tenements section

In 2011, various works were carried out on government-owned flats, offices and garages. The value of these works amounted to approximately €80,000. Most of these works were carried out on behalf of the Government Property Department and on tenements rented to the private sector or to tenements utilised by other government departments. Works mostly consisted of the repair or replacement of roofs and walls. These works were carried out in various locations such as Valletta, Floriana, Birkirkara, St Lucija, Kalkara, Pembroke, St Julians, Ta' Xbiex, Mqabba, Rabat, Cospicua, Vittoriosa, Lija, Ħal-Far, Attard and Gharghur.

Other extensive works consisted of major rehabilitation and repair works at the ITS building in Pembroke, the Auditor's offices at the Ministry of Finance, and at other sites. These works amounted to approximately €700,000.

LİJA WORKSHOP

This workshop is entrusted with carpentry and metal works. These include garden furniture, gates, doors, manhole covers, dustbins, bolards and ladders. This year, €108,429.02 worth of these works were carried out, of which €20,179.01 were material costs and €8,250.01 were labour costs.

Works carried out by the Lija Workshop were the following:

- Manufacture of 100 wooden strips for benches at Ġnien l-Indipendenza, Sliema.
- Manufacture of 15 metal bolards for the Rapid Intervention Unit.(RIU)
- Manufacture of two metal staircases and 30 metres stairs railing for Valetta waterpolo pitch.
- Manufacture of apertures for Zone 4 office, Pembroke
- Repairs to 12 timber windows at the office of the Government Notary, Valletta
- Repairs to railings of the roundabout of St Joseph statue, Rabat
- Manufacture of metal railing at Locker Street, Sliema
- Manufacture of metal road grating at the Sports Pavilion, Ta' Qali
- Manufacture of canvas tent at the war shelter, Gharghur
- Manufacture of stairs railing at the Nature Park at Xrobb l-Ghagin, Delimara
- Manufacture of 40 metal bolards for Wied l-Ghomor, St Julians
- Manufacture of 50 timber dustbins for the Cleansing Department
- Manufacture of 12 timber benches at Ġnien Dolmen, Qawra
- Manufacture of 10 timber shutters at Ġhajn Tuffieħa
- Manufacture of three timber gates at the Animal Care Centre at Ta' Qali
- Manufacture of eight timber gates for the Gharghur Fireworks factory
- Manufacture of metal grating at Angelo Pullicino Steps, St Julians
- Manufacture of a metal door and railing at the War shelter at Gharghur
- Manufacture of 100 metal barriers for the Zones
- Manufacture of metal grating at Lunzjata, L/o Rabat
- Manufacture of 10 timber dustbins for the Swieqi Local Council
- Manufacture of three picnic tables for the BMX Sports Complex, Pembroke

WATERPROOFING SERVICES

The Waterproofing Services section mainly carries out works involving the provision and laying of sheet or liquid waterproof membrane and repairs to existing roofing. In 2011, 5,063m² of membrane were laid on various roofs of government department buildings and these works amounted to €40,504.

The Waterproofing services section carried out works at the following sites:

- The Nature Park Project at Xrobb l-Ghagin
- Workshops at MSD Marsa
- NSO building , Valletta
- Bisazza Street, Sliema
- Offices at MSD Kordin
- Imriehel MRRRA Dump
- EPD building, Floriana
- The Saluting Battery, Valletta
- Bonsai Premises, Floriana
- Border Inspection Post, Kalafrana
- The Registry building, Works Department, Floriana
- Dingli Football Ground
- The Chinese Residence at Hal-Far
- Auberge D' Aragon
- Ghemmieri Buildings
- Stella Levantina Band Club, Attard
- The Presidential Palace, Valletta
- The Institute of Tourism Studies Building, Pembroke
- The Cospicua Health Centre, Cospicua
- Garden at Baħar ic-Cagħaq
- The Restoration Directorate stores at Ta'Xbiex
- The Restoration Directorate offices at The Ospizio, Floriana

It is anticipated that in 2012 that the following waterproofing works are to be carried at the following sites: MSD building, Kordin, a part of Valetta Presidential Palace, Zone 4 offices at Pembroke, Lija workshop, MSD Marsa, Block A Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, and the remaining part of the roof at the Cospicua Health Centre.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

This section is composed of the Quantity Surveying Section, the Works Planning System (WPS) Section, and other clerical and supervisory staff. The Quantity Surveying Section is entrusted with the task of measuring each job, preparing estimates and complying works reports. The Works Planning System (WPS) personnel carry out an evaluation of the time, material and personnel required to carry out each individual job and monitors daily attendance of staff by means of notification forms. The administrative personnel works in conjunction with the WPS section, issues invoices for works by means of SAGE, establishes and orders material by means of the Departmental Accounting System (DAS), issues requisitions for MSD, deals with daily notification forms of governmental vehicles and plant and with internal transfers of this directorate.

JOSEPH BORG GRECH

Deputising Director (Maintenance)

**Ministry of Education,
Employment & the Family**

Office of the Permanent Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the first months of 2011, a restructuring exercise within the Office of the Permanent Secretary was carried out; among other things this consisted of engaging an officer on EU Affairs and a personal assistant/consultant on policy matters and reorganising the Secretariat and PQs pool.

Throughout the year, in close collaboration with the political secretariat, this Office made sure that policies were implemented within established deadlines as decided by Cabinet. Regular weekly meetings with the Minister were held so as to keep in constant focus all government policies, as well as the link between the political and the administrative structures. Meetings with IAID, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Attorney General, PAHRO, PACBU, the Office of the Principal Permanent Secretary and the National Audit Office were instrumental in making sure that public services delivered by MEEF were up to scratch at all times.

The main challenges of 2011 were:

- the complete lifting of the EUPA suspension;
- the effective cooperation between the Department of Social Security and the Benefit Fraud and Investigation Department;
- the conclusion of the consultation process of the National Curriculum Framework and the merger between the Malta Qualifications Council and the National Commission for Higher Education;
- the card access system for all employees at Palazzo Ferreria;
- the new agreement with BTEC on the provision of vocational qualifications to all schools, reducing the timeframe from 2021 to 2013 and setting up new capacity-building processes for DQSE and MCAST;
- the closure of several pending administrative issues such as the transfer of employees, the merger of Channel 22 with PBS and closer collaboration between DES and private training providers;
- the effective management of ESF and ERDF projects namely:
 - *ERDF Projects (Education)*: 18 projects were under implementation in 2011. Eleven of these ended in 2011, while seven are still ongoing;
 - *ERDF Projects (Social Affairs)*: Two projects were under implementation in 2011. One of these ended in 2011 while the other project is still ongoing;
 - *ESF Projects (Education)*: 17 projects were under implementation in 2011. Two of these ended in 2011, 10 are still ongoing while five new ones were approved and were in their initial phase of implementation;
 - *ESF Projects (Social Affairs)*: 14 projects were under implementation in 2011. Two of these ended in 2011, eight are still ongoing while four new ones were approved and were in their initial phase of implementation;
- the introduction of family-friendly-measures at the Housing Authority;
- the resolved cases forwarded to MEEF by the Office of the Ombudsman;
- the drafting of the Childcare Services Act;
- the finalisation of the amendments to the Education Act and subsidiary legislation; and
- the restructuring of the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS).

COMPLETED TARGETS IN 2011

- Assisted in the completion of the Education Management Structures reform;

- Took up various initiatives related to 2020 targets in different sectors to be achieved by MEEF, including: reducing early school leavers' rate in Malta by collaborating with NSO in establishing a correct mapping of measurement scales for early school leavers; conducting, with the cooperation of NCHE, a survey on the participation rate in further and higher education; reducing the number of people at risk of poverty through the participation in a number of related meetings; assisting in initiatives taken up by ETC to increase the employment rate including the ETC Malta's Flexicurity Roadmap and strengthening enforcement through regular monitoring, against persons who employ workers from third countries without the necessary permits through regular monitoring;
- Facilitating the completion of the transition of all state school students into the college system, concluding the building of one new school and approving refurbishment of up to 9,265 specific jobs;
- Supporting the setting up of the early intellectual screening programme for children through core competences for Years 1, 2 and 3 in literacy and numeracy, and recruited resource workers for early childhood intellectual services. During 2011, the newly set-up Intervention Services were launched;
- Took an active role in ensuring fully equipped schools, teachers and students with eLearning technology (including laptops for teachers, one computer for every four students, network connection, interactive whiteboards and eLearning platform) and provided required training. This office was instrumental in providing 71 officers working in the psycho-social services in colleges with laptops;
- Staff members took an active role in the overall organisation, and the undersigned chaired the Final Conference of the National Curriculum Framework Consultation Process. Progress was monitored through regular meetings with DGs;
- Instigating the draft Lifelong Learning Strategy, which is now ready for consultation;
- Reducing abuse of benefits by 70%;
- Following up on Housing Authority schemes/initiatives through meetings with the Chairman and CEO;
- Assisting in intensifying the fight against domestic violence through meetings with CEO, FSWS;
- Assisting in strengthening racial and gender equality through meetings with CEO, NCPE;
- Restructuring the EU Affairs Unit, the Research and Development Unit and the Implementation Unit and creating an ongoing collaborative process;
- Starting in Q3 2011 the restructuring and refurbishing programme of the offices at the Education Head Office in Floriana including the setting up, and refurbishment, of a Customer Care Centre for MEEF;
- Planning and starting the implementation of a strategy to cut costs and increase efficiency of all grades in Colleges in five sectors: cleaning, secretarial duties, maintenance, security services and embellishment structures. An HR audit of the Head Offices in Floriana and Palazzo Ferreria was initiated in order to redeploy officers as necessary;
- Initiating of a restructuring process at the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) including staff redeployment as necessary;
- Redesigning of the MEEF website;
- Taking the initiative to plan an MEEF Journal, which will feature key initiatives and programmes undertaken by various units;
- Spearheading, through regular and ad hoc management meetings, the complete lifting of the EUPA suspension of funds;
- Helping in the drafting of the amended Education Act and the three subsidiary legislations to introduce quality assurance, accreditation and licensing of further and higher education institutions, the validation of informal and non-formal learning and the formal recognition of the Malta Qualifications Framework;
- Spearheading the move of the offices of the Malta Qualifications Council and the National Commission for Higher Education from St Lucia to Casa Leoni in St Venera and the Offices of the Commissioner for Children from Valletta to St Lucia.

Overall, 2011 was a very busy but rewarding year. The excellent rapport established with staff (Education, Social Security, Social Policy and the key managers of most of the 62 other entities and boards) was perhaps the greatest achievement for the Office of the Permanent Secretary and its staff members. Achieving the targets set in the PSA, the NRP and the individual goals of entities and agencies under the responsibility of MEEF, was made possible through the regular, formal and informal communication/ meetings with the Principal Permanent Secretary, fellow Permanent Secretaries, directorates as well as the setting up of MEEF senior management meetings.

INSTITUTE OF TOURISM STUDIES

The Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) is an institution of higher education aimed at meeting the changing needs of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry.

The Institute is firmly committed to provide an educational structure aimed at guaranteeing excellent standards of service within the hospitality industry. Students' progress is continuously monitored by tutors, review boards as well as internal examiners. The lecturing staff receives special training and guidance in methodology and assessment techniques.

PROGRAMMES OF STUDY FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2010 – 2011

During the past academic year, the Institute of Tourism Studies offered the following programmes of study:

Level 2 Qualifications

Foundation Certificate in Hospitality Trades
ESTS Apprenticeship

Level 3 Qualifications

Certificate in Hospitality Trades
Certificate in Food Preparation & Production

Level 4 Qualifications

Diploma in Hotel Operations
Diploma in Bars & Restaurant Operations
Diploma in Rooms Division Operations
Diploma in Culinary Arts
Diploma in Hospitality Events Management
Diploma in Sports & Active Leisure

Level 5 Qualifications

Higher National Diploma in Hospitality Management
Higher National Diploma in Tourism Studies
Higher National Diploma in Hotel Operations specialising in F&B Management
Higher National Diploma in Hotel Operations specialising in Rooms Division Management
Higher National Diploma in Culinary Arts
Higher National Diploma in Hospitality Events Management
Higher National Diploma in Sports Tourism and Active Leisure
Higher National Diploma in Hospitality Marketing and E-Business
Higher National Diploma for Tourist Guides

Further to the above, the Institute of Tourism Studies in collaboration with various secondary school colleges continued to develop the Pre-Employment Scheme with the aim of enabling students to embark on a career in the hospitality field and of encouraging students to continue with their studies at vocational education level.

ATTENDANCE

During the academic year 2010/11, there were 485 registered full-time students attending the ITS, 63 of who were foreigners. In addition, around 570 students attended a part-time course at the Institute.

International Internships

In July 2011, 59 students commenced their international internship. Students were placed in the following countries: England (35 students), Scotland (seven students), Isle of Man (nine students), Ireland (four students), Belgium (four students).

Graduates 2011

In total 202 students graduated in the following areas

– Diploma and Higher National Diploma	54
– Foundation	50
– Certificate	61
– ESTS (Extended Skills Training Scheme in collaboration with ETC)	37

Figures refer to previous programmes of study.

British Institute of Cleaning Sciences

The ITS has become an approved training centre for the British Institute of Cleaning Sciences and a corporate member. Lecturing staff was trained to conduct the Cleaner Operator Proficiency Certificate. A cleaning laboratory was set up at the Martin Luther King campus.

Chocolate Academy

In collaboration with *Callebout* of Brussels and their Maltese agents, the ITS set up a Chocolate Academy at Martin Luther King campus. Master *chocolatier* Philippe Vancayseele is a regular visiting lecturer.

Participation in EU Programmes

During 2011, the ITS was involved in the following EU programmes:

- *ERASMUS Tempus - SATIS*: Collaboration on Sustainable Tourism and E-Learning Networks;
- *ERASMUS - MODES*: A project to identify soft skills in higher education and to develop a pertinent curriculum as well as an online training simulation programme;
- *Leonardo da Vinci - YES Employability Project*: The Institute of Tourism Studies is the lead partner in a 'Transfer of Innovation' project involving the identification of skills and competencies in the hospitality industry and the development of a software tool to facilitate their relationship and pertinence to education and training programmes in tourism;
- *Leonardo da Vinci Innoguide Project*: This initiative spans three years and is aimed at planning a programme of studies for tourist guides in EU member states;
- *Comenius - START*: The development of an online training simulation programme;
- *ECVET* - European Credit Vocational Education and Training;
- *EQAVET* - European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training;
- *REFERNET*: a project to ensure high quality standards in the work undertaken within the Refernet consortium;
- *ESF 2.85* Linking Industrial Needs and VET to Optimise Human Capital;
- *ESF 2.78* Retaining & Attracting People within Tourism through Diversity Management;

DR JAMES CALLEJA

Permanent Secretary, MEEF

Corporate Services Directorate

The Directorate of Corporate Services (DCS) provides support services and advice to the Permanent Secretary and to the directorates, departments and organisations/entities within the Ministry on issues related to financial planning and management, procurement, human resources management and office management. The Directorate coordinates activities of a corporate nature and seeks to achieve uniformity in implementing policy directives issued by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment (MFEI) as well as by the Ministry itself.

The Directorate is organised into six branches: Finance (Ministry), Support Services, Human Resources (Education), Financial Services (Education Directorates), Procurement and Administration and Precincts Management.

FINANCE (MINISTRY)

The Finance Section of the Ministry continued to provide assistance to the Director of Corporate Services and to the Permanent Secretary with regard to financial management.

Monthly revised estimates were prepared in respect of recurrent and capital expenditure, including programmes and initiatives in order to keep financial commitments on track and to take corrective action in cases where allocated funds were not sufficient. Continuous liaison was maintained with MFEI by means of financial management reports. Also, appropriate action was taken to pre-empt, reduce or collect over payments when they arise. The Section assisted in the collection of arrears of revenue.

The Section also monitored the revenue and expenditure of all entities within the Ministry's portfolio and recommended to the Budget Office the release of funds required for their efficient and effective operation.

The Finance Section contributed towards the drafting of the 2012 financial estimates of the Ministry. Business Plans submitted by departments and entities falling under the Ministry were analysed and a holistic document was drawn up for the Ministry of Finance.

During the year, the Section devised new reporting mechanisms to facilitate the gathering of information necessary for the preparation of reports. Action was also taken to address issues raised by the National Audit Office (NAO) and by other bodies.

Other work carried out included the preparation of Accrual Accounting returns on a quarterly basis, the preparation of draft replies to parliamentary questions, and the preparation and submission of other information requested by the Office of the Prime Minister, the Budget Office, the Treasury and the NAO.

Financial control measures undertaken in 2011 included the following:

- implementation of the Fleet Management System;
- identification and de-activation of unused telephone lines;
- efficiency gains initiatives mainly with regard to the reorganisation of current operations, the amalgamation of sections and the improved utilisation of human resources;
- energy saving measures mainly with regard to the changing of light bulbs and water heaters and the preparation for the installation of two photovoltaic units in 2012 at the Health and Safety and Science Centre in Pembroke and at the Social Policy Carpentry Section at Hal Far.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services within the Directorate of Corporate Services consist mainly of the administration of Students' Maintenance Grants and travel arrangements for officers proceeding abroad on official duty and for study purposes.

Students' Maintenance Grants Section (SMGS)

The section was responsible for the administration and remuneration of the maintenance grants to all post secondary students who were eligible for a stipend, including students who were awarded a scholarship under the undergraduate scheme. The number of students for this scholastic years' intake for post secondary studies was 5,196.

These students were also provided with a smart card, which system was administered and regulated by APCO Ltd. The SMGS dealt with all the payments to retailers and was also responsible for the re-issuing of the new/lost smart cards.

Over the summer period the section received and verified all the applications for new entrants to post secondary schools and also administered the students' database and issued postings for students who applied for summer work during July-September 2011.

Travel Abroad Section

The section prepared documents required by the Ministry's and departments' delegates to travel abroad to participate in conferences and meetings. It was also responsible for follow-up procedures on the delegates' return. Such procedures included the presentation of relative documents to the Treasury and the submission of claims for reimbursements to MFEI in respect of expenses incurred for travel related to the European Commission and Council. Data in connection with Education is presented in the table below. An additional 126 visits took place from the Social Policy end.

<i>Annual data re Travel Abroad (Education Sector) 2011</i>				
	Visits	Officials	Cost	Reimbursement
Ministry	93	122	€100,422	€50,906
Directorates of Education	95	159	€149,139	€17,692
Libraries	4	4	€4,053	Nil
ITS	11	15 (and 14 students)	€21,919	Nil

HUMAN RESOURCES (EDUCATION)

The Human Resources (HR) Branch is responsible for providing support and advice to the Director of Corporate Services, the Permanent Secretary, the Directors General, and Directors of all line departments to ensure that the policies and procedures of the Public Service and relevant legislation are adhered to in matters relating to human resources. Furthermore, the Branch regularly assists internal and external customers providing support and information on an ongoing basis on a wide range of HR issues or as requested by central government.

In order to achieve its purpose effectively, the Human Resources Branch operates through four sections namely the Records, Employee Relations, Resourcing and Discipline Sections.

Records Section

The Records Section carried out the following activities:

- preparation of letters of appointment of new recruits and promoted officers, and registration and engagement of new employees;

- processing of 409 confirmation of appointments and 2,857 increments of employees within the Ministry;
- preparation of pension documents of 216 retiring employees and 14 other boarded out employees, of who 76 (73 superannuated and 3 boarded out) were also entitled to a Treasury pension;
- preparation of letters of progression in respect of 522 employees;
- processing the re-designation of 37 Instructors and two Part-time Instructors as Teachers;
- updating of all changes in personal records and appointment details of the staff, including the personal record sheets, seniority lists and allowances database;
- any necessary action with Public Administration HR Office, the National Audit Office, the Public Service Commission and the ETC in respect of employees whose employment was terminated during the year;
- processing of requests for 136 qualification allowances and a number of other allowances, such as the all-inclusive and acting Head of School allowances,
- drawing up of several hundreds of service and leave record forms (GP47) to applicants applying under various calls for applications.

Resourcing Section

The Resourcing Section:

- processed 449 cases of progression/promotions as provided in the Classification and Regrading Agreements of the different classes and grades;
- submitted monthly employment returns to the ETC and PAHRO;
- undertook the collection of employment data returns from the public sector entities falling under the Ministry's remit;
- administered the Performance Management Programme for the general service grades; increased its efforts to further improve the submission of these reports by employees bound by PMP - 282 PMPs were collected from a total of 334 employees;
- referred 644 employees for the required medical examinations;
- regularly updated the Human Resources Information Management System database;
- submitted to the relevant authorities weekly returns of staff engagements, transfers to and from other departments, superannuations and resignations within the Directorates;
- processed a total of 2,720 files;
- prepared letters of appointment to newly-engaged as well as promoted employees - 700 letters of appointment were processed and issued.

Discipline Section

The following cases were processed by the Disciplinary Section

- in terms of Section 3.1.3.3 of the Public Service Management Code, two cases were reported in the first 6 months;
- five cases were dealt with in accordance with Regulation 36 and two in accordance with Regulation 12;
- two Minor and 62 Serious disciplinary cases were processed in terms of Regulation 20;
- in terms of 20(2)(a) and (c) seven cases were concluded by Appeal at the Public Service Commission;
- out of 144 cases reported in terms of Regulation 19, 35 written warnings were administered;
- 18 Admonishments were reported in terms of Regulation 18;
- in terms of Regulation 14, six Criminal cases were terminated, while 19 other cases are pending in Court. These include violence, fraud, theft, defilement of minors and necessitated the initiation of suspension, interdiction or dismissal. In terms of the same regulation, Criminal forms were forwarded to the Director Employee Relations, PAHRO together with the Administrative Measures Form re Withholding of Increments/Progressions.

In processing these cases, continuous liaison is maintained between the discipline section and the Commissioner of Police, the Law Courts, OPM, the Public Service Commission and internally with other sections.

Employee Relations Section:

The Employee Relations Section:

- maintained an electronic record on HRIMS of 2011 vacation leave;
- maintained both an electronic record on HRIMS database and a manual record of sick leave, special paid and unpaid leave availed of by employees of the Ministry and the Directorates' staff, including also part-time staff ;
- processed requests for special paid and unpaid leave, including parental, career break, maternity, responsibility leave, pre-retirement, sports, alternative employment, unpaid study leave, vocational and cultural leave, as well as requests for reduced hours, donation of vacation leave, accumulation of sick and vacation leave, requests for 30 days unpaid leave for special/family friendly reasons, voluntary work abroad and taking up employment with agencies of the European Union;
- liaised with the Salaries Section in Gozo for adjustment of salaries and deduction of allowances;
- administered and processed reports regarding injuries at work;
- liaised with PAHRO for approval of paid and unpaid leave;
- liaised with the Ministry for Health and Community Care for approval of accumulation of sick, quarantine leave and sick leave abroad;
- liaised with the Department of Social Security regarding injuries on duty, after-effects of an injury and the issuing of payments of half-pay and no-pay sick leave benefits;
- made administrative arrangements for the setting up of medical boards regarding employees on prolonged sick leave;
- provided guidance to Directors, College Principals, Heads of School and school clerks regarding PSMC standing regulations, its updates and the family friendly measures;
- provided statistics and data requested in-house or in relation to PQs, as well as by central government departments.

During the year, 1,961 employees visited the Employee Relations Section requesting the GP47 and other services, 224 employees availed/are availing themselves of pre-retirement leave and 271 female employees of maternity leave, 229 employees availed themselves of birth/marriage/bereavement leave, 241 employees availed/are availing themselves of unpaid parental leave and 188 of career break. The Section processed 5,376 personal files, 17,882 applications for vacation leave and 16,277 medical certificates.

FINANCIAL SERVICES (EDUCATION DIRECTORATES)

The Financial Services Branch provides all the departments, units and state schools, which fall under the responsibility of the Directorate for Educational Services and the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education, with support services on all government financial matters. It also implements monitoring and control mechanisms necessary to keep the Educational Directorates' finances in line with government financial regulations.

The Financial Services Branch is made up of two sections: the Accounts Section and the Efficiency and Strategic Operations Planning Unit (ESOPU). The Branch is mainly responsible for the evaluation of the two Directorates' three-year Business and Financial Plans and their compilation into a single holistic document consistent with Government's policies and programmes. This document formed the basis of discussions with the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment for the 2012 Estimates.

Recurrent and Capital Votes and Items of expenditure were regularly monitored during the year and reports were submitted on a monthly basis to senior management for control purposes, indicating where expenditure was expected to exceed the budgetary allocation. Monthly reports on these Votes were also submitted to the Budget Office.

In particular, items such as allowances (€8.2m in 2011) and school transport (€3.9m) were closely monitored to analyse the effect of the increase in the respective rates payable. In the case of supervision allowances, the Accounts Section continued to monitor returns from schools with the main aim of keeping

the number of personnel authorised to carry out such duties within the relative agreements and to ascertain that payments were actually due.

Imprest funds for Materials and Supplies (€1.45m), and Repairs and Maintenance (€323k) were allocated to primary and secondary schools in Malta. Schools filed interim reports (for 2011) and final reports (for 2010) on the expenditure incurred on these items for monitoring purposes. These reports were checked and any discrepancies were remedied with the respective Head of school. During the year, no school audits were carried out.

Imprest funds for capital expenditure (€800k) were allocated to schools by ESOPU, which continued to monitor such expenditure through the capital imprest returns submitted by schools to ensure that all capital expenditure transactions were made in accordance with the government financial and procurement regulations.

The School Council Funds returns for the year 2010 were reconciled and any queries discussed and cleared with the respective Heads of School. ESOPU also compiled a list of bank accounts administered by the two Directorates, units and schools and the respective returns were sent to the Treasury Department.

With respect to Capital expenditure, ESOPU continued to monitor the items falling under the Capital Vote. This Unit continued to be responsible for the drafting, compilation and issuing of all departmental tenders and quotations related to capital expenditure. During the financial year, the amount of €1,044,952 was spent on the purchasing of equipment and furniture for/by schools (including special schools). The amount of €643,843 was spent on IT equipment in schools. Quotations for the purchase of IT equipment continued to be issued and processed through the e-procurement system.

The Unit continued to administer the sick leave verification scheme, which monitors the man hours being lost through sick leave, and coordinated visits by medical professionals to verify sick leave.

The Accounts Section and ESOPU processed and issued relative payments for all items and services procured by the two Directorates. Where possible, payments for goods and services procured by the Directorates were processed by the end of the financial year.

The Financial Service Branch continued to compile statistical data on education for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Overseas Development Assistance), MFEI, the National Audit Office, the National Statistics Office, data related to parliamentary questions, and for senior management as required.

PROCUREMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Procurement Section

The Procurement Section handled 1,630 requisition forms and their corresponding local purchase orders for the procurement of goods, works and services which were issued for the departments/directorates within the Ministry. Moreover, 13 departmental tenders and 11 sealed quotations were processed in addition to 27 sealed quotations referred by other departments within MEEF which involved being published and opened. An expression of interest to identify suppliers of school uniforms for each of the ten colleges was also issued on behalf of the Directorate for Educational Services and awarded in August .

The Departmental Contracts Committee met on a weekly basis to go through the evaluation reports and tendering procedures of all tenders valued up to €20,000 excluding VAT and all EU funded tenders valued up to €47,000 excluding VAT, issued by various entities and departments within the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family. During the year, 78 sessions in total were held. The Board reviewed tenders from 21 different Contracting Authorities falling under Education and Social Policy. Accordingly, of the 428 referred for decision, 248 cases were recommended for award, 81 cases were disagreed with and referred back to the respective entity, while 68 requests were referred back for

rectification/clarification and 28 calls were cancelled. Another three cases resulted as not being within the remit of the DCC.

Minor Staff Section

This section monitored the minor staff deployment in state schools and outstations in Malta and redeployed personnel as required. The inspection team set up in the previous year continued to supervise the attendance of watchmen in schools after normal hours.

Disciplinary action was taken against 90 defaulters involving minor staff. These were either criminal cases, admonition cases, written warning cases falling under Regulation 19 of the Public Service Disciplinary Procedures Regulations 1999 or other cases falling under Regulation 20 of the aforementioned regulations. Moreover, by the end of 2011 there were six pending criminal cases and two new criminal cases. There were two cases of termination.

Transport Section

This section provided transport service to the Ministry, the Education Directorates and other entities. A total of 4,000 formal requests for transport were received during the year.

The section provided six lifter vans to the special schools, two vans to Unit Għozza, and three buses to schools at Kalkara, Tarxien and Birkirkara. The latter service was discontinued in mid March 2011. The section provided regular transport for school outings, Skolasajf, youth exchange programmes, in-service courses, and to officers travelling to and from Gozo. Transport was also made available to various sections including Education Stores, the Schools Library Services, ICT, and the Education Assessment Unit.

The section supervised and processed the issue of fuel entitlements to users of official vehicles. All vehicles were given proper maintenance and passed the VRT.

Inventory Section

The Inventory Section provided continuous support throughout the year to school administrators to update their inventory database in line with the accrual accounting inventory system. It carried out 16 inspections in schools to check inventory updates, with inventory section staff taking part in school audits. Furthermore, it made arrangements, supervised and recorded in the relative inventory database 31 transfers of inventory items from schools and sections or stores within the Ministry.

The section submitted an updated general database to the National Audit Office and the Treasury Department every six months and continued the labelling process of permanent items throughout the outgoing year. Routine updating of all school inventories was carried out with the provision of relative support to school inventory officers and inserted updated inventory lists into the general database for subsequent submission to the Ministry of Finance.

The inventory list of the Head Office was continuously updated following the movement of the office of the Minister and the Permanent Secretary from Casa Leoni at Sta Venera to Palazzo Ferreria, Valletta and the relocation of all offices under the DCS from the 1st to the 2nd floor which are being refurbished.

The Inventory Section has also tackled and processed 13 inventory losses or theft cases throughout 2011.

Registry Section

The Registry processed an average of 400 files daily, received 4,251 e-mails with movements and requests of files and queries and opened 2,628 new files, of which 550 were personal files in respect of state and non-state schools staff and 2,078 general files.

The Registry also processed 5,642 registered letters and 65,298 letters (ordinary and foreign mail), registered over 500 internal circulars and updated the mail, transfers, general files and the telephone directory databases on a regular basis.

The Registry Section also provided assistance and help to all personnel on Registry procedures and services when and as required.

Stores Section

The Stores Section procured stationery items and cleaning material with a view of obtaining the best value for money. Records of stationery and cleaning material procured and distributed were always kept up to date at this Section.

Moreover, the number of school text books distributed by the Stores section to state schools during 2011 amounted to 109,707 copies covering the primary and secondary sectors.

Other material distributed to state and non-state schools were 70,000 flyers, 30,200 brochures, 25,000 books and 4,440 CDs in relation to the National Curriculum Framework and 20,000 copies of *Lo Stivale*, the Italian bi-annual magazine.

Furthermore, a number of summer and winter uniforms items were also issued from the Stores Section to 58 persons entitled to a uniform.

PRECINCTS MANAGEMENT

The Precincts Management Unit carried out new projects and refurbished premises on behalf of the Ministry, departments, directorates and some entities.

Projects initiated/concluded by this section in 2011 include: new child care centres at St Venera, Floriana and Qormi; Health and Safety and Science Centre at Pembroke; Galatea building within Appogg; Casa Leoni premises for NCHE/MQC; Education Head Office in Floriana; Social Security premises at 38 Ordnance Street Valletta; and Social Security district offices. Statistical information is produced in the table below:

<i>Trade</i>	<i>Employees in the trade</i>	<i>Requisitions for works</i>	<i>Jobs carried out</i>	<i>Jobs in hand</i>
<i>Aluminium works</i>	2	50	44	6
<i>Carpentry works</i>	4	92	89	3
<i>Drainage works</i>	1	37	36	1
<i>Drivers works</i>	1	300	300	Nil
<i>Masonry works</i>	4	16	15	1
<i>Membrane works</i>	2	35	34	1
<i>Welding and Iron works</i>	2	66	64	2
<i>Plastering & Painting works</i>	2	20	20	Nil
<i>Electrical works</i>	4	75	70	5
<i>Plumbing works</i>	4	76	74	2
<i>Gardening works</i>	6	461	461	Nil

Ten tradesmen from the former Ministry of Social Policy and five tradesmen from the Department of Social Welfare Standards assisted the above.

ANDRE' VASSALLO GRANT
Director (Corporate Services)

Information Management Unit

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT UNIT (SOCIAL POLICY)

Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) is one of MEEF's key resources. Accordingly, the primary focus of the Information Management Unit (IMU) is the strategic direction and management of information, ensuring that data is translated into information as a strategic resource. It focuses on improving the way the ministry uses technology as a sound and effective foundation for delivering its corporate objectives.

Administrative Support

Responding to growing dependence on ICT entails the provision and maintenance of a resilient and reliable operations service in support of organisational objectives. The main priority is therefore to ensure that MEEF's investment in ICT solutions is adequately protected. This is done through effective contractual frameworks which are currently ongoing. This guarantees that agreed service delivery and support is provided in a cost-effective, secure and efficient manner.

The Administrative Support Unit (ASU) offers a first line of support for ICT services for all staff within the Social Policy portfolio. ASU aims at serving as an ICT helpdesk in order to filter queries and requests forwarded by line departments, identifying the query or request. It also procures ICT stock in order to assist line departments deliver services efficiently and effectively. Moreover, contractual arrangements cover the full spectrum of ICT services including network management, desktop support and application support/development. Getting the most from selected service providers and from the cost effective use of technology helps deliver efficiency savings and reduce costs, thus creating long-term cost-effective solutions.

Social Policy Information Centre (SPIC)

The Social Policy Information Centre (SPIC) is an information centre offering greater access to citizens for the provision of information related to Social Policy services. It is an additional channel through which the general public may obtain information.

At SPIC, we provide a telephony-based service offering all necessary and relevant information to all citizens of Malta about social services and other services offered by departments and entities within the social policy portfolio. Our priority is to deliver excellent services by making the user's phone call or request a positive experience, ultimately providing a faster and better answer.

Benefit Processing and Data Management

Our task is to process social security benefits in a timely and effective manner keeping in mind that these benefits constitute a vital help to thousands of citizens. Payment processes are scheduled on a daily basis for different social security benefit payments due on a weekly, four weekly and quarterly basis.

The aim is to offer a timely and smooth support service with regards to the processing and the issue of social security benefits, as well as ensuring consistency and integrity of the data stored within the social security benefits system (SABS).

The payment of such benefits is either made by cheque or paid directly to the beneficiary's bank account. This involves liaison with the local banks and the postal service due to the large amount of cheques and direct credit transactions. Each year, the number of social security benefits paid by cheque to beneficiaries amount to 600,000 payments. Moreover, those beneficiaries paid through direct credit payments total to over 1.1 million yearly, while correspondence letters issued to beneficiaries related to social security benefits amount to 500,000.

eStrategy

Through the MEEF's online portal - www.meef.gov.mt, it is ensured that its content is maintained and updated of high standard at all times. As an ongoing task, we enhance, identify and extend components of the existing site, or seek specific business areas in order to offer new services through the website. Our priority is that of providing solutions to enable the implementation of an increasing number of e-government services thus enabling the delivery of personalised customer services.

Based on the continued growth pattern over these past years, our response is the continued expansion and enhancement of services via the MEEF's website. The portal layout is based on the respective business areas and provides a very broad accessibility to the public. Our commitment is that of providing information to the public.

CLIFFORD SCHEMBRI

Chief Information Officer (Social Policy)

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT UNIT (EDUCATION)

The Unit was responsible for the ICT Operations in the Department for Quality and Services in Education, the Department for Educational Services, the Libraries Department, the National Archives and the Examinations Department.

The major services to these organisations are:

- Procurement of peripheral equipment via the e-procurement facility
- Observance of ICT Standards and Policies
- Support in the procurement of Applications and Systems
- Maintenance of Applications and Systems
- Management of the leasing of computers which includes damages and thefts
- Maintenance of ICT spares
- Provision of Wide Area Networks
- Provision of Local Area Networks
- Maintenance and security of the Data Centre
- Management of Third Party Suppliers

The IMU works in close collaboration with MITA in all matters relating to ICT. It obtains expertise and direction and implements the Policies, Standards and Directives set out by the Agency. Hereunder is a detailed list of services rendered.

Services to Library Department

- Computerisation of four branch libraries in Malta – Q1
- Computerisation of 10 branch libraries in Gozo – by Q 2
- Provided WAN and LAN to the branches including computers and training of staff in basic office automation and the use of the Library Information System
- Supported the use of the Library Information System and managed the third party supplier and the local agents

Services to the Examinations Department

- Facilitated with Megabyte the introduction of a new Library Information System and the phasing out of the old System
- Assisted the Department in the User Acceptance Testing and the management of the third party supplier

Services to the Education Directorates

- Managed the Divestment tenderer (Megabyte) regarding the implementation of the contract for the maintenance and support of the Students, Teachers, Schools System
- Negotiated with Megabyte a Secondary School Certificate additional module for the Students and Teachers' Schools System. Assisted in the implementation and commissioning
- Provided assistance in the roll-out of further school libraries as well as in upgrades and updates to Schools Libraries System. Also managed the third party supplier

Service to the Life Long Learning Department

- Provided supplier management of the Evening Courses System
- Assisted the Department and the third party supplier (Megabyte) in the divestment of the Evening Courses System

Services to the National Archives

- Provided the National Archivist with technical support and guidance on matters of computerisation

Dealings with MITA

- Negotiated and managed the Ministry Services Contract for 2011
- Managed user accounts. Applied for the creation of new ones and for the deletion of accounts in respect of staff who terminated their employment with Education
- Contracted MITA for technical guidance in respect of WANs and LANs
- Raised requests for Waivers and Exemptions from GMICT Standards and Policies. Saw each request through to approval. Requested the renewal of expired requests, if further required

Various

- Provided supplier management for the Ministry Website
- Registered line-of-business non-core software
- Liaised with internal clients regarding the removal of Potentially Unwanted Programmes
- Participated in various tender adjudication boards
- Assisted SMART KIDS in the computerisation of new Smart Kids centres
- Supported ICT projects at the offices of the Parliamentary Secretary

Staff Matters

- Participated in various local expositions and conferences
- Participated in a Conference in Prague on Information Security Solutions (Europe) under an ESF project

EDWARD CARUANA
Chief Information Officer (Education)

Policy Development and EU Affairs Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The Policy Development and EU Affairs Directorate is entrusted with the task of coordinating the Ministry's response in EU and other international fora, as well as to contribute to the drawing up of policies in respect of matters pertaining to the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family. In effect, following the decision taken in February 2011 to relocate EU Affairs' Education staff from Floriana to Valletta offices in order to enable the Policy Development and EU Affairs Directorate to take over all EU Affairs operations within the Ministry, this responsibility was extended to cover monitoring in the areas of education and youth and sport, in addition to social affairs and employment.

Therefore, in 2011, the Policy Development and EU Affairs Directorate monitored developments in the areas employment, social affairs, education, youth and sport, at EU and international level and formulated the Ministry's position, after consultations with internal entities, other Ministries as well as non-governmental stakeholders, whenever this was required. The Directorate also provided feedback to other Ministries when called upon to do so. Moreover, the Directorate coordinated the participation of ministry officials in various conferences, meetings, and other events taking place abroad.

During 2011, participation in EU related events included various Ministerial meetings covering the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO), the Education, Youth and Sport Councils (ECYS), as well as Informal Ministers' meetings which focused on such issues as employment, demographic changes and family policies, and ROMA community.

Besides EU Affairs, the Directorate also dealt with matters relating to international affairs, particularly in the areas of social affairs and employment. Many of the requests originated from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and mainly referred to documentation sent from the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

With regard to Policy Development, the Directorate also incorporates within its structures the Social Inclusion Office and the Research Unit. The Social Inclusion Office is a key component of social policy development and upholds the overall responsibility for the promotion of social inclusion issues in Malta. This Office is responsible for the development, coordination and implementation of Malta's National Strategies Report for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (renamed National Social Report as from 2012). On the other hand, the Research Unit, which only started operations in January 2010, is entrusted with undertaking data and research analysis in the formulation of policy development related to social affairs.

EU AFFAIRS

Drafting of Positions

During 2011, the Policy Development and EU Affairs Directorate drafted or coordinated the drafting of 243 Instruction Notes for Working Party, COREPER I and Committees' meetings. In addition to this, the Directorate drafted 54 Briefing Notes, 54 Background Notes, and 52 Lines to Take/Speaking Notes in connection with participation in Ministerial meetings, bilateral meetings with the European Commission, and meetings attended by the Permanent Representative of Malta to the European Union.

Participation in Inter-Ministerial Committee

The Directorate actively participated in all the Inter-Ministerial Committee for EU Affairs meetings held in 2011. In this regard, the Directorate last year prepared a total of 20 Explanatory Memoranda outlining Malta's position on new EU proposals and communications in respect of issues for which the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family, was the implementing Ministry.

In addition, the Directorate also provided feedback in relation to numerous other Explanatory Memoranda for which MEEF was a participating Ministry.

Employment and Social Affairs

The main focus of the EPSCO Council meeting of 7 March 2011 was a policy debate on the issues related to the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy as part of the contribution to the March European Council. There was also an exchange of views on the Green Paper 'Towards adequate sustainable and safe European pension systems', as well as a discussion on a general approach on Proposal for Council Decision on Guidelines for the Employment Policies of the Member States. The working lunch debate focused on 'Complex Measures to Enhance Employability of Older Workers'.

The EPSCO Council meeting of 17 June also held another policy debate on the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy as part of the contribution to the June European Council. There was also an exchange of views on 'Demographic Change and Family Policies', as well as a general approach discussion on Council Recommendations on the National Reform Programmes 2011 for each Member State. Moreover, in this meeting, a debate took place on the Presidency Progress Report on discussion in Council on Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council Amending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the Coordination of Social Security Systems and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

An extraordinary EPSCO Council meeting took place on 19 May, which mainly consisted of an exchange of views on the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020. Ministers also adopted the related Council conclusions and endorsed the Opinion of the Social Protection Committee on Roma inclusion.

The EPSCO Council meeting of 3 October held a policy debate on the European Social Fund and its contribution towards the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The lunch debate dealt with European migration and mobility and the challenges and opportunities these pose for the future.

In the EPSCO Council meeting of 1 December 2011, Ministers held a policy debate on the contribution to the European Council of 9 December 2011. This debate mainly dealt with the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy in the field of employment and social policy. The lunch debate focused on youth employment. A general approach discussion in Council on Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council Amending Regulation (EC) NO 883/2004 on the Coordination of Social Security Systems and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 also took place. During this meeting, Ministers endorsed the Opinion of the Social Protection Committee on the EU commitment to poverty reduction and inclusion.

In 2011, Ministerial delegations took part in the following informal meetings:

- Informal Meeting of Ministers for Employment, Godollo, Hungary, from 16 to 18 January;
- Informal Meeting of Ministers responsible for Demography and Family Policy, Godollo, Hungary, from 31 March to 1 April;
- Informal Meeting of Ministers for Employment and Social Policy, Sopot, Poland, from 7 to 8 July;
- Informal Meeting of Ministerial Working Group on Employment and Social Policy, Potsdam, Germany, from 31 August to 1 September.

Delegations representing the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family also attended the First Annual Convention of the European Platform against Social Poverty and Social Exclusion held in Krakow, Poland, from 17 to 18 October, and the Equality Summit held in Poznan, Poland, from 14 to 15 November.

On 14 December, Malta notified the European Commission that although it supports initiatives undertaken in favour of the integration of the Roma community, it was nevertheless of the opinion that a National Roma Integration Strategy is not necessary in Malta's case.

On 19 December, Malta informed the European Commission of its decision to retain restrictions on the free access of Bulgarian and Romanian workers in the Maltese labour market. A report was also submitted to the European Commission justifying Malta's reasons for extending such restrictions to 2013.

Education and Training

The Directorate prepared documentation for three Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (EYCS) Council Meetings held at Ministerial level on 14 February, 19-20 May and 28-29 November 2011, respectively.

Documentation was also prepared for two Ministerial meetings held at informal level on 28-29 March 2011 and 10-11 October 2011 respectively.

The Directorate liaised with the Malta Qualifications Council regarding Malta's replies to the questions found in the Green Paper 'Modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive', that was launched by the European Commission on 22 June 2011.

Youth

During the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (EYCS) Council Meetings held at Ministerial level on 19-20 May 2011 and 28-29 November 2011 respectively, the following dossiers were adopted:

- Council Resolution on encouraging new and effective forms of participation of all young people in democratic life in Europe;
- Council Resolution on the structured dialogue with young people on youth employment;
- Council Conclusions on the Eastern dimension of youth participation and mobility' whereas the policy debate dealt with 'Youth and the world - Youth Cooperation beyond the EU'.

A youth policy debate focused on the Voluntary activities of young people and their contribution to the development of local communities.

Moreover, the first cycle of the Structured Dialogue on youth employment was concluded in the first half of 2011. The overall theme that is being addressed during the second 18 month cycle that started on 1 July 2011 and which will continue up to 31 December 2012 under the Trio Presidency Poland-Denmark-Cyprus is youth participation in democratic life in Europe.

Sport

During EYCS Council Meetings held at Ministerial level on 19-20 May and 28-29 November 2011 respectively, the following dossiers were adopted:

- Council Resolution on Work Plan for Sport;
- Council Conclusions on combating match-fixing;
- Council Conclusions on the role of voluntary activities in sport in promoting active citizenship;
- Council Resolution on the representation of the EU Member States in the Foundation Board of WADA and the coordination of the EU and its Member States' positions prior to WADA meetings.

The sport policy debates focused on sport-related aspects of online betting and good governance in sport.

Documentation was also prepared for two Informal Ministerial Meetings held on 22-23 February and 13-14 October, as well as for two Sport Directors' Meetings held on 27-28 June and 14-16 December respectively.

In line with requirements set out in the Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Sport which established six sport Expert Groups, Malta informed the European Commission of its decision to participate in the following groups: (a) Sustainable Financing of Sport; (b) Education and Training in Sport; (c) Sport, Health and Participation; and (d) Anti-Doping.

Following a letter received from the European Commission requesting information on the Malta Football Association's compensation fees in case of transfer of football players, Malta replied through a letter dated 11 January 2011 and in which it was noted that the Malta Football Association does not have its own compensation calculation formula for training and development and, therefore, bases itself on the FIFA Statute and regulations, keeping in mind the national dimension of the sport.

After the European Commission notified Malta that it received a complaint regarding the Provisions on the Registration of Foreign Players under the 2010 Registration and Licences Policy (RLP) of the Maltese Basketball Association, Malta sent a letter to the European Commission on 1 September 2011 informing it that the Malta Basketball Association had taken up the suggestions put forward by the European Commission by amending its registration and licences policy for the 2011-2012 season.

Europe 2020 Strategy

In the course of 2011, the Directorate continued to monitor developments in EU discussions and provide positions and other feedback as requested, as well as to hold consultation where necessary, with regard to three of the five Europe 2020 Strategy headline targets that pertain to the Ministry, which are:

- Education - reducing school drop-out rates below 10% and at least 40% of 30 - 34 year-olds completing third level education (or equivalent);
- Employment – aiming for an employment rate of 75% in respect of those aged 20-64;
- Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction - 20 million fewer people living below the poverty line.

National Reform Programme

The Directorate coordinated the Ministry's response towards the drawing up of the measures included in Malta's National Reform Programme 2011 in respect of the three aforesaid Europe 2020 Strategy headline targets pertaining to the Ministry. The National Reform Programme was published in April 2011.

Anti-Discrimination Directive

In 2011, the proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation was again the focus of much discussion in Council under both the Hungarian and Polish EU Presidencies. The Directorate coordinated Malta's response to the questionnaires of both Presidencies on 'reasonable accommodation' and 'age discrimination' respectively. Although progress continued to be made in 2011, agreement on the proposal remains elusive and further discussion is planned for 2012 under both the Danish and Cypriot EU Presidencies.

Infringements

During 2011, the Directorate coordinated Ministry response with regard to the following infringements:

- Infringement related to the transfer of pension rights between Member States' pension schemes and the European Communities pension scheme;

- Reasoned Opinion by the European Commission on Infringement 2010/4219 on the taking into account of professional experience and seniority acquired in other Member States for determining working conditions in the Maltese Public Sector, particularly with regards to teachers.
- Infringement No 2009/2161 on the alleged failure by Malta to apply Article 46b of Regulation (EEC) 1408/71 and Article 54 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 with regard to persons receiving a Maltese statutory social security pension and civil service pension from another EU Member State.

With regard to the latter, a bilateral meeting was held in Brussels between the European Commission and representatives from the Ministry on 19 December 2011.

Attendance in EU Meetings

Throughout 2011, officials from the Directorate regularly attended EU meetings of the Social Protection Committee, the Indicators Sub Group of the Social Protection Committee, the Working Groups on Social Services of General Interest, Age and Child Poverty, all three set up by the Social Protection Committee, the PROGRESS committee meetings, as well as in other EU-related meetings and conferences. One official was also nominated as Alternate Member on the Employment Committee (EMCO).

European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

The Directorate, together with the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) and the Programme Implementation Directorate, engaged in discussions with the consultants appointed to draw up the Final Evaluation Report on the activities held in Malta to implement the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. This report was published on 30 March 2011.

EU Regulatory Database

The Directorate continued its work in 2011 with a view to extrapolating relevant information from the EU Official Journals for inclusion in the Ministry's IT-based EU Regulatory Database. In effect, information was extrapolated for years 2007 to 2011 with the period 2004 to 2006 still outstanding. Such work is also being carried out in preparation of the planned launching of a Centralised Regulatory Database for EU Affairs Directorates across Government.

Presentations in MEUSAC

In the course of 2011, the Directorate liaised with the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) in giving presentations at both Core group and Sectoral Committee levels on the following dossiers:

- *MEUSAC Core Group*
 - 9 February - Communication on European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe
 - 24 June - The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European Framework for social and territorial cohesion
- *MEUSAC Sectoral Committees*
 - 9 February - Communication on European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe
 - 19 April - Communication on Tackling early school leaving: A key contribution to the Europe 2020 Agenda, and the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving;
 - 20 July - 'The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European Framework for social and territorial cohesion'

In addition to the above, a presentation on the 'The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European Framework for social and territorial cohesion' was also made at a seminar

organised by MEUSAC on 16 November 2011. The event formed part of a series of seminars organised by MEUSAC on Europe 2020 Strategy.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

On 23 March 2011, an invitation was conveyed to Malta by the United Nations Secretary General to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, inviting Malta to present its combined periodic report to the Committee at its 79th session taking place in New York on 24-25 August 2011. The Policy Development and EU Affairs Directorate coordinated the Ministry's response towards the preparation of this report. The Directorate also contributed towards the preparation of a speech for Malta's Head of Delegation, following consultations with the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, and in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two officials representing MEEF formed part of the delegation which attended the meeting in New York.

Also, in 2011, the Directorate coordinated the Ministry's response to requests received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on United Nations' conventions and protocols as well as Council of Europe documentation relating to such issues as women's rights, empowerment and other equality matters, including on sexual and reproductive health and rights, children's rights, migration and disability. Similarly, whenever requested, the Directorate provided its feedback to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in relation to Euro Med meetings.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

In relation to the implementation of Malta's national target on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy objectives, preparatory work was undertaken by the Directorate's Research Unit in 2011 towards the development of a tracking device, which is mainly based on the employment policy area, in order for Malta to be in a position to monitor performance in achieving the national target in the coming years. This tracking device is being developed in consultation with the Employment and Training Corporation.

During 2011, in collaboration with the Department of Social Security, the Research Unit carried out an analysis of non-contributory beneficiaries with a view to determining the disposable income from social benefits, both in terms of type of benefit as well as type of beneficiary.

With the support of the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA), the Research Unit also carried out work on the OECD based research on working age beneficiaries by groups of benefits received (more commonly known as branches). This was a time-consuming exercise in view of the detail and checking involved.

Furthermore, the Research Unit also coordinated Ministry's response towards to the drawing up of Malta's Draft National Environment Policy (NEP) and the preparation of the Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (SPED). This followed requests received from the Tourism and Sustainable Development Unit (TSDU) within the Office of the Prime Minister. During the first half of 2011, a progress report on the implementation of the National Strategies Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008-2010, which covers the three strands of social inclusion, pensions and health and long-term care, was drawn up by the Directorate's Social Inclusion Office.

OTHER MATTERS**ESF Community Initiative Programme EQUAL**

The European Commission informed Malta through a letter dated 28 September 2011, that all the operations related to the closure of the ESF Community Initiative Programme EQUAL had been successfully carried out.

GEORGE SULTANA

Director (Policy Development and EU Affairs – Social Affairs)

Programme Implementation (Social Affairs) Directorate

Throughout 2011, the Directorate continued to focus on its core functions, namely:

- monitoring and reporting upon the implementation of social affairs and education measures emanating from the National Reform Programmes, as well as social affairs initiatives laid down in the National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (2008-2010) and in the National Budgets;
- providing guidance and support regarding EU funding so that the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family (MEEF) makes the best use of such funding opportunities;
- overseeing and reporting on EU co-financed projects being implemented by the different departments and entities falling within the remit of the Ministry including the vetting and processing of payments relating to such projects.

KEY TASKS UNDERTAKEN DURING 2011

In line with its core functions, during 2011 the Directorate undertook the following key tasks:

- monitored endorsed measures whose implementation falls within the remit of MEEF
- disseminated information re EU funding opportunities
- oversaw the implementation of ERDF and ESF co-financed projects
- facilitated liaison between ERDF and ESF project leaders and the relevant authorities
- verified payment claims pertaining to ERDF and ESF co-financed projects

Monitoring of Endorsed Measures

During 2011, the Directorate identified a total of 46 measures emanating from the National Budget 2011 and the National Reform Programme (April 2011), whose implementation falls within MEEF's remit. Following the extrapolation of these measures, the Directorate established the respective measure owners and closely liaised with them so as to define milestones in respect of each such measure. Subsequently, once milestones were set, the Directorate started to monitor the implementation through regular reporting.

Through its monitoring function, during 2011, the Directorate oversaw, as specified hereunder, a total of 190 measures emanating from National Budgets, National Reform Programmes and National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (2008-2010):

- 126 measures being implemented by the different departments and entities falling within the Ministry's social affairs remit;
- 12 measures emanating from the National Reform Programme (April 2011) which are being implemented by the Education remit of the Ministry; and
- 52 measures focusing on social inclusion as emanating from the National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (2008-2010) which are being implemented by departments and entities outside the Social Affairs remit of MEEF.

By December 2011, the Directorate compiled two comprehensive implementation status reports showing progress in each measure as at December 2010 and as at end June 2011. Moreover, a further two reports showing status of NRP measures as at July 2011 and October 2011 were also drawn up.

Dissemination of Information of EU Funding Opportunities

In its commitment to promote the best use of EU funding, during 2011 the Directorate disseminated information about EU funding opportunities across the MEEF's remit. Notification was sent out by the Directorate regarding the following opportunities:

- ERDF and ESF funding opportunities:
 - 10th call for project proposals, part-financed by the ERDF 2007-2013 under Priority Axis 2: Promoting Sustainable Tourism
 - 11th call for project proposals, part-financed by ERDF 2007-2013 under Priority Axis 6: Urban Regeneration and Improving the Quality of Life, Focus Area: Internal Mobility
 - 12th call under ERDF Priority Axis 4: 'Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change'
 - Pre-announcement of the 8th Call for Project Proposals under the European Social Fund
- Other EU programmes:
 - *ESPON* – circulated newsletters and information re seminar and call for proposals
 - *PROGRESS* – through its national alternate member on PROGRESS, the Directorate contributed towards the dissemination of funding opportunities offered under this funding programme
 - *Twinning Fiches* – the Directorate received information about various twinning fiches and duly circulated all those fiches relevant to the remit of the Ministry
 - *European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (IF) and Annual Programme 2011 European Refugee Fund (ERF)* – through the EU Fund Managers, disseminated across MEEF the announcement re open calls for project proposals under Annual Programme 2011.

Besides disseminating all information received regarding calls for proposals and pre-announcements of EU co-financed programmes, the Directorate also enquired and carried out research on existing and new funding opportunities and their applicability to the remit of MEEF. In order to gain more insight and thus be better informed so as to be able to provide clarifications to queries put forward by interested entities and departments, the Directorate consulted both web information as well as the respective contact points.

Overseeing the Implementation of ERDF and ESF Co-financed Projects

During 2011, the Directorate continued to closely monitor and report upon ESF and ERDF projects being implemented by the various departments and entities within MEEF. Projects' progress was monitored through the compilation of monthly updates, completion of biannual Project Progress Reports, attendance in bilateral monthly meetings, convening of three Ministry Project Steering Committees and participation in the four Intermediate Body Steering Committees held in respect of EU co-financed Aid Schemes being implemented by the Employment and Training Corporation and the Department for Social Welfare Standards. These various monitoring mechanisms not only help the Directorate to oversee the expenditure and indicators reached by each project, but also facilitate the early detection of issues that may hinder the smooth and timely implementation of projects.

In line with the foregoing, the Directorate oversaw a total of 51 ERDF and ESF co-financed projects that had reached different stages in their implementation but which all fall within the remit of MEEF. Among them, as at December 2011, these projects had a total value of €134,947,526. The table below provides a breakdown of these EU co-financed projects by value.

Operational Programme (OP)	Education remit	Social Affairs remit	Total
OPI <i>European Regional Development Fund</i>	18 projects with a total value of €56,692,172	2 projects with a total value of €1,211,084	20 projects with a total value of €57,903,256
OP II <i>European Social Fund</i>	17 projects with a total value of €46,646,589	14 projects with a total value of €30,397,681	31 projects with a total value of €77,044,270
Totals	35 projects with a total value of €103,338,761	16 projects with a total value of €31,608,765	51 projects with a total value of €134,947,526

As regards the 35 EU co-financed projects (18 ERDF and 17 ESF) falling within the Education remit of MEEF, during 2011,

- the implementation of 11 ERDF projects (ERDF 11, ERDF 12, ERDF 18, ERDF 54, ERDF 56, ERDF 58, ERDF 77, ERDF 78, ERDF 79, ERDF 82, and ERDF 101) came to a close - total value of €14,679,055;
- seven ERDF projects (ERDF 17, ERDF 57, ERDF 64, ERDF 81, ERDF 109, ERDF 164 and ERDF 192) are still in progress with a total value of €42,013,117;
- out of a total of 17 ESF projects, two projects (ESF 1.21 and ESF 1.22), with a total value of €1,105,450, reached their closing stage;
- 10 ESF projects (ESF 1.24, ESF 1.25, ESF 1.28, ESF 1.29, ESF 1.33, ESF 1.34, ESF 1.36, ESF 2.85, ESF 3.48, ESF 3.49), with a total value of €25,250,292, are still ongoing;
- five newly approved projects (ESF 1.123, ESF 1.125, ESF 1.130, ESF 2.139, ESF 3.102), with a total value of €20,290,847, are in their initial phase of implementation.

As regards the 16 EU co-financed projects (two ERDF and 14 ESF) falling within the Social Affairs remit of MEEF, during 2011

- implementation regarding one ERDF project (ERDF 072) was finalised. By the end of the year, all payments due in respect of this project, amounting to €711,084, were effected;
- one ERDF project (ERDF 136) with a total value of €500,000 is still in its implementation phase;
- two ESF projects (ESF 3.42 and ESF 3.43) having a total value of €859,923 concluded their implementation. Whereas all disbursements due with regard to ESF 3.42, totalling €398,794, were processed by the end of the year, as regards ESF 3.43, the amount of €331,705 was disbursed up to the end of 2011; however further payments will be processed in 2012 since this project's implementation came to a close in mid-December 2011;
- eight ESF projects (ESF 2.4, ESF 2.65, ESF 3.47, ESF 3.59, ESF 3.60, ESF 3.61, ESF 3.62 and ESF 3.64), with a total value of €27,130,460, are still in their implementation phase;
- four newly approved projects (ESF 3.105, ESF 3.112, ESF 3.113 and ESF 3.114), with a total value of €2,407,298, are in their initial phase of implementation.

Whereas some projects have either come to a close or are fast approaching their closing phase, MEEF had a further nine new EU co-financed projects that were approved during 2011 under the European Social Fund. The tables below outline these new projects.

Project Ref.	Project Title	Implementing body	Full amount approved	Description of project
MEEF Education remit				
ESF 1.123	Training Support for the e-Learning Programme	Department for Curriculum Management and e-Learning	€525,329	The project involves training in relation to: a) the use of Interactive Whiteboards; (b) use of an eLearning Platform. Training will be delivered to teachers and administrators and aims to improve the quality of education and to facilitate the implementation of e-learning in schools.
ESF 1.125	Creating a Knowledge Transfer Framework and Technology Entrepreneurship Training Programme	University of Malta	€1,331,530	The project aims to set up an intellectual property and knowledge transfer framework and introduce an intensive training programme in science and technology entrepreneurship at the University of Malta. It addresses the National Priorities to increase business to academia linkages and to foster an entrepreneurial culture through education.
ESF 1.130	Making VET Education More Relevant and Attractive	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology	€5,547,136	A substantial upgrading exercise within the context of vocational education shall be conducted. A number of existing courses will be re-designed; new courses will be designed and launched. Moreover, scholarships will encourage an enhanced uptake in financial services subjects. Thus MCAST's offerings will become more attractive to a larger cohort.
ESF 2.139	Increasing Accessibility, Flexibility & Innovation to MCAST	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology	€7,245,710	The project aims at making adult education and learning more attractive, accessible and innovative thereby enhancing attractiveness of the life-long learning course offerings at MCAST.

	Life-Long Learning Course Offer			
ESF 3.102	Inclusion for Employment	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology	€5,641,142	A substantial upgrading exercise within the context of vocational education shall be conducted. A number of existing courses will be re-designed so as to become more relevant to current economic needs. Furthermore, new courses will be designed and launched. Thus MCAST's offerings will become more attractive to a larger cohort.
MEEF Social Affairs remit				
ESF 3.105	Promoting the Social Inclusion of Disabled persons with challenging behaviour	<i>Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b' Disabilita`</i>	€404,769	The project provides training for staff working with disabled persons who have a challenging behaviour and for family members. After the end of the training, they can train other staff within their respective organisations. The project will also finance a detailed study of the quality of life of disabled persons with challenging behaviour.
ESF 3.112	Training Rehabilitation workers for persons with visual impairment	Foundation for Social Welfare Services	€245,541	Through this project, a number of persons will be trained to become qualified rehabilitation workers of persons with visual impairment. The training will focus on three aspects of the rehabilitation of persons with visual impairment, these being communication, daily living skills and orientation as well as mobility training.
ESF 3.113	Employment support for persons with disabilities	Employment and Training Corporation	€661,816	The Employment Support for Persons with Disabilities (ESPD) project contributes towards the integration of disabled persons in the labour market through assessments and support services that include Learning Support Assistance during training, Job coaching and personal assistance allowance to employers during work exposure and/or employment. This project is driven by the ETC's belief that the highest form of social inclusion can be reached through labour market inclusion.
ESF 3.114	Employment in the social economy	Employment and Training Corporation	€1,095,172	This project will contribute towards the integration of disadvantaged groups and disabled persons in the labour market. It facilitates access to employment through financial assistance to organisations operating in the social economy and upgrades the skills of those furthest away from the labour market through work experience.

Facilitating liaison between ERDF and ESF project leaders and the relevant authorities

Whilst overseeing the implementation of EU co-financed projects, during 2011 the Directorate also held various ad hoc meetings with beneficiaries to discuss issues relating to particular projects. Through this constant liaison with beneficiaries, not only did the Directorate keep itself abreast with any difficulties being encountered but also, where and when possible, provided guidance and support for a way forward. Besides maintaining ongoing communication with beneficiaries within MEEF remit, the Directorate also continued to work in close collaboration with such key stakeholders as the Managing Authority, the EU Funds Management Unit within Treasury and the Department of Contracts so as to promote the effective implementation of all EU co-financed projects falling within MEEF remit.

Through ongoing communication with all stakeholders, the Directorate kept itself adjourned on administrative requirements governing the implementation of EU co-financed projects and disseminated such information to all beneficiaries. On behalf of Line Ministry, the Directorate always liaised closely with project leaders and project administrators to ensure compliance with administrative procedures and to promote accurate and timely action.

Verification of payment claims pertaining to EU co-financed projects

Throughout 2011, the Directorate continued to work closely with the Ministry's Accounts Section and the Treasury so as to ensure the smooth processing of payments relating to EU co-financed projects. The Directorate vets payments and performs all necessary checks in accordance with the stipulated guidelines and regulations.

During 2011, the Directorate vetted and processed 4,840 Invoice Status Certificates (ISCs) with a total value of €24,799,422 in respect of the EU co-financed projects being implemented by departments and entities within MEEF. The tables below show the number and value of ISCs processed by project:

New Projects co-financed under the European Social Fund approved during 2011 (MEEF Education remit)			
Project Reference	Project Title	ISCs vetted and processed	Value of vetted and processed ISCs €
ERDF			
ERDF 11	Furnishing and Equipping of the Chemistry and Biology Building Extensions	9	232,799
ERDF 12	Developing an Interdisciplinary Material Testing & Rapid Prototyping R&D Facility	6	103,022
ERDF 17	Construction, Finishing and Equipment of ICT Faculty Building	31	4,193,977
ERDF 18	Strengthening of Analytical Chemistry, Biomedical Engineering and Electromagnetic RTDI Facilities	5	214,455
ERDF 54	Multimedia Training Centre at the Institute of Art and Design.	4	2,200,713
ERDF 56	Upgrading and Expansion of MCAST Institute of Mechanical Engineering at Corradino Malta and Xewkija Gozo	8	184,215
ERDF 57	Junior College Building Extension	5	86,735
ERDF 58	Purchase of Science and Technology Laboratory Equipment for State Schools	3	212,023
ERDF 64	Construction and Equipping of University Computing Services Centre Building	31	3,766,655
ERDF 77	Electrical Energy and Efficiency Laboratory for the University of Malta	12	127,902
ERDF 78	Upgrading of Giordan Lighthouse Global Atmospheric Watch (GAW) Research Station	5	22,421
ERDF 79	Setting up of Mechanical Engineering Computer Modelling and Simulation Laboratory	15	139,901
ERDF 81	Enhancing the Health Biotechnology Facilities at the University	19	764,980
ERDF 82	Modernizing the University of Malta Control Systems Engineering Laboratory	13	191,953
ERDF 101	Installation of Renewable Energy Sources at MCAST	4	189,030
ERDF 109	Digitisation Strategy and Framework for the National Library of Malta	2	88,902
ERDF 164	Master plan: Development of Applied Science & Business & Commerce Institutes.	21	520,321
ERDF 192	Photovoltaic System at the University Gozo Centre	0	0
ESF			
ESF 1.21	Parents and Teachers Fusion ICT Training Programme	8	183,738
ESF 1.22	Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education	60	125,015
ESF 1.24	Guidance Capacity Building Scholarship Scheme	27	54,531
ESF 1.25	Strategic Educational Pathways Scholarships (STEPS)	739	2,324,614
ESF 1.28	Accrediting Quality Vocational Training - VQPACK	14	354,836
ESF 1.29	Valuing All Skills for the Labour Market - SKILLSPLUS	8	84,486
ESF 1.33	Increasing ICT Student Capacity in Malta	10	1,631,539
ESF 1.34	Addressing Skills Mismatches in the Aviation Maintenance Industry	38	204,381
ESF 1.36	Professional Development for MCAST Staff & Students Top-up Degrees	51	975,967
ESF 2.85	Industrial Needs and VET to Optimise Human Capital	17	58,804
ESF 3.48	Lifelong Learning for Enhanced Employability for Parents (LLEEP)	50	1,743
ESF 3.49	Training of Inclusion Coordinators for Secondary Education	31	18,583
Total		1,246	19,258,241

New Projects co-financed under the European Social Fund approved during 2011 (MEEF Social Affairs remit)			
Project Reference	Project Title	ISCs vetted and processed	Value of vetted and processed ISCs €
ESF			
ERDF 72	Constructing and equipping an Independent Living Centre in Malta	39	452,798
ERDF 136	Grant Scheme for childcare facilities – The regeneration of childcare in Malta	4	37,664
ESF			
ESF 2.4	Employability Programme	1,797	1,448,943
ESF 2.65	Training Aid Framework	456	1,045,333
ESF 3.42	An Independent Living Training Service for Disabled People	5	158,883
ESF 3.43	Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors	15	260,841
ESF 3.47	Unlocking the female potential	22	90,878
ESF 3.59	<i>Nista'</i> : The benefits of sharing life's responsibilities	16	398,647
ESF 3.60	Youth Employment Programme	90	172,549
ESF 3.61	E4L – Embark for Life: Labour market integration for socially excluded youth	364	206,743
ESF3.62	ME2 (Me Too)	598	440,788
ESF 3.64	Employment Aid Programme	188	827,114
Total		3,594	5,541,181

WAY FORWARD

During 2012, the Directorate shall continue to work closely with all departments and entities within the Ministry as well as with all the horizontal stakeholders involved. Through such liaison the Directorate shall ensure effective monitoring and reporting upon the implementation of endorsed projects, measures and initiatives as well as promote the best use of EU funding.

DR MARISA SCERRI

Director (Programme Implementation – Social Affairs)

Department of Social Security

Office of the Director General

The Social Security Department is responsible for the administration of Social Security legislation which provides for the payment of benefits under the contributory and the non-contributory schemes.

These schemes cover the entire population which is in some way recipient of such benefits. The Department is mainly involved in ensuring that financial support is given to those sections of the community which are mostly in need, namely those with a low-income, the sick, the elderly and the unemployed.

The total expenditure on Social Security benefits in 2011 reached €727,958,937.

LEGISLATION

Legal Notice 455 of 2011 provided for the increases in the rates of Social Security benefits and contributions as had previously been announced in the Budget Speech for 2011. These increases were proportionately tied to the cost of living increase in wages as awarded by Government.

There was no increase in the capital resources means test of persons applying for Non-Contributory Benefits. Thus the capital limit for the entitlement of Age Pension, Social Assistance and Sickness Assistance remained €14,000 in the case of a single or a widowed person and €23,300 in the case of married persons. The capital limit in the case of applications for Medical Aids Grant also remained the same, at €9,320 in the case of a single or a widowed person and €16,310 in the case of married persons. There was however an increase in the income limits of certain benefits to compensate for the cost of living increase.

The Social Security contribution rate payable by employers and employees remained at 10% of the basic weekly wage, and the Social Security contribution rate payable by a self-occupied and a self-employed person remained at 15% of the income declared by the payer in the previous year.

Two new rates were introduced with effect from January 2011 to cater for self-employed farmers and breeders and for self-employed part-time women. With the new rates, a self-employed farmer or breeder is now liable to pay 12% instead of 15% of the income declared while a part-time self-employed woman whose declared income does not exceed €9,203 has the option to pay a pro-rata contribution of 15%.

NEW SOCIAL SECURITY MEASURES

As a result of the various measures taken in the 2010 Budget, the expenditure in social benefits during 2011 rose by €67,546,688 million over that for 2010. Amongst the important measures that continued during the year under review are the following:

- Pensioners in receipt of a social security pension were once again awarded the full cost of living as in the previous year with a 2/3 increase in the pension weekly rate and the remaining 1/3 paid as a cost of living bonus at the start of the year. Approximately 80,000 pensioners were entitled to this cost of living bonus.
- Persons registering for work under the Part I register held by the Employment & Training Corporation and in receipt of an unemployment assistance who become engaged in voluntary community work or in any

public work under a scheme announced by Government continued to receive their unemployment assistance at an increased rate that is equal to 75% of the national minimum wage.

CONTRIBUTORY SCHEME

The Department continued with its duty to determine questions of cases of insurability. It also continued to issue exemptions from payments of the social security contributions to those expatriates insured in their home countries and also paying their dues there.

The total revenue collected during 2011 in terms of the Social Security Act (Cap 318) amounted to €585,515,723 and this reflects an increase of €33,49,274 over the previous year. These figures are broken down in the following table:

Type of Contributions	2010 (Actual)	2011 (Actual)	(+ or -)
Class I - Contributions in respect of Private Industry	251,775,094	271,614,551	19,839,457
Class I - Contributions in respect of Government Employees	80,688,662	82,883,590	2,194,928
Class II - Contributions by Self-Employed persons	35,344,696	34,893,949	-450,747
Further Contributions	363,771	1,503,145	1,139,374
State Contribution	183,904,226	194,696,045	10,791,819
Total	552,076,449	585,591,280	33,514,831

SHORT-TERM BENEFITS

During 2011, the Short Term Benefit (STB) Section in Gozo continued with the normal duties related to the issue of short-term benefits. All Stagers were integrated into one unit. This development even fine tuned the services rendered by Stagers and Claims without affecting payments of Sickness and Unemployment Benefits. Even so, with less staff and through the concept of teleworking, seasonal backlogs of SB payments during April-June (due to SPA bulk) and also during December, were addressed and reduced to a minimum. Members of staff from Stagger A were assigned new duties to recover monies due to the Department and monitor arrears of revenue.

STB section reorganisation allowed former staff based in Stagers who were previously involved in keying-in and verification of Ledger Sheets to be deployed to a new section. Call Centre Gozo was created and staff trained to perform Call Centre information duties. Call Centre Gozo is currently teamed up with SPIC 159, but in the near future it will become one whole independent unit performing customer care and information duties for the Social Security Department.

As in the previous year, the Gozo Branch once again managed to issue the annual reviews of Supplementary Allowance claims on time. The difference from previous years was that for the first time, 7/12 staff performed their duties mostly via telework. The total number of Supplementary Allowance claims reviewed amounted to 28,535 of which 26,005 were reviews to ascertain entitlement for year 2011/2012 and 2,530 claims pertained to late or change of status applications. The total number of Marriage Grant Applications processed during 2011 was 1,473.

The Short Term Benefits Section also continued with the processing of Energy Benefit applications. A total of 2,942 new applications were assessed and the relative vouchers issued accordingly and another 337 vouchers were also issued to charitable institutions. The section also re-issued 4,056 vouchers which had expired and took action on 434 Benefit Fraud cases.

Claims for short-term benefits dealt with during 2011, as compared with 2010, are as shown hereunder:

Type of Medical Certificate	2010	2011	+ or -
First/Final (less than 4 days)	71,441	73,051	1,610
First/Final (from 4 to 6 days)	26,464	28,428	1,964
First (open)	18,458	19,498	1,040
Intermediate	93,071	92,559	-512
Final	16,167	17,569	1,402
Total	225,601	231,105	5,504

Type of Benefit	Number of Claims		
	2010	2011	+ or -
Sickness Benefit	116,363	120,977	4,614
Unemployment Benefit	18,173	17,251	-922
Special Unemployment Benefit	803	985	182
Injury Benefit	3,171	2,899	-272
Marriage Grant	3,517	3,293	-224
Total	142,027	145,405	3,378

Children's Allowances and other Family Benefits

Children's Allowance Benefit (CA)

During 2011, the Children's Allowance section reviewed all the Children's Allowance claims that were in payment with a view to establishing the new Children's Allowance rates for the benefit year starting July 2011. The number of household in receipt of Children's Allowance benefit as at 31 December 2011 was 43,503.

Apart from the annual review as described above, the Children's Allowance section received 1,914 requests for an adjustment in the payment rate of the Children's Allowance benefit due to a change in the family's circumstances (additional children, termination of employment, students, etc). These adjustments necessitate a review over and above the annual review, due to the fact that these notifications of changes in circumstance are normally received after the annual review has been implemented. A further 874 claims were processed in connection with separation, marriage and deaths of one of the spouses.

During 2011, the Children's Allowance Section received 1,612 new claims (1st time application). All first time applications (new claims) fall under the Quality Service Charter (QSC). All claims received were processed within the time limit established by the QSC.

Maternity Benefit (MB)

2,276 Maternity claims were received by the CA section in 2011. This benefit also falls under the QSC and all claims were processed and paid within the established time-frame.

Disabled Child Allowance (DCA)

During the year the CA section received 134 new applications for this benefit; 116 of these claims were accepted while 18 claims were rejected by the Medical Panel. Thus the number of families who received DCA as at 31 December 2011 stands at 801. During this year, 72 claimants who were already in receipt of DCA had their claim reviewed by the Medical Panel.

Foster Care Allowance (FCA)

Twenty-one homes/institutes, which together host 161 children, had the foster care allowance paid to them during 2011.

Foreign Correspondence

The CA section is also responsible for answering various queries sent by EU Member States (E Forms) regarding family benefits. A number of requests were generated from the CA section to establish competence/payment entitlement for family benefits.

Children's Allowance Payments

The following tables provide some statistical data for Children's Allowance payments during 2011:

CA for household with income less than €23,923	Number of Families		
	2010	2011	+ or -
Child Allowance only:			
(i) One eligible child	14,208	13,618	-590
(ii) Two eligible children	8,693	8,074	-619
(iii) Three eligible children	2,032	1,942	-90
(iv) Four or more eligible children	580	551	-29
Total	25,513	24,185	-1,328

CA for household with income more than €23,923	Number of Families		
	2010	2011	+ or -
Child Allowance only:			
(i) One eligible child	10,085	10,719	634
(ii) Two eligible children	7,104	7,239	135
(iii) Three eligible children	1,183	1,181	-2
(iv) Four or more eligible children	194	179	-15
Total	18,566	19,318	752

Type of Benefit	2010	2011	+ or -
Disabled Child Allowance	768	801	33
Maternity Benefit	2,358	2,480	122
Total	3,126	3,281	155

The total number of households in receipt of CAFR in 2011 was 19,318 (total number of children 29,505).

Contributory Pensions

The following table shows the number of persons in receipt of a Contributory Pension at the end of 2011. Here the upward trend in the number of pensioners, especially the new retirees, continued with a net increase of 4.5% being recorded in the number of retirement pensioners over the previous year.

As a result of the budget speech for 2011 all pensioners were awarded the full cost of living increase. Thus two-thirds of the cost of living increase €0.77 was added to the weekly pension rate and the remaining one-third was given as a one time payment in advance for the whole year.

As in previous years, the maximum pensionable income for Social Security purposes was once again increased by the cost of living allowance to reach the amount of €17,175

Type of Benefit	2010	2011	+ or -
Retirement Pension	9,874	9,239	-635
Increased Retirement Pension	2,576	2,775	199
National Minimum Retirement Pension	8,516	8,793	277
Decreased National Minimum Pension	119	117	-2
Increased National Minimum Ret. Pension	2,859	3,040	181
Two-Thirds Pension	32,144	34,653	2,509

Invalidity Pension	837	658	-179
Increased Invalidity Pension	230	213	-17
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	5,454	4,973	-481
Decreased National Minimum Pension	8	9	1
Widow's Pension with Service Pension	500	400	-100
National Minimum Widow's Pension	8,223	8,169	-54
Widow's Special Allowance	-	-	-
Widow's Benefit	-	-	-
Widow's Allowance	-	-	-
Early Survivor's Pension	1,978	1,963	-15
Survivor's Pension	5,526	5,901	375
Disablement Pension	322	316	-6
Orphan's Allowance	16	15	-1
Parent's Allowance	-	-	-
Total	79,182	81,234	2,052

Pension Reviews

During this period, contributory pension revisions (Retirement, Widows and Invalidity) were undertaken in connection with new collective agreements that came into effect during the said year and by virtue of the service pension budget measure announced in the budget for this year. The collective agreements were of companies/organisations which pensioners were employed with prior to their retirement.

Invalidity Pensions

The number of Invalidity Pension cases assessed and reviewed under the new system during 2011 amounted to 1,811 up to the end of the year. From this number there were 487 new claims, 1,112 expired cases that had to be re-examined by the medical board while another 179 cases re-applied after their claim or review was rejected by the medical board. Furthermore, 203 claimants who had their claim rejected by the medical board opted to lodge an appeal with the Umpire's office. The Umpire's office changed the medical board's decision and awarded an Invalidity Pension in 68 appeal cases, it confirmed the decision of the medical board for 74 appeal cases, eight cases were withdrawn by appellant and another 16 cases were cancelled.

NON-CONTRIBUTORY SCHEME

The number of persons in receipt of non-contributory Age, Visually Impaired, Mentally/Severely Disabled, and Carer's Pension/Allowance paid under the Act. There was an increase of 1.09% when compared to the previous year in all the beneficiaries.

Type of Pension/Allowance	No of Beneficiaries as on 31.12.2010	No of Beneficiaries as on 31.12.2011	+ or -
Old Age	4,913	4,956	43
Visually Impaired	190	197	7
Mentally/Severely Disabled	2,274	2,313	39
Carer's	180	159	-21
OAA	-	-	-
Total	7,557	7,625	68

Assistances

Non-Contributory Benefits are granted to heads of household who are incapable of work, persons registered as unemployed, to carers of a relative on a full-time basis, single unmarried parents, to aged persons who could not qualify to a contributory pension, to drug addicts undergoing a rehabilitation

programme, to disabled persons and to persons who suffer from a chronic illness. There are also benefits in kind such as the issue of free medical aid. All these assistances are subject to a means test.

During the period in review, action was also taken to automate the social and unemployment assistances.

The following table shows the number of households benefiting from non-contributory Assistance paid under the Act. There was a marginal decrease in the number of beneficiaries of 2.56% as compared to the previous year. This decrease is mainly representative of beneficiaries in receipt of Sickness Assistance and Supplementary allowance.

Type of Assistance	No of Beneficiaries as on 31.12.2010	No of Beneficiaries as on 31.12.2011	+or-
Unemployment assistance	5,865	5,777	-88
Social Assistance*	11,662	11,795	133
Sickness Assistance	13,830	13,746	-84
Milk Grant	160	134	-26
Leprosy Assistance	43	42	-1
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0
Supplementary Allowance	26,612	26,590	-22
Total	58,172	58,084	-88

* Social Assistance means SA/SAF/SUP/DAD

During 2011, the Department carried out 3,750 financial investigations to determine the eligibility or otherwise to Free Medical Aid (another form of assistance in kind provided for under the Act).

Investigations

During the year under review, 361 new cases, submitted by the Benefit Fraud Department, were considered and decided upon by the Management Committee. From these cases, 189 benefit payments were suspended, 94 cases reviewed, another 38 required further investigations by the DSS, whilst 40 were not in breach or it was deemed that the evidence provided was inconclusive and hence it was decided that benefits should not be suspended. Where applicable, all the necessary work to recoup the benefits overpaid was carried out.

Apart from the above cases, the Benefit Fraud and Investigation Department passed on to the Department two exercises involving hundreds of cases where a possible fraud has occurred. At the time of the drawing up of this report, the cases are still under consideration by the Department.

As reported in the 2010 report, apart from the cases reviewed following investigations carried out by the Benefit Fraud and Investigations Department, the Department for Social Security embarked upon an extensive and intensive exercise on the review of means-tested benefit cases. The objective was to increase the review of such cases to ensure that each case is reviewed at least annually. Although beneficiaries are duty bound to inform the Department of any change in their circumstances, and that every effort is made by the Department to obtain as much information as possible to ensure the timely adjustment of benefit entitlements as a result of changes in circumstances, there are still cases where clients fail to report changes of circumstances in time, either through carelessness or abusively.

During the year under review, the Department's social worker has carried out regular visits and also dealt with a whole array of agencies and entities such as Appoġġ, Fejda and Mount Carmel Hospital. Several families have benefitted from the work carried out in this field.

Appeals to the Umpire

The following tables show the number of appeals that were up for one or more hearings during 2011 as dealt with and compared with the same figures for 2010:

Appeals	2010		2011	
<i>A. No of Appeals for hearing:</i>				
(i) Brought forward from previous years	781		922	
(ii) Lodged during the current year	1,190	1,971	884	1,806
<i>B. No of Appeals settled:</i>				
(i) Decided against appellant	449		315	
(ii) Decided in favour of appellant	31		36	
(iii) Withdrawn by appellant	155		188	
(iv) Cancelled	35		34	
(v) Revoked by Department	344		241	
(vi) <i>Sine Die</i>	4		7	
(vii) Awaiting reply from appellant/Department	31	1,049	3	824
Outstanding Appeals		922		982

Appeals re Invalidity Cases	2010		2011	
<i>A. No of Appeals for hearing:</i>				
(i) Brought forward from previous years	0		68	
(ii) Lodged during the current year	85	85	203	271
<i>B. No of Appeals settled:</i>				
(i) Decided against appellant	13		74	
(ii) Decided in favour of appellant	3		68	
(iii) Withdrawn by appellant	0		8	
(iv) Cancelled	1		16	
(v) Revoked by Department	0		0	
(vi) <i>Sine Die</i>	0		0	
(vii) Awaiting reply from appellant/Department	0	17	0	166
Outstanding Appeals		68		105

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIRECTORATE

This Directorate forms an integral part of the Department's management and organisational set-up. The Directorate consists of the Strategic Development Unit, the International Relations Unit and the Customer Care Section including the Department's District Offices.

Strategic Development Unit

Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Development Unit (SDU) continued to meet its statutory obligation to lead and deliver a range of projects, as well as providing a supporting role to other areas on key projects while monitoring projects which the Department of Social Security undertakes. The SDU, as the lynchpin of the Department, devises its strategic direction by synergising the work of internal and external stakeholders in developing policy measures, restructuring and reengineering the Department's operations, securing the required funds for pre-planned policy and operational initiatives and monitoring the implementation and completion of such activities.

The key strategic objectives of this Unit include the continuous development of an effective legislative framework, the ongoing development of the Department's human resources primarily through training, the availability of information and tools to assist the employees of the Department, improving the quality of services and information provided and evaluating effectiveness of actions taken.

Business Plan

The SDU was again responsible for the preparation of the Department's business plan for 2012. This plan includes a number of projects/measures/initiatives that the Department aims at implementing during 2012.

From an administrative perspective, the initiatives in the business plan seek to strengthen the Department's human resources, enhance further its information systems and create a better environment for its staff and the Maltese society in general. The objective is to be closer to the client by providing information and services that ensure that benefit systems are clearly explained and benefit entitlements issued correctly and as early as possible.

From the policy perspective, the proposed plan outlines the actions that are to be taken to continue with the review of the social security system with the underlining objective to steer our social security systems into a new era. The DSS is not looking at a revolution but an evolution that safeguards the interests of the most vulnerable and ensures that social security measures encourage increased labour force participation and do not discriminate between genders.

Business Process Analysis

During 2011, the SDU engaged on an impact assessment of the recommendations put forward by the Management Efficiency Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister as part of a Business Process Analysis of the Department of Social Security that it carried out in 2010. MEU presented its report in June.

The main aim of this analysis was to review the Department's current combined activities in the delivery of services and information to its customers and make recommendations for change. Through this analysis, the Department has taken stock of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with the ultimate aim of building a more dynamic, efficient and effective business-like organisation translating into better value service for its customers.

The management of the DSS has in fact decided to start implementing this long-term vision by addressing first its front office services. Such strategy envisages the gradual shifting of part of its front office duties to various local councils thus extending the Department's reach at community level to areas where it does not currently have a presence. The Department aims at providing basic customer care through 27 local councils by the end of 2015, subject to the availability of the necessary resources and the approval of the local councils concerned.

Quality Service Audits

The SDU continued with its internal quality service audits of the Department's processes. The scope of these audits is to evaluate and improve the Department's service delivery and internal processes.

Two Quality Service Audit reports were submitted to the Department's senior management in March and September 2011, covering all the operations in the Contributory and Non-contributory sections, in all its back and front offices around Malta and Gozo. These reports contain details of the specific exercises carried out, findings, conclusions and recommendations for improvement. These were analysed by management and a number of recommendations were taken on board and others are in the process of being implemented.

Internal training

In 2011, the SDU continued with the organisation of its intensive internal training programme for most of the Department's employees. Training focused on a number of social security benefits and their respective operational and legal aspects. During the year, the courses focused on Frequently Asked Questions about Pensions, Unemployment Assistance and Sickness Assistance for Malta based employees. Similar courses about Pensions and Sickness Assistance were held in Gozo for Gozitan employees as well.

Through this training programme, more than 1,080 man-hours of training were delivered in total to 119 employees (77 in Malta and 42 in Gozo). In addition, a number of officers attended other training courses on various topics organised by the Centre for Research and Training (CDRT).

Towards the end of 2011, the Strategic Development Unit started to draw up a training plan for all staff of the Department in close collaboration with the CDRT and the Human Resources Directorate within the Ministry. Such courses will address the specific personal development needs of each employee and will cover 2012 and 2013.

Management Guidelines on Telework

The Department of Social Security has been on the forefront in promoting telework for its employees. In fact, today one out of five of its employees are teleworkers. A thorough evaluation was carried out by the SDU in 2009 and 2010, to study the impact of telework not only on the operations of the Department and its service delivery but also on the personal and working life of the teleworkers and the office workers.

On the basis of the results of this study, the SDU drafted management guidelines to help the latter to formalise the identification, application, evaluation, selection, granting, monitoring and termination processes for/of telework arrangements/teleworkers. The aim of these guidelines, which are based on the Telework Policy in the Public Administration adapted to the particular realities and specific job demands of the DSS, is not only to help the Department to manage telework but also to provide more transparency in the whole process for the Department's employees. The guidelines were adopted in 2011.

Information and Data Protection Office

The year 2011 brought with it a number of projects for which the Information and Data Protection Office (IDPO) was responsible.

The office dealt with and solved at least eight data protection issues during the year under review. Apart from this, this office continued to improve the website, by expanding the data offered to our clients and obviously keeping it more user-friendly whilst making it more informative. Various sections and pages containing additional information related to the Department together with the benefits that are issued directly by the Department were added.

This includes the continuous updates on *Infoshare* – an internal portal for the Department's employees containing information such as circulars, changes in internal procedures, updated applications (those internal and also external), events and other issues that concerns directly our staff. The office has also started to review newspaper articles concerning social security issues with a view to have them uploaded on the website.

This office was responsible for the organisation of all the events commemorating 55 years of social security in Malta (7 May 2011). The activities were spread over the month of May and these included a Holy Mass, a football match during which €1,500 were collected in aid of Puttinu Cares, blood donation, the launch of an informative pack of leaflets on all social security benefits and an audio CD (containing the same information of the leaflets) for the visually impaired, a public exhibition on 55 years of social security which was visited amongst others by the Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi and the President Dr George Abela, and a full day seminar for all the employees of the Department.

In order to address the Department's corporate environmental responsibility, the IDPO has been managing a system through which all government gazettes and circulars, legal notices, bye laws, bills, parliamentary acts and departmental orders as well as internal publications, departmental circulars, and other updates are circulated electronically with all staff. This eco friendly system is not only helping to reduce the usage of paper but also reducing costs in the process.

The IDPO was also responsible for the drawing up of a booklet providing prospective pensioners with help how to fill in the application for the Retirement Pension. The booklet was completed towards the end of 2011 and will be included with all applications mailed in advance to all prospective pensioners.

Customer Care and District Offices

Continued Service within the Community

The Department of Social Security has a huge presence in the community through 24 district offices spread around the Maltese Islands, 22 in Malta and two in Gozo. These are situated in the localities of Balzan, Birkirkara, Fgura, Hamrun, Luqa, Marsa, Mosta, Msida, Nadur (Gozo), Naxxar, Paola, Qormi, Rabat, Sliema, Qawra, San Ġwann, Siġġiewi, Valletta, Victoria (Gozo), Vittoriosa, Żabbar, Żebbuġ, Żejtun, and Żurrieq.

Through these offices the Department is reaching out to provide assistance and advice on social security matters in the community by dealing with customers' queries, filling in of applications for contributory and non-contributory benefits and pensions, and the registration under the Social Security Act of newly employed workers. The registration of unemployed persons is also carried out at district offices by means of finger reading machines except for Mosta and Vittoriosa where this service is available at the Employment and Training Corporation's premises within the same locality.

In 2011, more than 730,000 customers were served from the above-mentioned offices around Malta and Gozo as well as the customer care unit in Valletta. Most of the customers, around 82%, attended the district offices personally while around 8% attended the customer care unit. The rest of the clients were served mainly by telephone through the branches and our call centre and also by e-mails or letters.

The above figures show that through all its front offices and call centre, the Department of Social Security in 2011 served, face to face or by telephone or by e-mail, an estimated average of 2,860 persons a day. The district offices alone dealt with an average of almost 100 persons a day.

Integration of Customer Care Unit with District Offices

In October 2011, as part of the continuous restructuring of the customer care area within the Department, and due to human resources limitations, the Customer Care Unit was integrated within the pool of district offices. This meant that the Customer Care Unit ceased operations as a single identifiable unit and its service is now being delivered through all the Department's district offices.

Provision of customer care through Local Councils

The Department's long-term vision is to provide basic customer care service through local councils so that it reaches more customers in the community. 2011 saw the consolidation of the agreement it had reached with the Gudja Local Council to this effect and through which the Department is providing basic customer care service to the residents of Gudja. This project is proving to be a success and is expected to be continued during 2012. Plans are in store to continue to expand this service to other local councils in future.

Refurbishment of District Offices

The Department remains committed to continuously improve its offices in terms of working environment and accessibility. Unfortunately, in 2011 the refurbishment programme of the district offices which was gathering a steady momentum had to limit itself to minor maintenance works in a number of district offices. It is envisaged that refurbishment works will be undertaken in 2012 on two district offices to enhance and improve the quality of the work environment and accessibility to the public.

The Department is also planning to rent property from interested property holders to acquire new premises for the Hamrun District Office.

Training for District Officers

Information sessions on various social security benefits and issues were held during 2011 to upgrade the knowledge of the customer care and district offices staff to achieve operational excellence. Customer service training courses were delivered to district managers to enhance their competence when dealing with staff and serving the public. It is envisaged that special information sessions will be held during 2012 regarding refugees' rights, legal terms and definitions and insurability issues.

Participation in media programmes

A number of District Managers participated in various programmes aired on local radio and television stations with the aim of promoting the services rendered by the Department in general and to make the general public more aware of the benefits paid under the Social Security Act.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS UNIT

International Obligations

The Department of Social Security (DSS) has substantial international obligations to meet, stemming primarily from Malta's membership in the EU as well from a number of bilateral agreements it has with non-EU countries. In this context, 2011 was another busy year for the International Relations Unit (IRU) which has continued to work on a number of important tasks mentioned hereunder.

Life Certification

This year marked the initiation of the Life Certification system, which the IRU had been preparing the previous year in consultation with the relevant foreign institutions. This system is providing the DSS with the necessary tools to maintain adequate contact with pensioners living outside Malta who receive a Maltese pension, with whom previously the Department had had no direct communication.

By means of this system, the Department can have access to information about significant changes in each pensioner's circumstances. A Life Certification template is mailed to the pensioner's address which s/he has to return to DSS with the necessary information about change in address and/or status and with the identification of next of kin to whom resort can be made in case of need. The certificate needs also be endorsed and stamped by an official witness. Such a system will prove useful in cases of unreported deaths of pensioners as it will minimise the payment of undue pension payments.

The following are the number of Life Certificates which the IRU despatched during 2011.

Maltese pensioners living in	Amount
Canada	806
Australia	353
United Kingdom	763
Rest of Europe	225
Rest of the World	51

In the context of the above, it is pertinent to mention that the Department of Social Security has a data exchange agreement in place with the Australian authorities through which data concerning mutual customers of both countries is exchanged on a regular basis. The Life Certificates issued to Maltese pensioners living in Australia are in fact to those who do not draw any pension from Australia and therefore not covered by this agreement. A similar agreement with the UK authorities is expected to come into force in 2012.

Participation in Meetings Abroad

The field of social security has a more concrete scope when seen in a wider perspective. IRU staff members have actively participated in several meetings held abroad, covering a wide spectrum of social security related issues. Thus, through its active participation, the issues and concerns of Malta, as a Member State of the EU were voiced. During the year under review, the IRU has continued to actively participate in the Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers and the MISSOC network (both standing committees of the European Commission) and also participated in a number of meetings of the Social Questions Working Party. The Unit has also participated in other one-off meetings dealing with several social security issues within an international perspective.

The Entry into Force of new EU Social Security Regulations

2011 witnessed the IRU continuing its consolidation of knowledge in terms of acquaintance with the new Regulation (EC) 883/2004 and its Implementing Regulation (EC) 987/2009, which in 2010 had replaced the previous Regulation (EEC) 1408/71 and its Implementing Regulation (EEC) 574/72. The Department renewed an agreement with a UK specialist in the EU social security coordination field who had been contracted in 2010 to train the IRU staff and provide advice about the new provisions of the Regulations and their applicability

Determination of Legislation Applicable

One of the main responsibilities of the IRU is the determination of the legislation applicable. Such duties emanate from Title II of the old Regulation (EEC) 1408/71 and now also from the new Regulation (EC) 883/2004.

Out of the requests put forward to the IRU for a continued liability to the Maltese scheme, while performing duties in another Member State, the Unit accepted 318 cases, after having analysed and vetted all the requests against Regulation (EEC) 1408/71 (for posting periods before 1 May 2010 and Regulation (EC) 883/2004 (for posting periods after 1 May 2010), requests. Accordingly, the Unit issued 5 E101 forms (MT) (prior to 1 May 2010) and 313 A1 forms (after the 1 May 2010) for each accepted case as requested by the respective regulations.

Also in connection with the above-mentioned insurability duties carried out by the IRU, during the year 2011 this unit was involved in various meetings with foreign investors to discuss social security issues. The IRU staff carried the necessary research and case analysis and the appropriate advice was given to the respective ministries involved regarding the insurability position of staff members engaged in the operations set up by these investors.

Issuance of E-forms

All benefits paid under Regulation (EC) 883/2004 fall under the responsibility of the IRU. These obligations imply the exchange of information with other Member States, in respect to various benefits. In this regard, during 2011, the IRU issued the following forms:

Form	Number
E301 (Certificate of Insurance for Unemployment Benefits)	297
E104 (Certificate of Insurance for Sickness Benefits)	64
E205 (Certificate of Insurance for Pension Purposes)	603
E001 (Requests and Provision of General Information)	437
E210 (Notification of decision concerning a claim for pension)	48

New Pension Claims received by the IRU

The following table provides data about the number of incoming pensions claims received by Malta from other countries and the number of outgoing claims made by Maltese residents claiming a foreign pension from another EU Member State on the basis of past employment there:

2011	Incoming	Outgoing
EU	137	124
Australia	544	274
Canada	51	128
Other	32	47
Total	764	573

Number of queries dealt with by the IRU

During the year under review, the IRU front desk office received about 8,000 queries from the general public, 160 of which were by e-mail alone. Other queries reached the IRU by letter, fax, or in person.

Apart from pension claims, the Unit had 63 cases of persons transferring their Unemployment Benefits to Malta under Art 64 of Reg. (EC) 883/04. For each case, the form U009 was issued to the Member State of origin confirming to the latter that the jobseeker in question had in effect registered as a jobseeker in Malta. For 19 out of these 63 cases, we were asked to provide monthly feedback on their job-seeking activities and a U013 form was issued for these 19 cases.

On the other hand, only one person transferred the Maltese benefit to another Member State. Form U2 has been issued to this person.

The IRU also provided information to the continuous flow of requests emanating from EU institutions and social security institutions in other Member States, ranging from clients' personal information to requests for contribution records. The IRU continued strengthening its internal IT infrastructure and services in order to process claims and requests more efficiently, thus offering a better service to our customers.

COMPUTERISATION PROGRAMS

Regular meetings were held between officers from the Social Security Department and Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) to continue and enhance software of SABS (*Sistema għal Benefiċċji Soċjali*). Amongst others, substantial effort was allocated to the following:

- Completion of Budget 2011 changes
- Automated Assessments of UA and SA Benefits
- Inclusion of LPG Gas Allowance in EB vouchers
- The issue of 45,000 one time payments to Beneficiaries at poverty risk
- Pension reform initiatives
- Generation of Statistics and Reporting to OECD, NSO and EPD for PROST population.

STAFF

During 2011, the staff complement of the Social Security Department stood at 301, a decreased of five persons when compared to the complement on 31 December 2010. Staff at the Administration Section, the Computer Section, and the Reconciliation Section is shown in the returns of the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family. Of the total staff indicated above, 62 were performing duties at the Social Security Office in Gozo.

PAYMENTS

The following table shows the expenditure on Social Security Benefits payable under the Social Security Act, (Cap. 318) during 2011. This table comprises the contributory and the non-contributory benefits issued by the Department.

Expenditure on the Schemes administered by the Department			
Type of Benefit	2010	2011	(+or-)
	Actual	Actual	
	€	€	
Pensions in respect of Retirement	369,891,530*	367,721,401	-2,170,129
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	29,454,667	26,692,511	-2,762,156
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	102,482,602	104,891,402	2,408,800
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries	1,551,917	1,388,835	-163,082
Benefit in respect of Unemployment	2,850,657	2,204,170	-646,487
Children's Allowance	38,233,699	36,967,024	-1,266,675
Maternity Benefit	2,100,967	2,259,895	158,928
Sickness Benefit	6,399,713	6,444,522	44,809
Orphan's Allowance	75,743	72,852	-2,891
Marriage Grant	789,162	790,944	1,782
Bonus	46,839,614	48,694,470	1,854,856
Total (I)	600,670,271	598,128,026	-2,542,245
Pensions in respect of Age/Visually Impaired	19,717,040	19,974,198	257,158
Pensions in respect of Disability	10,304,720	10,524,223	219,503
Social Assistance	67,193,774*	64,834,478	-2,359,296
Handicapped Child Allowance	661,085	727,931	66,846
Medical Assistance	17,280,373	17,296,361	15,988
Bonus	9,753,592	9,794,721	41,129
Supplementary Allowance	5,770,417	6,714,719	944,302
Total (II)	130,681,001	129,866,631	-814,370
Grant Total (I) + (II)	731,351,272	727,994,657	-3,356,615

*14 Payments were issued during 2010 instead of 13

JOSEPH CAMILLERI

Director General (Social Security)

Benefit Fraud and Investigation Department

OVERVIEW

The Benefit Fraud and Investigation Department was established in 2005. It focuses its resources on investigating all reports of alleged abuse in social security benefits and on initiating investigative exercises to curb social benefit abuse.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

As in the previous years, BFID continued to receive reports on alleged social benefit fraud from two main sources; the general public and the Department of Social Security (DSS). The general public is aware of the effective operations of BFID and has therefore continued to submit a large number of reports, most of which were anonymous. These reports were received by phone, including the freephone (80072345), through e-mails, especially the generic e-mail (benefitfraud@gov.mt), through letters and other media. During 2011, BFID included on its webpage the new facility to submit online requests for investigation. Staff from DSS also continued to submit a substantial number of requests for investigation on the template that was provided to them by BFID. During the year, BFID continued to take the initiative to identify other sources/trends where benefit fraud was suspected and to take appropriate action to curb such abuse. BFID regularly monitors closely all financial data that is uploaded on the SABS computer system operated by DSS. This data, which is obtained from the local financial institutions, is used to investigate and make recommendations to DSS to suspend the claims of those beneficiaries of non-contributory means tested benefits once their financial means exceed the applicable financial scales. Further investigations are then conducted in those cases where the claimants to such benefits register a sudden substantial increase in their financial assets.

COORDINATION

During the year, BFID continued to coordinate its operations with a number of government departments/entities and with the private sector in order to obtain information that is considered critical for the conclusion of its investigations.

OPERATIONS

In 2011 BFID, through its Inspectorate conducted 2,126 on-site inspections. This number of inspections reflects a per capita increase of 20% over the previous year, although the total number of inspections was less than that for 2010 due a decrease in inspectorate staff.

From the on-site inspections and from all other investigations conducted by BFID, 1,331 cases were concluded during the year. The operations of BFID during 2011 included four specific investigative exercises on social security beneficiaries. These exercises targeted 'Unknown Fathers', Unemployment Assistance beneficiaries, Hawkers, and Social Assistance beneficiaries. Of all the cases investigated by BFID during the year, 647 were not considered to be in breach of the Social Security Act (Cap 318).

BFID recommended to DSS that the remaining 684 cases which were considered to be in breach of the provisions of the Act be suspended and that any resulting overpayments be collected. Up to the first week

of October 2011, when DSS stopped providing feedback on cases referred to it, BFID had received full or partial feedback on the 742 cases that were evaluated by DSS and these resulted in the suspension of a total of 1,025 social benefits (vide table below) as a number of these cases had more than one benefit in payment. By the end of the year, BFID was still expecting full or partial feedback on 1,944 cases from DSS.

The estimated annual savings for 2011 collated from the feedback received from DSS, totalled €3,661,150.

Suspended Benefits	
Invalidity Pension	2
Supplementary Allowance	58
Child Allowance	117
Sickness Assistance	151
Social Assistance	167
Unemployment Assistance	304
Age Pension	65
Social Assistance - Single Unmarried Parent	57
Social Assistance Carers	2
Special Unemployment Benefit	13
Energy Benefit	89
Total	1,025

CONCLUSION

By the end of 2011, BFID had only 235 cases pending investigation or conclusion. The Department was also analysing the feedback received from DSS on 429 cases.

It is estimated that during the period 2006-2011 the Benefit Fraud and Investigation Department contributed through its operations, to savings amounting to €21,647,647. This was achieved with a cost/savings ratio of €7.14: €100.

RAYMOND MUSCAT

Director (Benefit Fraud and Investigation)

Human Resources Directorate (Social Policy)

OVERVIEW

The remit of the Human Resources Directorate (Social Policy) within the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family includes, amongst other, to:

- formulate and implement overall strategies in the areas of recruitment, employee relations and people management, grievance and discipline in accordance with the Public Service Management Code;
- maintain an effective working relationship and a communication system with all Directors and line Human Resources Managers and ensure adequate communication and information on developments in human resource policies and programmes;
- assist the Ministry and line departments to plan and define their staffing complement requirements, conduct training needs analysis, human resource planning and capacity utilisation, training and development;
- ensure that fully trained managerial, technical and support personnel are recruited and deployed so as to enable a high standard, professional and effective service to be provided throughout the organisation;
- organise programmes of continuing professional education for staff at all levels, collaborating to the full with training institutions and in particular helping in the provision of seminars, workshops and conferences;
- provide advice to line departments/entities in the implementation of policies/techniques in respect of HR.

The HR Directorate provides a service to approximately 500 departmental clients within the social policy remit of MEEF and to seven public sector entities. Currently there are ten members of staff working within this Directorate. These are organised in two main teams and carry out the following main duties:

- HR and People Management Team - resourcing, employee relations and people management, leaves and records, discipline, data collection, employee returns for public service and public sector and other;
- Salaries - the entire process related to processing of salaries, adjustments, computation of progressions and promotions, increment warrants and other.

The following statistical data provides a snapshot of the work processed by this Directorate during the year under review:

Family Friendly Measures and Initiatives	
Maternity Leave	15
Responsibility Leave	1
Parental Leave	8
Career Break	6
Reduced Hours (ranging from 20 to 35 hours per week)	60
Teleworking	92
Flexible work schedules	99
Other types of leave	9
Increment Warrants & Confirmation of Appointment	
Increments	208
Confirmation of Appointment	42
Transfers	
External	41
Internal	31

Appointments/Promotions	43
Resignations, Retirements & Death	
Resignations	4
Retirements	16
Death	1
Requests for Medical Boards	
Case Referrals	5
Medically Boarded Out	2

Calls for Positions either through Recruitment Portal or Otherwise

The Directorate drew up and processed ten calls for application. Moreover, it was also responsible for drawing up agreements/contracts in line with PAHRO requirements.

The Directorate was represented in nine different selection boards and provided administrative support as required.

During 2011, the Directorate processed 171 positions (including renewals and replacements) within public sector entities falling under the social policy remit of MEEF. The Vacancy Request Forms were vetted and forwarded to the Office of the Permanent Secretary for approval.

Disciplinary Cases

The Directorate liaised closely with PAHRO and with the Public Service Commission and compiled bi-annual returns for each Regulation. One case is still pending at PSC level following court judgement. There were 64 instances for salary deductions for habitual late-coming for the period January-June 2011.

Progressions, Promotions & Performance Appraisals

During the year, 28 progression papers were processed and 21 letters of progression were issued. Promotion papers amounted to 15. Eight were in the normal course and seven were promotions previously held in abeyance, but were due in 2011.

The number of Performance Management Programmes (PMPs) issued in 2011 was 397. Out of the PMPs issued in 2010 (approximately the same number), 98% were collected during 2011. The cycle for PMPs for 2012 was initiated during the last two weeks of 2011.

Other initiatives which were undertaken during 2011 included:

- organised two senior management meetings for officials within the education and social policy sectors;
- convened HR Forum for HR managers of public sector entities (social policy);
- participated in DCS and HR Fora;
- drew up policy related to donation of VL for humanitarian reasons;
- spearheaded the capacity building exercise for social policy departments/directorates and entities;
- liaised with CDRT in order to implement a number of training initiatives within line departments/directorates;
- collaborated with the Office of the Permanent Secretary and with the Information Management Unit – Social Policy, to issue access control cards to all members of staff working within Palazzo Ferreria;
- undertook IT initiatives, including utilisation of Infoshare intranet, to reduce service delivery timeframes and streamline procedures.

CHIARA BORG

Director (HR Management - Social Policy)

Social Welfare Standards Department

OVERVIEW

In 2011, the Department for Social Welfare Standards continued to adopt its mission statement, that is: 'Improving Standards in Social Welfare through Dialogue and Regulation'. The overall objective is to improve the quality of life of social welfare service-users, and hence, protect and enhance their dignity, safety and welfare. In 2011, the Department continued to adopt a supportive, developmental and collaborative approach that takes into consideration the views of all stakeholders.

With regard to the Regulatory Draft Law which had been submitted to the Ministry, further consultations were held with the Attorney General's Office in order to finalise the final draft.

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Qualifications of Carers

In 2011, action commenced leading to the establishing of occupational standards and criteria for the qualifications of child care workers and managers as per National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006) for children 0-3years. The Director worked with the Research Development Unit (RSDU) and the Welfare Services Assessment Unit (WSAU) and liaised with the other relevant entities mainly MQRIC, ETC, and FES in order to set down the qualification requirements and the MQF level for carers working within child day care facilities. The finalised document was presented to the Ministry in October. DSWS held several meetings between entities in order to coordinate the work involved by each entity.

Meetings

Together with RSDU and WSAU, meetings were held with the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority; the Management Efficiency Unit concerning better regulation; the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations in connection with the accreditation of adoption agencies; Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education regarding harmonisation of approach on overlapping services and related to specific child care facilities/kindergarten. Courtesy visits were also paid to several residential homes for minors with the aim of enhancing good relations as well as channels of communication.

Working group on places of entertainment for children

An initial meeting at the Office of the Commissioner for Children took place in 2011 and a Technical Committee was subsequently set up together with other interested bodies. The Director and Research Analyst are attending this Committee organised by MCCA regarding places of entertainment for children based on the proposal by the Commissioner for Children.

Care Orders

Staff from WSAU were designated by Director to gather objections by parent/s of children under a care order. As per Care Order Act 2008 objections made by parent/s were presented for the Minister's consideration. A member of the CA, together with the Assessors of the WSAU, worked on 14 care orders.

Work included reviewing social reports and case conference minutes sent by Aġenzija Appoġġ, interviewing parents/significant others of the child/children and compiling a report on each case which is then sent to the Minister responsible for social welfare.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

In 2011, this office continued to carry out procurement and registry duties, answering to queries in connection with childcare facilities from the child care freephone installed at same office besides other general office duties.

It also replied to 88 parliamentary questions; 72 on corporate and administrative issues, two on family friendly measures, four on the department's standards, one on green initiatives and nine on childcare facilities.

In 2011, the Administration office was instructed to effect 2% efficiency gains as stipulated in MFEI Circular 10/2010. In actual fact, this office managed to contribute towards 6.7% savings, 4.7% over and above the requested threshold.

This office also liaised with the Human Resources Management Directorate in connection with the recruitment process of several positions. Two calls for applications for the position of Project Administrator within the ERDF Section were issued in order to replace a person who had resigned in December 2010.

Liaison was initiated with the Better Regulation Unit in order to prepare a Quality Service Charter for the Department and with the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality in order to achieve the Equality Mark for the Department.

Various correspondence was made between this Office and the National Archives with regard to the Retention Policy of the Department's Social Work files. To this end, meetings were held and an inspection was conducted by the National Archives in order to assess the methodology being used to store these files. The general situation of the files and assessed classification and room ambience were confirmed.

Green Initiatives

In 2011, the Green Officer continued to strive to make the staff aware to remit items that can be recycled and maximise energy efficiency. Whenever possible green procurement was encouraged. The table below provides data concerning items sent for recycling to the Mrieħel Civic Amenity Centre in 2011:

Recycle Bags (Tuesday)	Newspapers (Bundles)	Used Batteries	Toner/ Cartridges	A4 Paper Printed On both Sides 8 kg	Glossy Magazines /Paper 7.0 kg
92	38	0	25	8	2

The Green Officer continued to correspond with the Directorate Corporate Services in order to find a solution so that light and electricity bills could be shared among the six entities housed within Bugeia Institute and not solely by this Department and the Care for the Elderly.

WELFARE SERVICES ASSESSMENT UNIT

Child Day Care

Requests for on-site inspection visits to assess suitability of premises

Throughout the year, assessors from the WSAU conducted 27 on-site inspection visits to prospective child day care facilities to assess the suitability of new premises. The aim of such inspections was to offer advice and assistance to prospective childcare providers who intend to invest in child day care services and to ensure that the facility premises and set up have the potential to comply with the National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006).

Temporary Registrations

Assessors from WSAU processed 13 temporary registrations. Temporary registration is granted to prospective facilities, prior to becoming operational. Temporary registration is issued by DSWS for six months and restricted to suitability of premises and service provision. With a temporary registration a facility is expected to seek compliance with national standards, DSWS will conduct a full assessment of the facility leading to confirmation/non-confirmation of provisional registration.

Provisional Registrations

The assessors conducted 53 assessment visits to DSWS registered child day care facilities. These yearly announced assessment visits were carried out in order to assess and monitor compliance with the National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006). WSAU provided an annual inspection report to all the registered service providers indicating a number of requirements/areas of improvements. The report outlines requirements related with the physical environment, operations and service offer by the facility. As part of its inspection process for provisional registration, WSAU assessors also carried out an unannounced inspection visits to the registered facilities. The aim of unannounced visits verifies compliance with requirements set in renewal of registration of the facility.

In 2011, WSAU assessed 11 new applications for registration for child day care facilities. These new facilities started operating in 2011. Three of the newly registered in 2011 are government-run centres managed by the Foundation for Educational Services.

Parents of children (0-3 years) attending provisionally registered child day care facilities are eligible for tax rebate as per Legal Notice 466 of 2011. Once granted registration, registered facilities with DSWS were published on the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family's website.

As per Legal Notice 54 of 2008, WSAU processed applications of facilities requesting to be registered as educational establishments. Child day care facilities registered as an educational establishment with the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) can be exempted from VAT on the fees for the services they offer. In order to reduce administrative burdens to service providers DSWS and DQSE provided two in one registration form for provisional registration with DSWS and registration as educational establishment with DQSE.

Verification inspection visits - ERDF Grant Scheme *The Regeneration of Childcare in Malta*

WSAU assessors carried out 14 verification visits between September and December 2011. Verification visits were carried out on behalf of the EU funding grant scheme administered by DSWS. Verification visits carried out dealt with start-ups as well as upgrades of existing facilities. The visits included on-site inspections related with verification of funding requested and presentation of verification report to the ERDF unit (DSWS).

Investigation of Complaints

WSAU received and investigated 15 complaints all related with registered child day care facilities. WSAU assessors carried out announced and unannounced visits at these facilities and investigated the complaints made. On all complaints, assessors prepared complaint investigation reports and both complainant and service provider were provided with feedback.

National Vocational Qualification Level for Child Carers and Managers of childcare facilities

With reference to Standard 1 (1.1.1) of the National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006), an Assessor from WSAU worked in close collaboration with the RSDU of the DSWS to draft occupational standards for the childcare workforce. The draft occupational standards were presented to the Malta Qualification Council and Ministry for approval.

MEPA Consultation Requests

During 2011, WSAU received nine consultation requests from MEPA related with applications for planning permissions for child day care centres. Manager WSAU provided consultation replies to MEPA in line with National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006).

Queries related with Childcare Services

Manager WSAU dealt with 50 queries through e-mail, telephone and website mainly related with child day care services. Queries included forwarding of information regarding registered child day care services, students, parents enquiring about childcare tax rebate and job opportunities/training for child carers.

WSAU – Internal Policies and Procedures

Quality Indicators for Child Day Care Services

In November 2011, the WSAU assessment team concluded quality indicators for the all the ten National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006). The aim of quality indicators will form part of the improved inspection process that will be applied in 2012 for all registered child day care facilities.

DSWS Child Day Care Services Complaints Procedures

The assessment team formulated a complaints procedure on how parents/others can forward to the department their concerns, complaints or when non compliance with national standards is observed. A clear complaint procedure and form are both available online on the department's webpage.

Review of WSAU inspection process for child day care services

During 2011, the WSAU assessment team held various team meetings and reviewed its internal inspection process when assessing child day care facilities registered with DSWS. The process outlines a number of improvements to the way WSAU carries out its inspection process. A new inspection process will be applied in 2012.

DSWS Newsletter for registered child day care providers

An assessor from WSAU coordinated and edited the work of four e-newsletters published for service providers. Assessors within the team also contributed to the newsletters by writing various relevant articles or providing relevant information relating to childcare. The newsletters were e-mailed out to all the provisionally and temporary registered facilities with DSWS.

Accreditation as per Adoption Administration Act (2008) and the Foster Care Act (2007)

The Central Authority received four applications for accreditation from prospective adoption agencies as per the Adoption Administration Act (2008). On behalf of the Central Authority, WSAU processed and concluded the assessment and vetting of three applications. The work included formulation of accreditation criteria, vetting of documentation presented by the applicants, checking compliance with the Adoption Administration Act (2008) and preparation of accreditation reports.

Accreditation as per Foster Care Act (2007)

Since the Foster Care Act was enacted in 2007, the Central Authority received only one application for accreditation of a fostering service, namely the Fostering Service of Aġenzija Appoġġ. In accordance with this Act, the Accreditation Certificate of the Fostering Service of Aġenzija Appoġġ is valid till 2012. Two assessors from WSAU started reviewing the accreditation for this service. This work will be concluded in May 2012.

Participation in development/setting of Standards by DSWS

Adoption

As per Adoption Administration Act (2008), the Central Authority needs to formulate a set of standards to be followed by accredited adoption agencies. In this regard, the RSDU set up a working group to start drafting the said standards. Two members from WSAU participated and contributed toward the work of the working group.

Addiction Services

As per National Drug Policy, DSWS was delegated with the task to formulate a set of standards for addiction services. In this regard, the RSDU set up a working group to start drafting the said standards. An Assessor from WSAU participated and contributed toward the work of the working group.

RESEARCH AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENTS UNIT (RSDU)

In 2011, the Research and Standards Development Unit was actively involved in setting up standards and/or guidelines for childcare services, out-of-home care, Addiction services and Adoption Services. The RSDU conducted its work with valuable support from the Welfare Services Assessment Unit and the Administration Office, as well as with the benevolence of several stakeholders in the fields with which it came in contact.

Child Day Care Facilities

Malta Qualifications Framework Level for persons working within Child Care Centres

In 2010, the DSWS set up a core group to elaborate on Standard 1.1.1 in the National Standards for Child Day Care Services and set qualification requirements for workers in the field. The core group continued its work during 2011, when the RSDU was also invited to the group. The RSDU's contribution to this core group was manifold. The RSDU conducted a mapping exercise of the qualifications held by persons working within childcare centres registered with the DSWS. This was carried out between January and March 2011 by way of a postal survey, through which childcare centres were asked to submit curriculum vitae and copies of the certificates indicating the qualifications of each worker. The mapping exercise corroborated the data collected through WSAU assessment visits in identifying two caring roles that currently exist within child day care facilities: that of child care worker and that of manager. The RSDU developed Occupational Standards and Qualification Standards for each of these two roles. The core

group proposed a way to assess workers currently employed in the field and bring them in line with the requirements of the Occupational Standards. Additionally, the core group identified entities willing to provide training, in line with the Occupational Standards and Qualification Standards.

Survey on the Availability of Childcare Centres

In May 2011, the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family commissioned the RSDU to carry out a survey on the availability of childcare centres in terms of opening hours, capacity, waiting lists and prices. An online survey was conducted with each childcare centre's responsible person and a report was presented to MEEF in June 2011.

Quality Indicators

The RSDU was involved in the development of Quality Indicators for Child Day Care Services. The Quality Indicators are to be used by the Assessors of the WSAU during their inspections of Child Day Care Facilities.

ECC Sub-Committee on Encouraging Female Participation in the Labour Market

The RSDU attended a meeting held by the sub-committee in caption, during which the RSDU shared the DSWS' knowledge with regards to childcare facilities and put forward proposals aimed at encouraging more women to seek employment.

Addiction Services

National Standards for Services that cater for people with problems related to Addiction

Following the publication of the National Drug Policy (2008), the DSWS started working towards the regulation of Addiction services. In November 2010, the RSDU set up a working group whose remit was to discuss and adapt the Scottish National Care Standards for care homes for people with drug and alcohol misuse problems to the local context. The working group, which met 14 times, involved several workers in the field. As a supplement to the working group, the RSDU conducted one-to-one interviews with five ex-service users and two relatives of ex-service users. Furthermore, the RSDU sought feedback from several other government entities regarding the draft standards.

Survey on Service Users' Perception of the Service delivered at Residential Homes that cater for People with difficulties related to Drug- and/or Alcohol- Use

In May 2011, the RSDU conducted a service-evaluation survey among clients availing of residential services because of issues related to the use of drugs and/or alcohol. The scope of the survey was to offer a more comprehensible and indirect way of gaining knowledge directly from service users. Such knowledge would inform the development of the standards and direct the focus of standards-implementation on areas which service-users consider more important or as having more needs. This survey was intended as the beginning of a longitudinal study which considers the effectiveness of the standards, and identifies any areas for which a review of the standards may be necessary. The survey's results may be considered as a snapshot of the present situation, as it stands prior to the publication and implementation of the standards, and will be used as a baseline against which the results of the next research project of this kind are compared. Sixty-six persons, residing in six homes, were interviewed as part of this project

Workforce Mapping Exercise

Towards the latter part of 2011, the RSDU launched a workforce mapping exercise with a twofold aim: to identify the different roles that exist within the residential services that cater for people with addiction, and

to identify the qualifications, training and work experience held by persons working in such services. The workforce mapping exercise is to be completed in 2012.

National Audit Office (NAO) audit on Drugs and Alcohol

The RSDU also participated in an audit carried out by the NAO, which focused on Addictions. The RSDU assisted the NAO during its several queries and visits to the DSWS, the scope of which was to obtain knowledge on the DSWS' work in the field.

Adoption Services

The Adoption Administration Act (2008) established the Central Authority as a regulator of Adoption Services, giving the Central Authority the right to establish and enforce 'standards, criteria and procedures' (Cap 495.22). The RSDU put together a working group consisting of various stakeholders in the field, whose remit was to discuss the Scottish National Standards of Care - Adoption Services and adapt them to the local context. The working group convened in April 2011 and met 10 times throughout the year. The RSDU also attended a number of meetings outside the working group in this regard.

Out-of-Home Child Care

Workforce Mapping Exercise

The RSDU launched a workforce mapping exercise towards the end of 2011. The aims of this exercise were to identify the different roles that exist within the children's homes and to identify the qualifications, training and work experience held by persons working within such services. The data collection for this project was done through a combination of meetings with representatives of the homes and self-completion questionnaires. The workforce mapping exercise is to be completed in 2012 and will inform the development of Occupational Standards for the field.

Check List

The RSDU was involved in the development of two checklists, which will be used by assessors during their inspections of the entities involved in the provision of out-of-home care, namely children's homes and the agency responsible for the welfare of the child.

Service Mapping Exercise

Towards the end of 2011, the RSDU launched a service mapping exercise, which will continue throughout the first quarter of 2012. This exercise maps out residential services currently being provided to children, with the scope of identifying the aims and remits of existing residences, and identifying gaps in such services. This would contribute to meeting Standard 7 of the National Standards for Out-of-Home Care. The exercise involved both the children's homes and the agency responsible for the welfare of the child. Data was collected through a combination of meetings and self-completion questionnaires.

Data Management

The RSDU was also involved in the DSWS' data management process, particularly with regard to data collected by the WSAU and the Central Authority Unit. An output of this was that the RSDU established two databases, one to hold data on abduction cases and another to hold data gathered from the inspections of childcare centres. The outcome of this was that the DSWS is now able to analyse data and identify trends with regard to these two sectors. This will inform the development, review and implementation of standards, policies and procedures issued by the DSWS.

Requests for Statistics

The RSDU received five requests for data from researchers or students outside the public service/sector and the media. Of these, four related to Child Day Care and one related to Out-of-Home Care.

European Professional Card

The RSDU participated in an Informal Meeting of the Designated Authorities which was organised by the Malta Qualifications Council. The scope of the RSDU's participation in this meeting was to discuss how the professional card will impact the social care sector and the DSWS' regulation of this sector.

ERDF Section

In 2011, this Department continued to administer the Aid Scheme ERDF 136 'Grant Schemes for Childcare Facilities – The Regeneration of Childcare in Malta'. The main aim of the scheme was to help private sector organisations by providing them financial support in the form of grants to introduce, relocate or upgrade childcare facilities that have the overall aim to facilitate integration of females in to the workforce and increase the female participation rate in the Labour Market.

On 24 May the Department issued Call 2. In all, seven applications were received where two were rejected. Of the five successful beneficiaries, two subsequently withdrew. The remaining three beneficiaries are Pricewaterhouse Coopers (Start up), Yo Yo Kids Childcare Centre (Start up), and Teddies (Upgrade). Total funds allocated for Call 2 amount to €88,284.

Call 3 was issued on 16 October and closed on 14 November 2011. In all, 13 applications were received: eight start-ups and five upgrades. At the end of the year, the appeals process had not yet been concluded. Funds allocated for this call amount to €284, 171.

Central Authority Functions

Adoptions

Accreditation

In 2011, CA completed the accreditation of adoption agencies including Aġenzija Appoġġ according to articles 10 and 11 of the Adoption Administration Act, Cap 495 of the Laws of Malta.

The CA received and assessed together with the WSAU, four applications for the accreditation of adoption services. Two of the four applicants were eventually considered eligible and actually accredited. This accreditation is valid for two years and will be reviewed towards the end of year in 2013. There is one pending due to issues within the foreign mother agency.

Draft Agreements

The CA is working on two pending draft agreement with:

- The Philippines: awaiting feedback with regard to documentation required for Prospective Adoptive Parents;
- Russia: the Russian authorities have been kept informed of developments in Maltese law.

Inter-country Adoptions

Adoption processes were carried out with Albania, Russia, Cambodia, and the Philippines. There were no adoption processes concluded with Slovakia.

Varied adoption queries

The CA dealt with and replied to approximately 20 queries from prospective adoptive parents living abroad, or foreigners wishing to adopt from Malta. CA also dealt with a number of investigations related to adoption processes not in line with standard procedures.

Tracing

The CA unit received a number of requests from Romanian adoptees who have now reached age 18 and who wish to trace their birth parents. The Unit collaborated with WSAU, the Data Protection Commissioner and the office of the Attorney General in this regard. Together with the WSAU, the CA assisted a number of adoptees who have now reached the age of 18 to trace their biological family.

Abductions

During 2011, the Malta Central Authority dealt with 14 cases, one of which was brought forward from 2010. Ten of these cases were closed during 2011. The cases were divided as follows:

- six cases for children to be returned from Malta to another country (four closed);
- five cases for children to be returned to Malta from another country (four closed);
- four cases of requests for access by the left behind parent (two closed).

The outcome of the closed cases was as follows:

Cases for return to Malta	1 closed as there was a court order of country ordering child to return to Malta 1 not pursued further by the left behind father 2 not pursued further as children could not be traced
Cases for return from Malta	1 suspended by the respective CA 1 suspended by the Malta CA as there were no grounds on which to continue the case 1 could not be pursued further as there was already a court decision in place 1 not pursued further as the child was never traced in Malta
Access cases	1 not pursued further by the left behind father 1 closed as there were no grounds on which the Malta CA could continue the case

Status of cases pending at the end of year 2011 is as follows:

- One case for return to Malta from another member state
- One case for return from Malta to another member state
- Two cases for access.

New Functions

The Department has also been designated as a Central Authority for another Regulation and another Convention. The current CA took over these two new functions in 2011.

- Council Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and cooperation in matters relating to maintenance obligations
- The Convention of 19 October 1996 on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Cooperation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.

Request for maintenance enforcement under Council Regulation 4/2009

To date, Malta CA has received one request for application under Regulation 4/2009 and several others which would eventually fall under the Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance by means of LN 452 of 2011 European Union Act (Cap 460) International Maintenance Obligations Order, 2011

Participation in meetings

- September 6 2011: CA Unit participated in a seminar organised by the Adoptions Board on a new Unit within Appogg.
- CA Unit participated in the working group which is currently being chaired by the RSDU.
- CA Unit also participated in a number of meetings which were held within the Department to conclude the draft law.

Questionnaires

The CA also forwarded feedback on and replied to questionnaires or queries requested by HCCH, other ministries and other member states.

Training

In 2011, the staff of the department attended various training programmes and conferences on diverse topics.

Travel Abroad

The table hereunder outlines the visits abroad by departmental staff on official business:

Date	Officer	Country	Conferences/Meetings
20 -23 February	Manager Welfare Services Assessment Unit	Budapest, Hungary	EU Presidency Conference on 'Excellence and Equity in early Childhood, Education and Care'
20-22 June	Director	Budapest, Hungary	5 th Meeting for the Central Authorities (European Judicial Network in Civil and Commercial Matters) Council Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 of 27 November 2003
28-29 November	Principal Social Worker – Central Authority Functions Office	Brussels, Belgium United Kingdom	39 th Meeting for the Contact Points 1 st meeting for the Central Authorities (Council Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 of 18 December 2008)
30 Nov-3Dec	Director	Rome Italy	17 th Informal Working Meeting of European Central Authorities for Inter Country Adoption

OTHER MATTERS

The Department provides logistical and administrative support to:

- Malta Psychology Profession Board: An Assessor from WSAU acted as Board Secretary to the Malta Psychology Profession Board. The Board convened five times in 2011.
- Adoption Board: In 2011, a Senior Clerk rendered secretarial services to the Adoption Board which convened 15 times.
- Social Work Board: A Senior Clerk rendered secretarial services to the Social Work Board which convened 13 times during 2011.

- Appeals Board (Adoption): An Assessor from WSAU acted as Secretary to the Appeals Board (Adoptions) set up in August 2011 in relation to a decision taken by the Adoption Board regarding suitability of a prospective family. The work involved attending to Board meetings, coordination of appointments, drafting minutes of meetings held, recording and transcripts of interviews held with professionals/others involved in the case.

SANDRA HILI VASSALLO

Director (Social Welfare Standards)

Directorate for Educational Services

Mission Statement

To ensure the effective and efficient operation and delivery of services to the colleges and state schools within an established framework of decentralisation and autonomy

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

The Directorate for Educational Services (DES), in constant collaboration with the colleges and schools, has the general function of planning, providing and allocating the resources, human and otherwise, services, and learning tools, both of a pedagogical, psychosocial, managerial and operative nature and other ancillary support tools, as required in the state colleges, schools and educational institutions, and to encourage and facilitate their networking and cooperation.

The Directorate has three departments: Human Resources Development, School Resources Management and Student Services. The DES also oversees the mode in which the ten state colleges operate and function. In its fourth year of operation, the DES gave great emphasis to recruitment within the Directorate, especially with regard to student services. The DES also continued with its extensive school refurbishment project.

In the area of student services, recruitment of psycho-social services has been a top priority. This means that students will receive enhanced services to eliminate any obstacles to learning and entitlement. The early intervention service has been revamped and the setting up of Learning Support Centres, Learning Support Zones and Nurture Groups has been given great importance.

In the department for School Resources Management, the main focus has been the restructuring of the Technical Services Branch, the maintenance and refurbishment of schools, review of the school transport system and improving health and safety services in schools. The DES has continued to decentralise technical services into the colleges.

Following are the detailed annual reports of the three departments: Department for Student Services, Department for Human Resources Development and Department for School Resources Management.

DEPARTMENT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

General Overview

The department for Human Resources Development (HRDD) is responsible for:

- Planning
- Recruitment
- Performance Appraisal
- Customer and Support Staff

STAFF

Professional staff attached to the HRDD is as follows:

Head Office			
	M	F	Total
Director	0	0	0
Assistant Directors	0	1	1
Service Managers	2	2	4
Education Officers	1	1	2
Total	3	4	7

Recruitment/Deployment of Teaching Staff

When schools reopened in September 2011, there was a shortage of Heads in the following schools:
Primary: Ghaxaq, Bahrija, Mtarfa, Safi, Senglea, St Julian's, Żabbar A, Kerċem, Msida, Ghajnsielem;
Secondary: Maria Regina College Naxxar Boys' Secondary, Floriana Boys' School, Maria Regina College Mosta Boys' Secondary, St Margaret College Verdala Boys' Secondary, St Margaret College Cospicua Girls' Secondary, St Ignatius College Żebbuġ Boys' Secondary, St Clare College Gżira Boys' Secondary, St Nicholas College Naxxar Boys' Secondary. A total of 144 teachers (primary/secondary/special) were recruited.

Primary		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	21	23

Special Education		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
0	9	9

Secondary			
Subject	Male	Female	Total
Art	0	1	1
Biology/Int. Science	2	1	3
Chemistry and/or Integrated Science	0	3	3
Computer Studies and/or IT and/or ICT	4	7	11
Design & Technology	0	2	2
Eng. Drawing and CAD	1	0	1
English	0	13	13
Env. Science	1	0	1
French	0	1	1
Geography	0	2	2
German	0	1	1
History	2	0	2
HE and/or Design & Tech. F/T	2	1	3
HE and/or Textiles Studies	0	6	6
ICT	0	1	1
Integrated Science	0	2	2
Italian	0	4	4
Maltese	4	3	7
Marketing	0	1	1
Maths	3	6	9
Music	0	2	2
PSD	0	3	3
PE	5	8	13
Physics and/or Integrated Science	5	3	8
Social Studies	0	3	3
Sociology	1	1	2
Spanish	1	4	5
Systems of Knowledge	2	0	2
Total	33	79	112

Schools

Kindergarten Centres	62 ¹
Primary Schools	68
Secondary Schools (Boys)	12
Secondary Schools (Girls)	11
Boys' Secondary School (College)	6
Girls' Secondary School (College)	1
Boys' School	1
Post-Secondary Schools	2
Total	163

¹ These centres are situated on the same premises as the primary schools with the exception of Mosta and an additional centre at Paola.

Staff in State Schools

	Pre-Primary		Primary		Secondary		Inclusive Education		Post-Secondary		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Heads of School ⁽²⁾	0	0	32	25	13	11	0	0	0	1	45	37	82
Assistant Heads of School ⁽³⁾	0	0	44	90	58	49	0	0	3	3	105	142	247
Heads of Department ⁽⁴⁾	0	0	1	2	37	40	0	0	7	2	45	44	89
Teachers ⁽⁵⁾	0	0	119	556	652	1,002	0	0	115	117	886	1,675	2,561
Resource Teachers	0	0	2	2	12	7	0	0	0	0	14	9	23
Instructors ⁽⁶⁾	0	0	3	14	12	10	0	0	1	0	16	24	40
Part-time Instructors	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	5
Temporary Teachers	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Retired Teachers	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	7	7
Supply Teachers	0	0	16	57	12	15	0	0	1	3	29	75	104
Kindergarten Asst. (KGA) ⁽⁷⁾	0	102	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	102	102
KGAs II ⁽⁸⁾	0	307	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	307	307
KGAS I ⁽⁹⁾	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
KGAs (Spec. Educ.) ⁽¹⁰⁾	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	24	24
P/T KGAs (Spec. Educ.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4	4
Supply KGAs	1	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	22	23
Learning Support Assistants (LSA) ⁽¹¹⁾	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	10	10
Learning Support Assistants I ⁽¹²⁾	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	288	0	0	13	288	301
Learning Support Assistants II (LSA II) ⁽¹³⁾	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	419	0	0	22	419	441
Supply Learning Support Assistants (SLSA) ⁽¹⁴⁾	0	0	0	0	0	0	78	575	0	0	78	575	653
Supply Learning Support Assistants (SLSA) (Spec.Educ.) ⁽¹⁵⁾	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	34	0	0	11	34	45
Total	1	432	218	755	797	1,135	124	1,354	128	127	1,268	3,803	5,071

² Not including 1 Secondary Head on pre-retirement leave

³ Not including 7 Primary Assistant Heads on pre-retirement/unpaid leave, and 8 Secondary Assistant Heads on pre-retirement/parental/study/maternity. Including 10 Primary Acting Heads, 7 Secondary Acting Heads

⁴ Not including 1 (Primary) on pre-retirement leave and 3 (secondary) on pre-retirement leave/parental/pre-retirement/adoption

⁵ Not including 59 Primary Teachers on maternity/parental leave, responsibility, study and unpaid leave, 8 Secondary Teachers and 2 Post Secondary Teachers on non-teaching duties, 170 Secondary Teachers and 9 Post Secondary Teachers on maternity/parental leave, pre-retirement, responsibility study and unpaid leave

⁶ Not including 8 Primary Instructors on maternity/parental leave, 1 Secondary Instructor on non-teaching duties, 3 Secondary Instructors on parental leave

⁷ Not including 8 KGAs on pre-retirement leave, 4 KGAs on clerical duties, 1 KGA on library duties & 1 KGA on Kinder duties at Mater Die Hospital

⁸ Not including 11 KGA II on leave, such as Pre-retirement, Maternity or Parental

⁹ Not including 1 KGA I on maternity leave

¹⁰ Not including 1 KGA (Special Educ.) on pre-retirement leave

¹¹ Not including 1 LSA on responsibility leave

¹² Not including 1 LSA I on pre-retirement leave, 11 LSA I on maternity leave and 10 LSA I on parental leave, 1 LSA I on study leave, 1 LSA I on unpaid leave for alternative employment, 1 LSA I on unpaid leave for emigration

¹³ Not including 9 SLSAs II on maternity leave, 33 SLSAs II on parental leave, 1 LSA II on study leave and 2 LSA II on pre-retirement leave

¹⁴ Not including 10 SLSAs on maternity leave, 18 SLSAs on parental leave, 4 SLSAs on unpaid study leave and 1 SLSAs on pre-retirement leave

¹⁵ Not including 1 SLSAs (Spec. Educ.) on parental leave

* long leave includes: maternity, parental, emigration, missionary, study, responsibility and other unpaid leave.

Student Population and Number of Classes in State Schools

School Population (at the beginning of scholastic year 2011/2012)				
Sector	Population		Total	Classes
	M	F		
Kindergarten	2,823	2,456	5,279	398
Primary Schools	7,285	6,263	13,548	767
Secondary Schools	2,803	6,276	9,079	460
Post-Secondary Schools	1,117	1,438	2,555	NA
Colleges	3,669	685	4,354	222
Total	17,697	17,118	34,815	1,847

In-Service Course for Heads of School

The Induction Course for newly appointed Heads of School and Acting Heads of School (Primary and Secondary) was organised for the third time.

The course entitled 'Induction Programme for Newly Appointed Heads of School' consisted of six full day sessions. It tackled the following topics: Customer Care, Internal Calls, School Planning and Administrative Matters, Education Psycho-Social Services, Special Education Services and Inclusive Education, Projects and Initiatives, Cash Accounts, Government/MUT Agreement, PSMC Manual, Injury on Duty, Disciplinary Boards, Foreign Students, Developments in the Curriculum, Summative Assessment, Assessment for Learning, Secondary School Certificate and Profile, Carrying out research in State Schools, Information about Local and International Research, Classification and Time-Tabling.

The course was attended by 16 Heads of School: seven from the primary sector, seven from the secondary sector and two from the resource centres.

In-Service Management Course for Assistant Heads

An In-Service Course was also organised for newly appointed Assistant Heads of School (Primary and Secondary) by the Human Resources Development Department.

The course entitled 'Improving Quality Management in Schools' consisted of six full day sessions. It tackled the following topics: Team Building Skills, Dealing with Staff, School Management and Leadership, Administrative Matters, Introduction and Overview of the services offered by the Student Services Department, Procedures for Reporting Alleged Injury on Duty, Policy regarding Exemptions from School Fees, the Curriculum, Assessment for Learning, Summative Assessment including the end of Primary Education, Expenditure Returns, Using the STS Database, Classification Overview and Time-Tabling.

The course was attended by 18 Assistant Heads of School: 14 from the primary sector and four from the secondary sector.

SIS Training Centre

During the year under review, the HRDD in collaboration with the Schools Information System (SIS) conducted training courses in the various SIS software programs, aimed at newly appointed School Administrators and School Secretaries/Clerks. These courses included:

- Training to School Secretaries/Clerks in STS (Schools, Teachers, Students) Programme and Cash Accounts Programme, including courses in Gozo for Gozitan School Secretaries and Clerks;
- Training to School Administrators in the Facility Timetable software, including a course in Gozo for Gozitan Administrators;

- Workshops for Heads of Schools in the Facility Timetable software were held before the start of the new scholastic year;
- Training to School Administrators in the Classification Programme, including a course in Gozo for Gozitan Administrators;
- Training to Secondary School Secretaries/Clerks in the new Secondary School Certificate and Profile module in STS.

The SIS support team provided school clerks with the required support during the summer recess to perform the Year-End update for their students' database.

At the start of the new scholastic year, the SIS team conducted the Good Shepherd Project for the twelfth consecutive year. This project identifies children of five years of age, whose parents have not registered them in any school according to the provisions of the Education Act 1988.

One of the main projects for 2011 was the introduction of a new module in STS where secondary schools can keep examination result records. The information inputted in this section will eventually be used for the population of the Secondary School Certificate and Profile to be given to each Form 5 student at the end of his/her secondary school education. This will be given for the first time to students finishing Form 5 in June 2013.

Another very important project for 2011 was the preparation for the implementation of the new e-Learning Platform to be introduced in all state schools in 2012 and 2013. Personnel from SIS were involved in numerous meetings to ensure a smooth transition in the rolling in of the new e1 Management Information System that will be replacing STS.

Inclusive Education

One hundred and eighty Supply Learning Support Assistants (SLSAs) were engaged during 2011. Taking into account employees who resigned or retired during the course of the year, it follows that the total number of LSAs has gone up from 1,389 to 1,547.

A call for applications for SLSA posts was issued on 9 November 2010. In all, four interviews by selection boards were held throughout 2011. The first interview was conducted in December 2010 and January 2011 with results issued on 23 February 2011. This was the first Pass List to be officially approved by the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Public Administration Human Resources Office (PAHRO). The list contained 134 successful candidates, of which 93 accepted and were engaged, 36 refused the post offered and five initially accepted but eventually resigned their post. The first appointee was engaged on 9 November and the last to be appointed commenced duties on 1 December 2011 due to a requested postponement.

The second Pass list was officially issued in the first week of September. The first appointee was engaged on 23 September and the last commenced duties on 19 October. Out of a possible 63 candidates, 42 accepted and were engaged, 20 have refused the posts offered while one has postponed the appointment on humanitarian grounds.

The third Pass list was endorsed by the PSC on 16 November 2011. Out of a possible 65 successful candidates, 39 were engaged, 24 have refused the post, one has postponed the appointment due to pregnancy and one had already been engaged from a previous Pass list.

The fourth and final batch of interviews was conducted during October. The Pass list contained a total of 93 successful candidates. To date, out of a possible 31 persons contacted, 24 have accepted and been engaged, four have refused the post and three have opted to postpone their commencement date.

On 2 February the Directorate for Educational Services issued a call for applications for LSAs willing to take charge of Learning Support Zones, Nurture Groups and Learning Support Centres. Following interviews by a selection board, 15 LSA IIs, one LSA I and three SLSAs qualified from their respective category. The number of primary and secondary schools where Nurture Groups and Learning Support Zones have, with effect from this scholastic year, been boosted by a further eight centres, four in each category.

During 2011, a total of 56 transition exercises were held between March and June 2011 for special needs students proceeding from the primary to the secondary sectors.

The total number of Special Needs students in mainstream and resource centres who benefit from some type of support has increased from 2,189 in 2010 to 2,414 at the close of 2011.

CUSTOMER CARE AND STAFF SUPPORT SERVICES

The Customer Care and Staff Support Services incorporate:

- Reception of customers at the Head Office both through telephone and at the Reception: the Reception had contact with 23,699 customers. Staff continued their IT training through the CDRT programmes.
- Customer Care for the Directorate of Educational Services and also other directorates at Head Office:
 - *Recruitment one-stop shop*: in conformity with Directive 4 *Consolidated Service Quality Standards*, continued the services of a one-stop-shop to facilitate recruitment of new staff;
 - *Signature of Definite Contracts*: together with Secondary and Primary Sections, takes care of the signing of all the definite and indefinite contracts of Supply Teachers, Supply Kindergarten Assistants, Supply Learning Support Assistants and On Call Learning Support Assistants (379 contracts signed in 2011);
 - *Call for Applications*: receipt of all calls for applications issued by the various directorates and departments except for those received by the Ministry; total number of applications received was 4,529;
 - *Receipt of scholarships applications*: received 763 applications for the following scholarships – Malta Government Scholarship Schemes (Under & Post Graduate), STEPS, Commonwealth, United World Colleges and Malta Arts Scholarship Scheme (971 applications received);
 - *Contacts with customers*: a total of 21,736 customer contacts (8,196 face-to-face; 12,888 via telephone, 652 e-mail) were made during 2011. Contacts concerned various issues ranging from information and receipt of applications, salaries, information about various services offered in schools and education in Malta and staff related issues. Customer requests were solved either immediately when information was available or else through collaboration with the various sections within the Directorates;
 - *Training of Customer Care Staff*: staff underwent regular and intensive training on several relevant subjects. This enabled the customer care officials to offer a better and more efficient service;
 - *Marketing of the Teaching Profession*: The marketing campaign of the teaching profession continued with the participation of the Directorate for Educational Services and the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education in the Learning Expo organised by the Ministry and various other career conventions organised in different schools. Sessions were held with Trainee Career Advisors and Guidance Teachers in order to promote the teaching profession in state schools with Guidance School activities through the DVD *L-Ghalliem fil-Klassi Llum*.
- Staff Support Service: counselling to staff on performance related issues through the services of two part-time counsellors; and training on soft skills and other issues for all staff within the Education Directorates.
 - *Marketing of Service*: the staff support continued its sessions to introduce the service within various schools - service was presented to more than 16 schools in 2011. The marketing of the service with all the schools will come to an end in 2012. During 2011, the team held meetings with the newly appointed teachers, heads of school, mentors and all the staff of the DQSE;
 - *Opening Hours*: fixed opening hours established in order for employees to be able to avail themselves of the service. However most sessions are held through appointments rather than through drop-in service;
 - *Contacts*: total number of contacts were as follows:

Type of Clients	Number	Sessions
Parents	60	201
Teaching/Non-teaching Employees	87	488
Total	147	689

- *Psychology of Change Seminars*: Seminars about the psychology of change were held in 23 secondary schools. Meetings were held with College Principals, Heads of School and Senior Management Team prior to meeting teachers. Staff Support Counsellors then delivered a seminar to secondary school team on Change Management and conducted a survey with the staff. This was discussed with the College Principal and Head of School.

PLANNING

This office provided the Directorates with analysis, recommendations and support on a number of matters, namely:

- phasing-out of junior lyceums and area secondary schools and the phasing-in of college secondary schools;
- improvements to classification and time-tabling;
- the teaching of Integrated Science in smaller groups;
- rationalisation in the deployment of teaching staff, inclusion support staff, technical support staff, clerical staff and cleaning staff;
- capacity building;
- recruitment, retention and succession planning;
- improvements to the STS database;
- statistics and projections;
- schools upgrading programme;
- the Higher Secondary Schools;
- the National Curriculum Framework;
- agreements with social partners;
- participation in projects/surveys of the European Federation of Education Employees (EFEE);
- the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol.

RECRUITMENT/PROMOTION OF GRADES

The Recruitment/Promotion of Grades Office is responsible for drafting all PSC calls for application which fall under the remit of the Directorate for Educational Services (DES) and the Directorate for Quality & Standards in Education (DQSE) up to scale 5 and the issuing of all internal calls pertaining to the teaching grades. These include: education grades, promotional grades; posts/positions within the Student Services' Section; and peripatetic/support/teachers with special responsibilities – internal calls.

This office is also responsible for:

- the preparation of call for applications adverts, to be published on local newspapers;
- the inputting of calls for application on the recruitment portal;
- establishing a fair open policy in the selection process;
- providing support and all necessary documentation to selection boards;
- the recommendation of selected candidates according to the capacity building approval;
- the drafting of the 36 month contracts for positions.

In the case of regular teachers, which attracted the largest number of applicants, 43 selection boards were set up. Results were published as follows:

- *Approved by PSC on 25/08/2011*: Resources Centres, Information Communication Technology – Resource Centres, Art, Music, Physical Education, Accounts and/or Business Studies, Biology and/or Integrated Science, Business Studies, Computer Studies and/or Computer and/or IT and/or ICT, Design & Technology, Engineering Drawing and CAD, Environmental Science, European Studies, French,

Geography, German, Graphical Communication, History, Home Economics and/or Textile Studies, Home Economics and/or Design & Technology – Food and Textiles, Italian, Integrated Science, Marketing, Mathematics, Personal & Social Development, Physics and/or Integrated Science, Religion, Sociology, Social Studies, Spanish, Systems of Knowledge, Chemistry and/or Integrated Science, Economics and/or Business Studies, English, Information Communication Technology, Maltese, Primary.

The following draft calls are pending verification and approval from PAHRO/PSC or Principal Permanent Secretary: College Principal, Director DES, Director DQSE, Principal Technical Officer, INCO.

The following calls for applications were published.

Calls for Applications	
Kindergarten Assistants II	Assistant Head of School (Resource Centre)
Speech Therapist	Youth Worker
Part-time Project Administrator	On Call Learning Support Assistant
Educational Psychologist	Head of Department Primary (Assessment)
Clinical Psychologist	On Call Learning Support Assistant (2 nd Call)
Library Assistant	On Call Kindergarten Assistant
Counsellor	Education Officer (2 nd Call)
Education Officer	Senior Social Worker
Social Support Worker	College Prefect of Discipline
Resource Worker	Inclusive & Special Education Specialist
Assistant Head of School (Primary) Malta	Head of Department Primary (Assessment & Literacy)
Regular Teachers	Education Officer (3 rd Call)
Head of School (Malta)	Head of Department (Subjects/ Group of Subjects/ Area)
Supply Kindergarten Assistant (extended call)	Supply Learning Support Assistant (extended call)
Kindergarten Assistant II	Learning Support Assistant II
Supply Teachers (extended call)	College Precinct Officer
Head of Resource Centre	Engagement of Retired Public Officers and Engagement of Retired External Recruits within the DES - Teacher and Kindergarten Assistant

The following internal calls for applications were published:

Internal Calls for Applications (DES)
Teacher Librarian in Secondary and Post Secondary Schools in Malta
Teacher Librarian in Secondary and Post Secondary Schools in Gozo
Support Teachers with the Peripatetic Service for Hospital Classes
Support Teachers with the Peripatetic Service for Home Tuition
Peripatetic Support Teachers with the Autism Spectrum Support Team in Malta
Peripatetic Support Teachers with the Hearing Impaired
Support Teacher with the Peripatetic Service at the Young People Unit (YPU)
Support Peripatetic Teacher at the Early Intervention Service at Student Services Hamrun
Support Teacher with the Peripatetic Service as a Transition Organiser
Peripatetic Support Teacher with the Visually Impaired
Guidance Teachers in State Secondary and Post Secondary Schools in Malta
Guidance Teachers in State Secondary and Post Secondary Schools in Gozo
Applications to perform duties as Career Guidance Teacher
Applications to perform duties at Unit Ghozza
Applications to perform duties as Guidance Teacher in charge of Safe Schools – Anti-Bullying Services in Malta
Applications to perform duties as Guidance Teacher in charge of Safe Schools – Anti-Substance Abuse Services in Malta
Applications to perform duties as Guidance Teacher in charge of Safe Schools – Child Safety Services in Malta
Support Teachers to serve in Learning Support Zones (LSZ)/Nurture Group/Learning Support Centre (LSC)
Support Learning Support Teachers to serve in Learning Support Zones (LSZ)/Nurture Group/Learning Support Centre (LSC)
Support Teacher in the peripatetic service for Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers
Guidance Teacher in charge of Safe Schools Programme – Child Safety Services in Gozo
Support Teachers to perform duties at the School Psychological Services (SPS) within the Educational Psycho-Social Services for Gozo

Support Teachers to perform duties at the School Psychological Services (SPS) within the Educational Psycho-Social Services for Malta
Support Teacher with the peripatetic service Home Tuition Gozo
Guidance Teacher in charge of Safe Schools Programme – Anti-Substance Abuse Services in Gozo
Guidance Teacher in charge of Safe Schools Programme – Anti-Bullying Service in Gozo
Support Peripatetic Teacher at the Early Intervention Service in Gozo
Officer in-charge of Learning Support Zones (LSZ) and Nurture Group
Teachers to perform General Library Duties and the Schools Library Service
Teachers to perform General Library Duties and the Schools Library Service (2 nd Call)
Teachers at the Lifelong Learning Centre Msida
Officer-in-charge School of Music Malta
Officer-in-charge School of Art Malta
Officer-in-charge of Drama Centre
Peripatetic Catch `em Young Health & Safety Teachers in College Primary Schools in Malta
Health & Safety Teacher in State Secondary and Post-Secondary Schools in Malta
Health & Safety Teacher in State Secondary and Post-Secondary Schools in Gozo
Health & Safety Teacher in College Primary Schools, Resource Centres and Section/Units in Malta
Health & Safety Teacher in College Primary Schools, Resource Centres and Section/Units in Gozo
Support Teacher to serve at the Foundation For Tomorrow Schools (FTS)
Support Teacher performing light engineering duties with the School Resources Management
Health & Safety Teacher in State Secondary and Post-Secondary Schools in Malta (2 nd Call)
Support Teachers on Special Responsibilities at the School Information System (SIS) in Malta
Support Teachers on Special Responsibilities at the School Information System (SIS) in Gozo

Internal Calls for Applications (DQSE)
Art Teachers in the peripatetic service in Primary Schools in Malta
Drama Teachers in the peripatetic service at the Drama Unit in Malta
Music Teachers in the peripatetic service to serve in primary schools in Malta
Teacher of Physical Education (PE) in the peripatetic service to serve in primary schools in Gozo
Peripatetic Teachers of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) at the Dyslexia Unit in Malta for Primary and Secondary
Peripatetic Teachers of eLearning in primary schools in Malta
Peripatetic Teachers of Core Competences in Mathematics in primary schools in Malta
Peripatetic Teachers of Science & Technology in primary schools in Malta
Peripatetic Teachers of Science & Technology in primary schools in Gozo
Peripatetic Teachers of Personal & Social Development (PSD) in primary Schools in Malta
Peripatetic Teachers of Personal & Social Development (PSD) – Alcohol & Drugs Prevention Programme (SEDQA) in secondary schools in Malta
Support Teacher of Home Economics in the peripatetic service at the Home Economics Seminar Centre
Peripatetic Teachers for Let Me Learn Programme for primary and secondary schools
Peripatetic Teachers at the Educational Assessment Unit in the Curriculum Management and e-Learning Centre
Support peripatetic Teachers at the Educational Assessment Unit in the Curriculum Management and e-Learning within the DQSE
Peripatetic Oracy support Teachers for primary schools in Malta and Gozo
Research Teachers to serve in the peripatetic service to serve at the Research Unit in Floriana
Peripatetic Teachers of Complementary Education in Primary Schools in Malta
Literacy Support Teachers to serve in the peripatetic service in Primary Schools in Malta
Literacy Support Teachers to serve in the peripatetic service in Primary Schools in Gozo
Support Teachers for the Malta Writing Programme (MWP) in the peripatetic Service in Primary School in Malta
Support Teachers for the Malta Writing Programme (MWP) in the peripatetic Service in Secondary School in Malta

Internal Calls for Applications (Ministry)
Support Teachers for Eco-Gozo
Teachers Animators at the Gozo College with a link to Eco-Gozo Project
Officer in charge National Book Council (cancelled)
Officer in charge National Book Council within the DES (2 nd issue)

The following recommendations for appointments were made to the Public Service Commission and the Public Administration HR Office for verification and approval.

Recommendations 2011	Posts
College Prefect of Discipline	2
Supply Learning Support Assistants	355
Supply Kindergarten Assistants	106

Regular Teachers 2010	14
Regular Teachers 2011	136
Postponements Regular Teachers 2010	13
Education Officers	23
Assistant Director (DQSE)	3
Trainee Career Advisor	3
Head of Department (Subject/Group of Subjects/Area)	1
Supply Teachers	104
Trainee Counsellor	5
Youth Worker	4
Part-time Project Administrator (CGCB)	1
Occupational Therapist	1
Assistant Head of School (Secondary) Malta	19
Learning Support Assistant I (LSA I)	281
Kindergarten Assistant II (KGA II)	82
Trainee Educational Psychologist	1
Social Support Worker	7
Counsellor	5
Library Assistant	3
Assistant Head of School (Primary) Malta	22
Speech Therapist	1
Assistant Head of School (Primary) Gozo	1
Head of Department Primary (Assessment)	5
Postponements Regular Teachers	24
Inclusive & Special Education Specialist	1
Resource Worker	2
Senior Social Worker	1

POSTING OF STUDENTS FOR TEACHING PRACTICE/OBSERVATION/SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

MCAST

MCAST students following the two-year full-time course for the National Diploma in Children's Care, Learning & Development were placed in state schools for their school experience as follows:

- Second Year students – 11 weeks from January to April – Teaching Practice in Kinder 2 classes;
- First Year students – 4 weeks in March/May for observation in Kinder 1 classes;
- Second Year students – 4 weeks in November for observation in Kinder 1 classes.

During the school experience of March/May and November, the students are placed in Kinder 1 classes for observation, taking over in organising and carrying out some activities under the constant supervision of the class Kindergarten Assistant. During the January to April Teaching Practice the students take over the groups for 10 weeks Teaching Practice in Kinder 2 classes after one week observation. During their School Experience/Teaching Practice, all the students are visited by their tutors.

During 2011, a total number of 196 placements were made in state kindergarten centres as follows:

- 10 January to 1 April – 55 second year students (scholastic year 2010/2011) for teaching practice;
- 10 March to 8 April – 38 first year students for observation;
- 2 to 27 May – 38 first year students for observation;
- 7 November to 2 December – 65 second year students (scholastic year 2011/2012) for observation.

University

The Directorate for Educational Services is represented by the Human Resources Development Department on the Teaching Practice Committee of the Faculty of Education.

Students following the Bachelor of Education (Honours) degree and PGCE courses are posted in state, private and church schools for a six-week teaching experience, for weekly class observation and/or for school experience sessions. The following table provides a calendar when each activity took place:

Specialisation Area	Year	Teaching Practice	Class Observation	School Experience
<i>Primary</i>	First	Apr – May 2012	Nov 2011 – Mar 2012	
	Second	Mar – Apr 2011		
	Third	Nov – Dec 2011		
	Fourth	Nov – Dec 2011		
	Fifth	Oct – Nov 2011		
<i>ECEC</i>	Second	Nov – Dec 2011		
<i>Secondary</i>	First			Nov 2011 – Mar 2012
	Second	Mar – May 2012	Nov 2011 – Mar 2012	
	Third	Mar – Apr 2011		
	Fourth	Nov – Dec 2011		
	Fifth	Oct – Nov 2011		
	PGCE	Mar – Apr 2011	Jan – Mar 2011	
	PGCE	Nov – Dec 2011	Oct – Nov 2011	
	PGCE Extra Year	Oct – Nov 2011		

Third year secondary BEd (Hons) students were on teaching practice in March - April. First year primary and secondary BEd (Hons) students' school experience started in November. Observation sessions for second year secondary and teaching practice for third and fourth years primary and fourth years secondary students were carried out in November-December 2011. PGCE students were posted in schools for their observation and teaching practice twice – in October-December and March-April. They remained in schools for observation lessons every Wednesday till the end of the scholastic year.

The schools taking BEd (Hons) and PGCE students determine their own needs and student teachers are posted accordingly, as much as possible. Schools take full responsibility for the students placed in their schools. In this way, both parties involved benefit to the maximum from their placement in school. During the whole process, heads of school, assistant heads, subject coordinators and teachers are encouraged to participate in the tutoring, mentoring and supervision of student teachers.

At the request of, and in conjunction with, the Teaching Practice Coordinator of the Faculty of Education, a total of 1,046 placements in state, private and church schools were given to BEd (Hons) and PGCE students for their teaching practice or school experience and/or observation during 2011, as follows:

Specialisation Area	Year	Male	Female	Total
<i>Primary</i>	First	12	81	93
	Second	7	87	94
	Third	7	79	86
	Fourth	2	57	59
	Fifth	0	4	4
<i>ECEC</i>	Second	0	29	29
<i>Secondary</i>	First	45	86	131
	Second	26	63	89
	Third	28	72	100
	Fourth	28	71	99
	Fifth	1	4	5
	PGCE (Mar-Apr)	34	94	128
	PGCE (Nov-Dec)	30	88	118
	PGCE Extra Year	5	6	11
Totals		225	821	1,046

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

A performance appraisal exercise for all officers on a Performance Agreement Contract was launched after approval by PAHRO of templates to be used.

FOREIGN STUDENTS – New Registrations in 2011

Fee Paying	
St Clare College	17
St Margaret College	NIL
St Benedict College	3
St George Preca College	3
St Ignatius College	4
Maria Regina College	10
St Nicholas College	NIL
St Theresa College	6
St Thomas College	3
Gozo College	1
Total	47
Non Fee Paying/Exempted from paying	
St Clare College	64
St Margaret College	3
St Benedict College	24
St George Preca College	15
St Ignatius College	4
Maria Regina College	88
St Nicholas College	8
St Theresa College	15
St Thomas More College	24
Gozo College	23
Total	268
Grand Total	315

An audit of foreign students in all state colleges was completed. A considerable number of discrepancies and irregularities were identified and remedial action taken.

OFFICERS SECONDED TO NGOS

The deployment of Education Officers attached to NGOs as per PSMC 4.9.3 was facilitated and monitored. In 2011, six education staff were assigned to NGOs. These organisations provide the HRDD with duly countersigned attendance sheets, sick and vacation leave records on a monthly basis and a formal report of activities every six months. Regular inspections were carried out to verify compliance with terms of release.

DISCIPLINARY AND INJURY BOARDS

The HRDD chairs Disciplinary Boards involving non teaching grades Staff and the Injury Board for all Directorates' employees. During the year under review, the following cases were investigated: 34 Discipline Boards; 28 Injury Boards.

DEPARTMENT FOR SCHOOL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

The department for School Resources Management consists of three main areas of operation, each managed by a Service Manager, namely:

Technical Services: ensures the provision and the coordination of services in particular technical areas at college and school levels; oversees management of technical section within the DES; liaises with the Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools in its programme of new school buildings in line with the Ministry's policy;

Educational Facilities: ensures the servicing of all operations of the state schools and of the Directorate's sections, including health & safety issues that arise at College School levels, deployment of school funds, green initiatives, data protection issues, better regulation; responsible for school transport management;

ICT in Education: responsible for the hardware and software in all schools, research of new methodologies and technologies needed to enable schools and teaching staff to adopt modern state of the art pedagogies whereby students learn and teachers teach to meet modern holistic standards. The major strengths of this area include: extending the infrastructural networks in schools to make the internet accessible to all state schools; deployment, management and redistribution of all laptops to state school teachers and other teaching grades; deployment, management and redistribution of all desktops rolled out to state schools; rollout of interactive white boards to more than 1,600 classes at kinder, primary and secondary levels.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

The Directorates' Transport Services consist of two sections, namely, the Transport Pool, operated under the auspices of the Director, Corporate Services, and the School Transport Section operated by the School Resources Management Department.

The School Transport Section is responsible for providing transport to approximately 14,000 students every day, to and from state primary and secondary schools. This mammoth task has a route register of 510 routes for mainstream students together with 60 other routes for students with special needs, some of them attending the mainstream schools and a number of others attending the resource centres and learning support zones. The mainstream transport service is rendered by two major providers, namely, the MiniBus Cooperative and the Unscheduled Transport Service. The transport for students with special needs is carried out using lifters and cabs; the lifters for the students in the mainstream are provided by TDP whereas the lifters for resources centres is provided by Minibus Cooperative; the transport using cabs are provided by Paramount Garage and by Peppin Transport Ltd in agreed proportions.

The year 2011 was a very busy year regarding the student transport service. Work on a new tender took a lot of effort, with the tender being published in May 2011. Following a long adjudication process, the tender was finally awarded and a new agreement signed with the providers a few weeks after the start of the scholastic year. This new agreement has seen significant developments over the previous agreement, amongst which one can include the use of better vehicles in line with EU standards, more stringent service level agreements, a tracking system to monitor the operations on each and every route on a daily basis, doing away with amalgamated routes, and discarding old vehicles that were below expectation levels.

Using the transport reporting software developed by the Section itself, better control is exercised over the way reports of transport trips to and from schools reaches the Accounts section of the Directorates. Refresher training was given to school staff regarding the way data is collected and forwarded to the Directorate. Data collected from the STS about the students taking all routes is monitored and analysed with a view towards improving and controlling the transport service. Software enhancements were discussed with the software developer with a view to rendering it more consonant with the transport management process.

The Section continued in its efforts to exercise more control on individual drivers, thus rendering the transport service more cost effective. It was also ensured that wastages were minimised thereby saving a considerable sum. This was made possible through the increased effort on the part of the School Transport Section personnel, together with liaison with the Customer Care Section staff who was involved in receiving complaints of parents and others.

The draft Safe Route to Schools policy compiled in 2008 provides the guiding principles for transporting state school students from home to school and vice-versa, safely, securely and efficiently.

The School Transport Section is also responsible for the organisation and management of the transport needs when activities on a national scale are occasionally held. Over the last year, two major events included a concert given to school children by Ira Losco in aid of *Dar tal-Providenza*, the Guidance and Counselling activities, and the Arts Festival that catered for both state and non-state school children.

TECHNICAL SERVICES SECTION

The Service Manager is responsible for the school enhancement area. Most of the trade workers within this section have been decentralised and allotted to colleges so that each college will have a more holistic provision of trade workers within it. The only trades that remain centrally controlled are: the electricians, drainage workers, painters, aluminium workers and membrane workers. The painters will be distributed to the colleges as soon as their number is increased following the recruitment exercise that is currently in hand. Five imprest drivers see to the needs of transporting materials, tools and other items as the need arises.

Projects and Initiatives undertaken by Various Trade Sections

Project/ Scheme/ Initiative Title on a National level in Colleges	Description of Project/Scheme/Initiative
Decentralisation Process and Twinning of Colleges	<p>The decentralisation process within the School Resources Management Department was continued with the aim of increasing the efficiency across the board. This year, a number of improvements were added in the record of works system, a new system for planning works was introduced, and the employee attendance tracking system was updated and upgraded. These initiatives were brought into effect through the continuous support and contribution of the College Precincts Officers and the trade foremen.</p> <p>Under the current scenario, the Heads of school will submit an official request to the College Precincts Officer. The College Precincts officer analyses the request and decides whether to tackle the problem or to push it forward to the Technical section for assistance. This has reduced bureaucracy and works within the college are being carried out within a shorter span of time.</p> <p>The decentralisation process also necessitated the twinning of the colleges. This is a process whereby two geographically adjacent colleges may share human resources should it transpire that the resources of any of the colleges cannot meet some particular need. It also serves the purpose of one College Precincts Officer covering his twin who might be sick or on vacation leave, in case of an emergency.</p> <p>In case a problem is beyond the capacity of the Technical Section, it is referred to the FTS for their intervention.</p>
An updated attendance record tracking system	<p>Another initiative that was undertaken was the updating of the employee track record system and the ongoing development of the system. The aim of this new system is to keep track of records of work carried out by the Technical Services staff, their vacation leave, sick leave and other special leave, and other information related to the workers on a daily basis. After various discussions, this system was updated to conform with the PSMC and to satisfy the needs of the Technical Section.</p>
Installation of Interactive White Boards in Primary and Secondary Schools	<p>During 2011, more than 1,600 interactive white boards (IWBs) were installed in primary and secondary schools. The Technical Services Section contributed in ensuring that all the IWBs were fixed according to established specifications and the old whiteboard removed and reinstalled in a position secondary to the IWB. Other alterations were carried out so that the IWB project could run smoothly.</p>
Internal Shafts in Schools	<p>This year the section focused on the upgrading of shafts in schools, entailing replacing of drainage pipes, plastering and painting and sometimes remodelling plumbing works.</p>
Spalling	<p>Spalling work was carried out during the year in various schools across the colleges</p>
Cleaning of roofs, water culverts and roof water	<p>Cleaning of culverts, roof water tanks and roofs in each school was carried out during the summer months</p>

reservoirs.	
New Iron Gates	Replaced a number of iron gates in schools, including realignment of the gates at Fortini, construction of 3 new gates for Gżira Boys' Secondary, another gate at St Paul's Bay Primary, and two gates with fences, one at Mosta Lily of the Valley Girls' Secondary and the other at Paola Boys' Secondary
Green Initiatives	The initiative that wherever an electric choke of a neon tube runs off is exchanged by an energy-saver, was continued. This initiative was applied across all colleges in Malta.
Analysis of circuit breakers in Colleges	Another initiative that was undertaken was the analysis of the circuit breakers in schools. This is being carried out across all the colleges, in an effort to ensure a safer environment.
Ramps	The ramps project was continued, with the latest addition being carried out at Qrendi Primary school.
Palms	As in previous years, the Gardening Section did its best to reduce the impact of the Red Palm Weevil. The spray and treatment project regarding 'Red Palm Weevil' was carried out twice last year, during February and July. Palms attacked by the insect were removed through a formal system as specified by the local authorities.
Flower arrangements, wreaths and pot plants	The nursery at tas-Samra Gardening Section, which specialises in flower arrangements, met requests for special occasions such as prize days, official visits to schools by high government officials and other occasions. The nursery also carried out re-potting of palm trees and cultivated mature palm trees in large pots.
St Margaret College (SMC)	Cospicua Girls' Secondary School - plastering/painting, installation of new irrigation system, tiling works, redecoration of corridors; Fortini - upgrading of all the first floor classrooms introducing reconditioned furniture, and upgrading the electrical fuses; Vittoriosa Primary - upgrading of electrical system and installation of floodlights, installation of sound system in hall and of netting posts for security; Kalkara Primary - interior/exterior plastering/painting, installation of stage lighting system, improvements to security system, relocation of play areas rubber; Żabbar Primary A - plastering/painting, installation of gypsum partition, alterations in the electrical system; Żabbar Primary B - installation of new rubber mat in main yard, redecoration of ground floor level of yard; Xgħajra Primary - plastering/painting, remodelling of façade, adaptation works to address accessibility needs; Senglea Primary - redecoration of classrooms and stairwell, upgrading of electrical distribution box; Zejtun Girls Secondary - refurbishment works; maintenance of roof membrane in practically most of the primary schools in the college and Fortini Boys' Secondary
St Benedict's College	Mqabba Primary - decoration of internal yard façade with the college colours; Ghaxaq Primary - embellishment of façade, repair/renovation of chairs; Helen Keller Special Resource Centre - plastering of shafts, repair of Jacuzzi for special needs students; Safi Primary - redecoration of main foyer and kitchen, maintenance of doors; Gudja Primary - installation of floodlight system in main yard, redecoration of play area; Tarxien Girls' Secondary - transformation of room into a clinic, plastering/painting works; St Lucia Girls' Secondary - embellishment of new office, plastering/painting of classrooms; Kirkop Boys' Secondary - application of liquid membrane, plastering/painting works; Żurrieq Primary - fixing of fence in main yard, redecoration of two kinder classes; B'Bugia Primary - plastering/painting of classrooms/corridors; membrane works were carried out across the College.
St Ignatius College	Żebbuġ Primary - embellishment works; Blata l-Bajda Girls' Secondary - landscaping, redecoration of ex-Education 22 studio; Handaq Boys' Secondary - installation of new stage lighting system, redecoration works, installation of new temporary stage; Luqa Primary - redirection of surface run-off of an internal yard, improvement of accessibility, creation of two emergency exits for H&S purposes, redecoration works, upgrading of internal yard; Qormi St George Primary - painting works, replacement of old water tanks, maintenance of roof plumbing system; Qormi St Sebastian Primary - maintenance works, diversion of drainage pipes in internal yard, conversion of rooms into a new science laboratory and a clinic, setting up of a special needs room, upgrading works; Siġġiewi Primary - redecoration works in corridors/foyer; Żebbuġ Boys' Secondary - redecoration of gym, installation of new lighting system, painting/aluminium works.
St Thomas More College	Hamrun Boys' Secondary - redecoration of hall/toilets, provision of better lighting outside the new block, installation of gypsum partitions; Fgura Primary B - standard maintenance, removal of a lintel; Fgura Primary A - painting of block, replacement of culvert concrete slabs; M'Scala Primary - replacement of drainage pipe, plumbing works; Marsaxlokk Primary - maintenance of wall, exterior works; Paola Boys' Secondary - upgrading of

	water system, renovation/embellishment works; Tarxien Primary - repainting of yard, installation of access facilities, plastering/painting; Żejtun Girls' Secondary - redecoration of hall, replacement of water tanks; manufacture and fixing of new gates, creation of air vents in emergency door, replacement of wooden planks of the stage, various masonry interventions; Żejtun Primary A - redecoration of yard/corridors; Żejtun Primary B - installation of utility services in new resource room.
St Clare College	San Miguel Special Resource Centre - embellishment of corridor, opening of window and two doors for better accessibility, maintenance of swimming pool, repair of roof membrane, replacement of aluminium doors, installation of new gutter next to swimming pool, renovation of showers/toilets, partitioning of new office; Gżira Boys' Secondary - upgrading electrical works, manufacture/fixing of gates, embellishment of new learning zone, repair to membrane; Gżira Primary - upgrading electrical works; building of a mobile kitchen unit; Sandhurst Girls' Secondary - plastering/painting works, installation of energy saving lighting, repair to falling stone balustrades from the school façade, cleaning around trees, enhancing of security in grounds; Pembroke Girls' Secondary - redecoration/embellishment works, manufacture of furniture for offices; San Ġwann Primary A - resurfacing of kindergarten area, spalling works in some areas, plumbing work; San Ġwann Primary B - installation of new kitchenette and ancillary works, installation of sun protection shield in yard; Sliema Boys' Secondary - installation of fence around school yard, extension of iron railings of stairs; Sliema Primary - upgrading of electrical sockets, manufacture/fixing of furniture, installation of wooden façade in the hall; St Julian's Primary - plastering works in corridors.
San Ġorġ Preca College	Hamrun Girls' Secondary - installation of iron windows, plastering/painting, repair to membrane; Floriana Primary - redecoration works; Guardian Angel Special Resource Centre - replacement of insect screens; Hamrun Boys Secondary - relaying of membrane, interior/exterior redecoration works; Hamrun GP Primary - redecoration; Hamrun SS Primary - repair works, provision of roof access; Marsa Boys' Secondary - redecoration; Marsa Primary - repair works; Paola Primary - replacement of tiles were replaced, painting of games in schoolyard; Paola Primary B - repair to membrane; Pieta Primary - redecoration works; College boardroom - plastering/painting, manufacture of tables.
Maria Regina College	Mosta Girls' Secondary - spalling works, redecoration of corridors/classrooms, other maintenance/repair works; Mosta Primary B - spalling works, improvements to drainage communication system in toilets; Naxxar Primary - replacement of parts of membrane, refurbishment/repair works; Mellieħa Primary - refurbishment/plastering/painting works, adaptation works to stage façade including alterations in the wooden steps; Ghargħur Primary - redecoration of main staircase/two new classrooms, replacement of iron stairs; St Paul's Bay Primary - installation of energy saving lighting, replacement of limestone pillars, redecoration works; Wardija Special Resource Centre - rebuilding of rubble walls, construction/repair works, erection of greenhouse, planting of trees and installation of new irrigation system; Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary - laying of concrete for parking facilities, spalling works.
St Theresa College	B' Kara Boys' Secondary - revamp to school library; B' Kara Primary - various decoration works, maintenance of roof membrane; Lija/Balzan/Iklin Primary - redecoration works in offices, replacement of consumer units, re-erection of part of a rubble wall; Mrieħel Girls' Secondary - installation of new kitchenette, redecoration/refurbishment works; Msida Primary - replacement of some furniture, redecoration works; St Venera Boys' Secondary - redecoration of classrooms/corridor, replacement of water main; maintenance to roof membrane; St Venera Primary - installation of new ramp at main entrance upgrading of electrical system, embellishment works in hall/classrooms.
St Nicholas College	Naxxar Boys' Secondary - assistance to FTS on works carried out, maintenance of membrane; Attard Primary - setting up of sun shade, upgrading of water supply, decoration/conversion works; Bahrija Primary - replacement of doors, plastering/painting, installation of irrigation system, repair of membrane, conversion of office space; Dingli Primary - repair of roof membrane; Mġarr Primary - rerouting of armoured cable in yard, plumbing repairs, rendering safe low windows sills; Mtarfa Boys' Secondary - repair/replacement of roof balustrades, gardening tasks, redecoration works; Mtarfa Primary - embellishment/decoration works, maintenance of roof membrane; Rabat Girls' Secondary - embellishment of corridors, repairs to school boundary wall; Rabat Primary A - replacement of broken glass blocks, embellishment of corridor; Rabat Primary B - installation of energy savers, maintenance of corridor.

Demand for works (Intervention forms) within Colleges - 2011						
College	Demand		Completed		% Completed	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
SMC	872	1085 + 126*=1211	755	1,126	86.6	92.9
SBC	1,986	1879 + 159*=2038	1,828	1,903	93.3	93.3
SGPC	775	960 + 134*=1094	660	932	85.2	85.1
SIC	869	948+46*=994	814	931	93.7	93.6
SCC	967	842+ 212*=1054	753	936	77.9	88.8
MRC	818	900 + 71*=971	756	815	92.4	83.9
SNC	774	765 + 72*=837	703	757	90.8	90.4
STC	994	1073 + 184*=1257	810	953	81.5	75.8
STMC	1,097	887+ 93*=980	1,002	912	91.3	93.1
Total	9,152	9339 + 1097*=10,436	8,081	9,265	88.3	88.7
* forward of pending works from 2010						

Gardening Section

Regular maintenance of the school grounds in all the schools in Malta was seen to. Each school received no less than four interventions throughout the year, which included spraying, weeding, pruning (heavy and light), rotary cultivation and seeing to rubble walls where necessary. The following data gives an idea of the heavy and light pruning that was carried out in the respective college schools:

St Margaret College	Verdala Boys' Secondary
St Benedict College	Sta Lucia Girls' Secondary, Qrendi Primary, Mqabba Primary and Kirkop Boys' Secondary
St Ignatius College	Handaq Boys' Secondary and Blata l-Bajda Girls' Secondary
St Thomas More College	Marsaxlokk Primary and Marsascala Primary
St Clare College	Pembroke Girls' Secondary, St Julian's Primary, Sliema Primary and Boys' Secondary
St Gorġ Preca College	Hamrun Boys' Secondary, Hamrun Girls' Secondary, Hamrun Primary GP, Pieta Primary
Maria Regina College	Mosta Primary, Mellieha Primary, Naxxar Boys' Secondary, Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary
St Theresa College	B'Kara Primary, Msida Primary, B'Kara Boys' Secondary
St Nicholas College	Mtarfa Boys' Secondary, Mtarfa Primary, Rabat Primary and Rabat Girls' Secondary

Health and Safety in Schools

Health and Safety (H&S) educational programmes in schools have seen further strengthening following the appointment of another two H&S teachers covering the early years (Yrs 1-3). Therefore, for the first time, all of the 10 colleges benefit from a peripatetic H&S teacher covering the early years ('Catch-'em-Young'). Students in the early years experience basic H&S principles without the use of formal lessons through games, role plays, puzzles and other such interactive pedagogies. These teachers further support and complement the work that is carried out by other H&S teachers in the middle and secondary years whose service is nowadays established within our schools.

The school leavers' programme, offered to students in their last year of compulsory school age, includes a comprehensive course on occupational H&S. This course has grown in popularity and more schools and students have shown an interest. The Malta Red Cross has been our partner in this programme and participants are offered the possibility to follow a full basic First Aid course leading to a recognised First Aid certification as part of this course.

Regular risk assessments and emergency evacuation drills were held in all schools and teachers have throughout the year received various training to empower them further to assist schools with high quality support.

Other Services

The H&S Unit has experienced a significant increase in demand for the services offered by its team; some of these services have traditionally not been linked to the H&S Unit within the DES but the team has endeavoured to meet all the possible requests. Apart from the 'regular' services offered annually, the H&S Unit offered school PD sessions, risk assessment for child care centres and other MEEF buildings, awareness sessions amongst parents and for the first time offered a tailor made course for cleaning and technical staff attached to a college.

Collaboration with various entities, both at national and international level has been further strengthened and various training was offered by these entities to H&S teachers (including Belgian Red Cross, Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools, Transport Malta, Malta Red Cross, the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate). Schools are now being offered a more complete package when it comes to risk assessments and the identification of measures to deal with risks; H&S teachers are working in close collaboration with the respective College Precincts Officers to identify the best, most reasonable options that will both ensure a safe environment for all students and staff, as well as ensuring that works are carried out without unnecessary delays and in an efficient manner.

A new system of induction training for all newly appointed Health and Safety teachers was piloted this year, where training has been offered in-house rather than relying on external providers. Whilst training from external providers will always be sought, the response received over the past two years signalled to a preference of induction training being organised by H&S Unit personnel and hence, this practice will be confirmed. During the INSET period, all H&S teachers were offered a course on creating 'stress' awareness which is fast becoming a significant occupational illness.

All H&S teachers (state and non-state schools) at both primary and secondary levels were offered a unique opportunity to follow a course on the teaching of First Aid delivered by members of the Belgian Red Cross. The course enabled participants to experience various methodologies that can be used in the teaching of First Aid amongst school-aged children. A very positive response for this course was received and this augurs well for further awareness on First Aid amongst our students.

The H&S Unit organised a H&S EXPO between 5 and 8 April 2011. Around 1,000 students from various state and non-state schools visited the EXPO over the four days, where various scenarios were set up to offer students the possibility to experience risk and identify ways how this can be avoided/mitigated. During the EXPO, a full day seminar and a half day seminar on various H&S topics was organised for H&S teachers and School Administrators respectively. For these seminars, the H&S Unit, through private sponsorships, managed to attract the services of an established speaker from the UK who is affiliated with the highly respected charity 'ROSPA' (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents).

Other topics covered during the various training seminars held this year include:

- H&S Legislation
- Asbestos
- Risk Assessment
- Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Internet Safety
- Legionella
- Infectious Diseases Control

Most of the services, in particular training offered to teachers and the activities related to the H&S EXPO, were held at the H&S Centre in Pembroke which is now hosting the H&S Unit on a permanent basis.

Others

- The EO Health and Safety held an information session with SkolaSajf leaders on basic H&S issues.

- Services were offered, against request, to all schools regarding training of school staff, including minor staff and parents, on various topics such fire safety, general H&S, home safety and internet safety.
- This office liaised with other national entities in order to provide the best services to schools; some of the entities with which regular collaboration is held are: Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools, Civil Protection Department, Transport Malta, Environmental Health Department and Health Promotion and Disease Surveillance, Occupational Health and Safety Authority, and the Malta Red Cross.

On an International level

The Health and Safety Unit has good contacts with the following agencies:

- Belgium Red Cross
- ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents)
- ENETOSH (European Network Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health)*
- HSE (Health and Safety Executive)
- ECSA (European Child Safety Alliance)
- CSEC (Child Safety Education Coalition)

*The Education Officer H&S has been appointed an ambassador for ENETOSH.

ICT IN EDUCATION

Interactive Whiteboards (IWB)

Phase 1 of the Interactive White Boards project has been implemented. 1,600 out of the 1,876 IWBs were installed in schools by the end of December, and covered all kindergarten classes, the primary school classes and the majority of classrooms in the secondary schools. (These exclude the Interactive White Boards that were installed in all Year 5 primary classes last year).

Procurement

The eLearning unit liaised with MITA on the compilation of the specifications and technicalities necessary to issue a tender for Interactive White Boards – tender to be issued in January 2012. Members of the eLearning Unit are participating in the adjudication of various tenders.

Be Smart Online! Project

Be smart Online! is a project financed by the EU and is run by a consortium that is coordinated by the Malta Communications Authority. It includes the Foundation for Social Welfare Services – Aġenzija Appoġġ, the Directorate for Educational Services, the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Cyber Crime Unit.

The eLearning unit prepared content for children as part of this project. Other content was designed for parents and teachers. The project was launched in February 2011. Teachers coming from state schools, church schools and independent schools were trained and these lessons started being delivered in primary and secondary schools as from September 2011.

Embed

Embed 2011 was an exhibition and a showcase of the latest technologies and approaches towards the use of ICT in education together with hands-on experience in a number of workshops. These include: augmented reality, Algodoo, programmable floor robots, podcasting, Nintendo Wii, stop motion animation, multimedia development, robotics and IWB. Embed 2011 was held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre and there were around 23 workshops. Embed 2011 lasted for seven days with the weekend being open to the whole community. Attendance was numerous.

One of the objectives of Embed was to recognise and award individual teachers who made the best use of ICT across the curriculum throughout the year. There was an increase in the submission of projects. Every teacher received feedback and a certificate.

Maintenance of websites and web pages

Various websites are being maintained and updated regularly: www.curriculum.gov.mt, <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/cs/>, <http://elearning.skola.edu.mt/> (which also incorporates a number of blogs by the staff from DES and DQSE), and <http://www.skola.gov.mt/ictsec/page.asp>. Four CMeLD web pages for the new Education website due to be launched were also developed. Preparatory work on the Fronter platform was initiated during the latter half of the year. This platform will be introduced in schools in 2012. The template of the primary classroom was complete by the end of December.

LearnIT Magazine

The unit worked on and issued two copies of LearnIT magazine which were distributed to all the teaching grades in schools. LearnIT magazine covers articles regarding new innovations and how these can be used in schools. A special attention to the new IWBs and the new eLearning platform was given in the last issue of this year.

Infrastructural Works

Minor installation of network points and associated power sockets was carried out in 43 schools as the need arose. Network points and power sockets were installed in the CNC laboratory at Handaq Boys' Secondary school, and also at Hamrun Boys' Secondary school (St Thomas More College). Extension of the network was carried out at Paola Boys' Secondary school Technology Lab. Shifting of network points and associated power sockets with respect to the Interactive White Board project was carried out in six schools. Installation of a telephone system was carried out at St Theresa College Sta Venera Boys' Secondary school. Removal and replacement of UTP cable and fibre optic cable was carried out in two schools. Other works included the dismantling, shifting and re-assembly of a number of cabinets.

Totally new network installations were carried out as follows:

- complete network and power installation at St Theresa College, Sta Venera Boys Secondary;
- one complete floor at Marsa Primary;
- complete installation in classrooms and hall at Pembroke Health and Safety and Science Centre, including also the laying of a fibre optic cable;
- supply of network and power points to Pieta Primary school;
- installation of network and power supply in the Administration Block, Biology Lab, Learning Support Zone, Home Economics and two classrooms of the St Ġorġ Preca Hamrun Boys' Secondary school.

Other works included the designing of the plans, issuing and adjudicating of two batches of tenders and the project management of the network installations in 29 primary schools, one special school and six secondary schools. The liaison with MITA was kept to ensure the quality assurance of the network installations. Plans were designed for another 10 secondary schools which are currently being prepared for tendering. Continued support was offered to the computer technicians in schools, and the SSR examinations were organised and monitored.

Desktop and Laptops

- 223 laptops were re-named or re-imaged.
- 130 HP and 93 Dell laptops were relocated to teachers who have been redeployed in schools.
- 115 desktops were re-named or re-imaged and moved between schools.
- Various requests for re-imaging or re-naming by educators were met.
- Movements of desktops and laptops were monitored and the Asset Management System was updated.

- Collaboration was made with MITA personnel to resolve issues that arose with re-imaging of certain software that was installed.
- Inspections of desktops were carried out during summer holidays to ensure a smooth start at the beginning of the new scholastic year.
- Hardware and software problems were resolved.
- A total of 377 Request Forms for new laptops were received and processed. A total of 349 laptops were imaged and issued for users who were employed as newly qualified teachers, redeployed in different schools, or appointed in new positions within the Directorates.

Communication with all state schools in the primary and secondary sector was made, requesting an updated list of all laptops within the school and their current users. The provided lists were cross-checked with forms received from schools to ensure that all relevant forms resulting from laptop movements from one user to another were received. All forms were inputted in a database for easy reference.

Office 2010 and Java installations on Primary Desktops and updates on all the Secondary desktops

This project was managed by the eLearning Centre throughout the summer period in liaison with MITA. Plans were adjusted and revised to accommodate the school needs. Follow-up included the monitoring of progress achieved, and the collection of data indicating faulty and/or misplaced desktops in schools. The collected data was then used to give feedback to all schools to log calls with MITA to attend to faulty PCs in preparation for the new scholastic year.

MICHELINE SCIBERRAS

Director General (Educational Services)

Directorate for Educational Services

Department for Student Services

OVERVIEW

The Student Services department (SSD) is divided into four sections, each managed by a Service Manager:

- Education Psycho-Social Services
- Special Education and Resource Centres
- Inclusive Education
- Projects and Initiatives

The Student Services Department Centre in Hamrun houses various facilities to complement the services offered by the above mentioned sections. These include: a fully equipped playroom for early intervention services, counselling rooms, assessment rooms, access to communication and technology assessment laboratory, and training facilities.

EDUCATION PSYCHO-SOCIAL SERVICES

The Educational Psycho-Social Services seeks to provide quality service by qualified personnel to clients within the educational system according to the specific needs of students. These services are intended to assist students in their holistic development as individuals and help them become active and responsible members of society.

The Education Psycho-Social Services is comprised of the following services/unit:

- School Psychological Service
- Social Work Service
- Safe Schools Programme which incorporates the Child Safety Services, Anti-Bullying Unit and Substance-Abuse
- Career Guidance Service
- Education Medical Service
- Unit Għożza
- Counselling and Career Guidance
- College Prefect of Discipline

The persons working in this sector are operating from the Centre and give their services to the colleges, where every professional is responsible of a college or a number of colleges. In the meantime, there are other professionals who are working within the colleges.

- *Services Operating from SSD to Colleges*
 - Career Guidance Teachers
 - School Psychological Service
 - Safe Schools Programmes
 - Education Medical Service
 - Principal Social Worker
- *Centre situated at Qormi*
 - Unit Għożza
- *Personnel working in the Schools within the Colleges*
 - College Counsellor
 - Counsellor
 - Trainee Counsellors
 - College Career Advisor

- Trainee Career Advisors
- School Counsellors
- Guidance Teachers
- College Prefects of Discipline
- Social Workers
- Social Support Workers

Employment of new recruitment – Investment in more Manpower – New Posts/Positions

In addition to professionals operating at the SSD, each college has its own multi-disciplinary team. New recruitment has brought as well the implementation of the reform as regards the specialisation of services. Through the employment of college counsellors, college career advisors, counsellors, trainee counsellors and trainee career advisors, the two fields of discipline mainly personal counselling and career guidance will be provided by these different personnel, who will be focusing either on personal counselling or career guidance according to their present role.

This year, the counsellors, psychotherapists, psychologists and guidance teachers who work in specialised sectors were once again given personal and group professional supervision sessions. This service is still ongoing and was very useful for the individuals in the development and professional knowledge regarding their work and also was a learning experience for their personal development.

Regular meetings were held during 2011 between all professionals at national, college and school level.

School Psychological Service (SPS)

The main services offered by the School Psychological Service during 2011 included:

- psycho-educational assessment and intervention for children and young people with learning and behavioural difficulties. The majority of referrals requested support relating to severe emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (including aggression, depression, suicidal behaviour, anxiety, disruption and school refusal) and identification of learning difficulties predominantly relating to dyslexia, dyspraxia, mental disability, ADD/ADHD and autism;
- one-to-one therapeutic work with children as well as systemic family work and peer support programmes;
- crisis intervention measures involving rapid individual, family and school support in traumatic situations;
- issuing of psycho-educational reports for special educational and/or examination provision (e.g. as part of the documentation required for 'statementing', applications for University of Malta SEC, Intermediate and Advanced examinations, ECDL, Edexcel, examinations etc);
- telephone consultation with parents, school staff and professionals in other agencies/services;
- attendance for case conferences and IEP meetings;
- advising SMTs, teachers and parents on the psycho-educational needs of children;
- liaising with other units within the SSD and with external child-support agencies;
- participation in whole-school development, relating to children's psycho-educational development and/or special educational needs;
- contributions to professional development of school personnel;
- contributions to policy review and participation in workgroups and committees; and
- supervision and mentoring of trainee psychologists.

Referrals

In 2011, 684 new referrals were received by the Service consisting of:

- Closed referrals (received during or prior to 2011): 828
- Open referrals (received during or prior to 2011) : 178
- Cases referred to Psychotherapy Section: 226
- Assessments for SEC examination access arrangements: 315
- Assessments for the End of Year 6 Benchmarking Examination: 140

Training and Supervision

The main thrust of the educational psychologists' activity during the year was in the training and supervision of newly-recruited personnel. This involved the following activities: placement supervision of trainees undertaking professional training at either the University of Malta or the University of East London; internal supervision of psychology assistants and trainee educational psychologists not in formal university training; team-building activities facilitated by the appointed external supervisors; various in-house training activities delivered by SPS personnel and participation in conferences, seminars, workshops and other CPD activities.

Apart from peer-supervision, personnel received regular external supervision sessions. Team-building sessions were held to strengthen for the integration of newly-recruited personnel.

Supervision of Trainee Educational Psychologists

Junior personnel received internal supervision on a regular basis by SPS psychologists and they were also given opportunities to co-work with qualified personnel in various work activities. External group supervision was also provided. UoM and UEL trainees received regular individual and/or group supervision with SPS psychologists. They also had various opportunities to shadow psychologists, psychotherapists and other SSD professionals at work and to visit a range of educational set-ups and child-support services.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

A total of 157 SPS personnel participated in a wide range of CPD activities.

Projects and Initiatives

- Collaborative work with the Child Guidance Clinic (CGC), St Luke's Hospital: The SSD liaised with the Child Guidance Clinic (St Luke's Hospital) to offer better access to the services of a psychiatrist. Consultative meetings were held at approximately two-week intervals at the School Psychological Services. During these meetings, 31 students were presented for a consultation with CGC psychiatrists in 2011.
- Clinical psychology services: SPS has extended services to include the services of a clinical psychologist. In total, 36 students received this service during 2011. Of these referrals, 11 cases were closed and 25 others are in process/ongoing.
- Participation in workgroups/committees: During 2010, SPS participated in the following activities:
 - *SEL Core Competences workgroup* - The brief of the working group was to develop a national policy and strategy for the attainment of Social Emotional Education (SEE) as a core competence in primary education and it was planned to propose a SEE framework on the lines of those presented for Literacy, Numeracy and eLiteracy in the National Policy and Strategy for the Attainment of Core Competences in Primary Education (Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, 2009).
 - *Sub-committee on examination access arrangements for the Year 6 Benchmarking Assessment* - The sub-committee was set up DG DQSE. The terms of reference for the sub-committee were to analyse the current situation with regard to examination access arrangements, to explore different possibilities for adaptation of exam provision within the context of a benchmarking assessment and to submit recommendations.

School Social Work Service

Services Offered

- Serving as links between the school and home through social work intervention with habitually absent students, their families and school staff.. School visits and home visits are carried out as and where necessary.

- Providing practical assistance to families of habitually absent students including teaching them home management, parenting and interpersonal for the benefit of the education of the children;
- Supporting and guiding students on personal matters, including stigmatisation, scapegoating, labelling, self-fulfilling prophecies, bullying, substance abuse, challenging behaviour and relationship difficulties.
- Working with families concerning home situations that relate to school attitudes and performance.
- Implementing and promoting anti-discriminatory practice.
- Empowering students, parents and school staff to access available opportunities and resources to fully develop each student's learning potential.
- Acting as liaison with students, parents, school staff and community resources.
- Ensuring the law on compulsory education is adhered to by parents, keeping track of truant students and addressing issues that are leading to absenteeism.
- Working within a multidisciplinary team situated in the respective College.
- Referring students to other professionals and specialist agencies as and when required and subsequently monitoring the student's process.
- Organising and participating in case conferences and inter-agency liaison meetings.
- Providing the necessary support to students, parents or guardians and other family members, School Management Teams and teaching Staff and act as a mediator between the school and family.
- Serving as an advocate for students by ensuring equity regarding service provision as well as demonstrate awareness of cultural differences and individual needs of students particularly those coming from vulnerable groups.
- Preparing and presenting social reports for, and participating in, Local Tribunal sittings, and the Juvenile Court.
- Providing consultation on relative matters to College Principal, School Management Teams, teachers and other professionals within DES.
- Carrying out relevant research work and preparing reports on specialised issues.
- Assessing and vetting applications for exemptions.

Summer Initiatives

- Tackling Unauthorised School Absences

During summer, the social workers conducted office visits with parents of primary school children who were absent from school for more than 30 unauthorised days during scholastic year 2010-2011. After reviewing all students' attendance through the SIS, the Service Manager together with the Principal Social Worker identified this realistic cut-off in view of the Director General's directive to reduce habitual absenteeism in schools. It was also agreed that the social workers will follow cases of secondary students who were absent from school for the same number of days giving priority to students in Form 1 and Form 2. 204 primary school children and 215 secondary students were identified.

The parents/guardians of these students were notified by letter, of an office visit scheduled with the social worker held at the respective schools or office. The visits were held in schools or in the office situated in the respective college to make it more accessible for the parents/guardians to attend. When parents/guardians did not turn up for the planned office visits the social worker tried to contact them to schedule another school, office or home visit. In cases where parents/guardians could not be reached by phone, a surprise home visit was conducted in pairs for safety reasons.

In October, 156 primary students and 153 secondary students were attending school regularly whilst another seven had left the island. The social workers are still monitoring these students as well as the rest who are still not attending due to various situations.

- Good Shepherd Project

The Good Shepherd Project is an exercise conducted by SIS on an annual basis. It consists of comparing the list of children who are registered in the common database (CdB), who have become of school age i.e. should be attending Year 1, with children of the same age registered in all state, church and independent schools. During summer, the social workers sent registered letters to parents of those children who were not registered in any school.

A number of these students are children of foreign origin registered in Malta. Legally, these are not bound to attend compulsory schooling in Malta; however the office still tries to contact the parents to check the children's whereabouts. The number of children not located through this exercise was 50.

School Exemptions and Related Issues

During the past scholastic year, meetings were held with representatives from the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), Department of Social Security (DSS) and Department for Employment and Industrial Relations (DIER) to discuss the application for school exemptions. The application form was reviewed and finalised and as from October 2011 the same form is being used by the Education Social Work Service and DIER to simplify the process and improve efficiency.

An agreement was also reached between DES and ETC so that students who have completed compulsory education would be allowed to register for work with ETC from their 16th birthday onwards and on presentation of the school leaving certificate.

It was also agreed that 16 year old youths, who have not completed compulsory schooling, still need to apply for a school exemption issued by DES to be allowed to register for work. These applications will be assessed by the Social Work Service within DES and approved by the Service Manager of the Education Psycho-Social Services who will in turn inform ETC regarding the decision taken.

This agreement will also hold for the DSS, in that the latter will issue the NI number for 16 year old youth on presentation of the school leaving certificate. When the latter is not available the youth needs to present a school exemption issued by DES.

As from October 2011 applications are being vetted by the school clerks and forwarded to the college social worker for processing. Information sessions were organised throughout this year for representatives from all college secretariats, as well as for guidance teachers and other support staff working within colleges. The social workers were also invited to talk to parents of fifth formers held during the beginning of the scholastic year to update them regarding above procedures.

Juvenile Court

One of the roles of the social work service within SSD is to attend Juvenile Court hearings and advise the magistrate presiding with information concerning the school aged offenders, also acquainting the magistrate about current programmes within the Directorates that the offender might benefit from. Another role is that of liaising with probation officers who are assigned to follow particular students. During 2011, the social worker attended 12 hearings.

Continuous Professional Development and Staff Support

During the past months, social workers followed an in-service training programme formulated by the Principal Social Worker together with the Service Manager, Education Psycho-Social Services, and based on the actual training needs expressed by the staff. Sessions conducted by specialised facilitators tackled the following issues: Dealing with bereavement; Motivational Interviewing; Tips and techniques to apply when communicating with vulnerable children; Positive parenting; Budgeting skills – Train the Trainer Seminar; Career Guidance; Stress Management.

Ad hoc the SSD also sponsored social workers and social support workers to attend various conferences and seminars. The social support workers were also given the opportunity to attend a course in Basic Counselling Skills organised by the Education Psycho-Social Services. They also attended training in budgeting skills, positive parenting, career guidance and stress management.

Professional Supervision

Supervision is a very important tool in social work as it provides continuous professional development whilst ensuring that service users are receiving a professional service. Hence, warranted social workers and social support workers are offered a compulsory monthly supervision session with the Principal Social Worker whilst unwarranted social workers were offered supervision once every three weeks. Alternate supervision sessions are held in the respective colleges so that the Principal Social Worker has the chance to observe the social workers in their setting as well as maintain regular contact with the College Principals.

Group supervision sessions were also organised once every two months. Team meetings were also held at intervals with the aim of discussing procedures, practices and other work related issues as well as to strengthen team spirit. The latter was also tackled during a team building day facilitated by an external qualified facilitator. Regular case consultation and case discussion were also provided by the Principal Social Worker whenever requested.

Local Tribunal System

The social workers have been attending tribunal sittings since the onset of the service. The Social Worker attends and assists the Commissioner of Justice in reaching decisions regarding school absenteeism cases arraigned in Local Tribunals. Their role is of providing information to the Commissioner according to the information obtained by the Heads of Schools regarding school attendance. The Social Workers also point out cases, where, despite, social work intervention, parents/guardians/designated persons have remained non-cooperative.

The nine tribunals appointed are not distributed in line with the college system; hence there are instances when two social workers from different colleges attend the same hearing. Changes to the procedures were proposed, including a suggestion for the appointment of one Commissioner of Justice to preside all educational sittings as well as other procedural improvements. In November 2011, Dr Maria Karlsson was appointed Commissioner of Justice to preside on all educational sittings. Subsequently, a meeting was held to discuss the way forward.

Statistics

Social Work Interventions	
Home Visits	1,291
School Visits	1,275
Office Visits	994
Other Contact with family and/or significant others	323
Case Reviews	1,162
Case Conferences	185
Referrals to other services	131
Case discussions	186
Meetings with Professionals	1,826
Phone calls with family members	836
Phone calls with professionals and/or significant others	4,277
Supervision	171
Recording/Reports	4,011 hrs
Vetting Court Files	233 hrs
Tribunal Court sittings	144*
Juvenile Court sittings - issued	35
Juvenile Court sessions attended	12
Absenteeism reports processed**	11,034

* Sittings per tribunal were as follows: B'Kara – 6; Fgura – 15; Lvant – 34; Qormi – 14; Tramuntana – 14; Valletta – 13; Żejtun – 26; Żurrieq – 16.

** All schools are obliged to report to the Social Work Service when students miss school for more than 3 days in a month. 4,667 of reports were referred to the tribunals.

Caseload Statistics

During scholastic year 2010-2011, the social workers followed 787 students, 667 of who did not attend school regularly. Following social work intervention, 196 primary school students and 216 secondary school students resumed attending school more regularly. 120 cases are not related to absenteeism. These include students with challenging behaviour, families with financial difficulties, issues of child abuse, learning difficulties, mental health problems, chronic illness and domestic violence. It is also the case that parents of 55 students were referred to the Local Tribunal to issue court mandates.

School Exemption issued during scholastic year 2010-2011

School Exemptions – Scholastic Year 2010-2011								
	Permanent +16 years		Temporary -16 years		Permanent -16 years		After school hours	
	Issued	Refused	Issued	Refused	Issued	Refused	Issued	Refused
Form 3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Form 4	7	0	22	0	5	0	9	0
Form 5	151	0	19	0	82	0	13	0
6 th Form	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	165	0	42	0	89	0	23	1

Safe Schools Programme

Child Safety Services (CSS)

Child Safety Services (CSS) is a specialised unit working in the area of child abuse. It is an educational, coordinating and therapeutic unit, offering interventive and preventive services to students, parents and school staff. CSS strives to offer effective and professional services catering for the needs of children who have experienced abuse.

Child Safety Services has the following functions:

- *Prevention:* Prevention work is a continuous process in schools. This includes awareness-raising sessions with parents and prevention sessions with students. Prevention programmes are offered mainly to Year 4 students at the primary level and to Form 2 students attending state, church or independent schools. The programmes aim at equipping students with the necessary knowledge about child abuse and vital skills necessary to protect oneself.
- *Consultation:* Consultations are normally requested by school staff or other professionals within the Directorate for Educational Services, with the aim of deciding whether the school needs to refer the case for investigation or if the case needs to be observed further by the school before being referred. In the latter case, CSS together with the school design an observation programme and time frame. Consultations are also requested by parents, other professionals working within the student services and other outside agencies.
- *Monitoring of cases and coordination of services:* Once a referral is received, Child Safety Services monitor the case and coordinate any work that needs to be done by other student services and/or other agencies. In most cases, a team of professionals from different agencies are involved with the case. CSS offers to be a link between schools and service delivery units of the Student Services Department and/or other agencies/professionals outside the Directorate of Educational Services.
- *Training:* This function has been given high priority. CSS participates in staff development meetings in schools, upon request. Generally, the Unit presents the four forms of child abuse; physical, neglect, emotional and sexual. Other training programmes delivered by CSS staff during the year included:
 - a 3-day INSET course on Child Abuse, highlighting awareness, prevention and intervention for members of staff in the school sector;
 - two sessions delivered by a staff member to Learning Support Assistants as part of their training;
 - a talk addressed to Heads/Assistant Heads of both state and non-state schools in order to sensitise them further on the issue of abuse;

- participation in a working committee to review and update the present National Child Protection Policy.
- *Counselling/Intervention:* Following the investigation, counselling is offered to survivors of child abuse. The counselling sessions take place with the child within the school premises, often in coordinated with other services offered to students.
- *Research:* CSS upgraded the INSET training programmes in content and presentation, incorporated short video clips in the presentations and developed a new programme for primary students regarding internet safety.
- *Tracing:* CSS are often asked by Appoġġ to trace students in schools so that they can investigate or follow up cases of child abuse. CCS received 197 requests for tracing from the Child Protection Services, the Initial Response Team and by the Generic Section at Appoġġ.
- *Professional Teams:* CCS continued to form part of the Professionals' Team at Senglea Primary School. Such teams are multidisciplinary and cater for children with learning problem and try to identify and help at-risk students.
- *Media Awareness:* The CSS was invited to two television programmes where CSS was requested to talk about child abuse and responded to queries from the viewers.
- *Continued Professional Development in 2011:* Members of staff attended various training events and given the opportunity to pursue post graduate studies.
- *Others:* Reports to the Director General, DES; giving feedback on cases on request to heads, counsellors and guidance teachers; continuous updating of the database and filing system; inputting of information in the database; attending courses offered by the DES or on own initiative.
- *Referrals:* In 2011, CCS received 296 new referrals re cases of child abuse; 210 cases were closed and one was referred to the DG, DES. The following table shows the types of cases referred to CSS:

Type of Abuse	Number of Referrals
Emotional	41
Neglect	70
Physical	44
Sexual	42
Emotional and Neglect	24
Emotional, Neglect and Physical	4
Emotional and Physical	31
Emotional, Physical and Sexual	5
Emotional and Sexual	10
Neglect and Physical	13
Neglect, Physical and Sexual	3
Neglect and Sexual	3
Physical and Sexual	2
Unknown	5
Total	297

- *Statistics:*

Service	Frequency
Consultation by phone	Numerous
Consultation to Senior Management Team	62
Consultation given to parents	27
Consultation and Coordination (with police/parents/counsellors/guidance)	92
Case Conferences	11
School Meetings with Appoġġ	93
Other Meetings with Appoġġ	14
Professionals' Meetings	12
Meetings with Directors/Service Managers	15
Meetings with College Principals	14
SMT Meetings (re Policy and Services)	29
Council of Heads' Meetings	7
College Guidance Meetings	5
Meetings with other agencies on shared projects	12
Staff Training (SDP)	7

In-service Training	3
Training for Learning Support Aids	1
Training for members of Senior Management Teams (Ass. Heads)	3
Primary safety Programme – Year 4's (including individual follow ups)	132 classes
Embed Sessions (re Internet Safety)	12 classes
Parents' Awareness Programme for Primary Schools	15
Parents' Preparatory Meeting for Year 4's Programme	48
Parents' Awareness Programme for Secondary Schools	1
Class Observation	23
Tracing	197
Personal Supervision	36
Media	2
Court Summons	2

Anti-Substance Abuse Unit

The Anti-Substance Abuse Unit strive to give effective and timely help to students suffering from substance abuse while at the same time ensuring a safe school environment. Work carried out by the Unit in 2011 included the following:

- *ESPAD* - The European school survey project on alcohol and other drugs (ESPAD) uses standardised methods and instruments to measure drug and alcohol use among representative samples of school students who turn 16 during the calendar year. In 2007, data was collected in 35 countries, including 25 EU Member States, Croatia and Norway. The fifth ESPAD study was conducted in 2011. The team, together with the Service Manager Education Psycho-Social Services, supported and was involved in the ESPAD research which took place on 2 February 2011. Various meetings were held with ESPAD representatives on how to coordinate this research with state schools. The Unit coordinated with colleges (mainly with Guidance Teachers, PSD Teachers and Assistant Heads) to gather and provide necessary information; supporting the research developer in the research. An information meeting was held for all professionals regarding the survey procedures. The department was very satisfied with the ESPAD organisation and positive feedback was received from various schools and from the research developer. The results of the fifth round, conducted in year 2011 with the participation of 23 out of the 27 Member States together with Croatia and Norway, will be published in 2012.
- *Consultation services*: assistance to schools whenever cases of alleged substance abuse occurred and provision of technical advice on matters of policy and procedures regarding school referrals.
- *Intervention*: assistance to individuals who were allegedly abusing or at risk of substance abuse. In cases where several professionals are involved, case conferences are set up with all stakeholders to discuss and agree on an action plan on how to help that particular student. The process of intervention involves an array of indirect and/or direct strategies. Interventions may include classroom sessions, fora, seminars, staff development meetings and other preventive work. Other strategies involve sessions with abusers, parents and staff concerned in the case. The following table shows the cases reported to the Unit in 2011.

School	Boys	Girls
Church	11	1
State Primary	2	-
State Secondary	53	34
Class Intervention - State	17	11

This amounts to a total of 101 cases and 28 class interventions. These cases involved a total of 408 sessions such as individual sessions with the students, meeting with parents/guardians, SMT, guidance teachers, social workers (Youth in Focus), Police Drug Squad and other professionals such as prefects of discipline, trainee counsellors and counsellors. Some of the cases needed to be referred to Sedqa/Appogg, Youth in Focus or Caritas (Malta) so that the student would be given further assistance.

- *Database*: A computerised database was set up in which all the necessary case information is recorded and updated on a daily basis.
- *Prevention*: During 2011, the Unit worked on a Preventive and Intervention Programme with 1,734 students from Forms 2, 3, 4 and 5 in 20 schools, aimed at educating students about the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. The programme, which consists of a mixture of activities such as discussions, case

studies, PowerPoint presentation, video clips and so on, is designed to last on average four sessions for each class. At the end of the programme, students are required to complete an evaluation sheet, to help the team introduce improvements in subsequent sessions and the forthcoming scholastic year. After analysing the feedback, a report was compiled for each school participating in the programme, which was also sent to the respective Heads of School. The results of the evaluation were very positive and encouraging. This programme was introduced by the Unit during scholastic year 2009/10 and from time to time updates are implemented to make this programme as interesting as possible to the students.

- *Parents Prevention Exercise:* In conjunction with personnel from schools and other agencies, the team aims to inform and equip parents with skills to assist their children; these activities take the form of formal meetings. Substance abuse educational and training programmes are provided for parents on a regular basis at various times and locations.
- *Information Sessions from Drug Squad:* During scholastic year 2010-2011, a pilot study was conducted with Form 5 students attending Gozo College. whereby a police officer from the Drug Squad was invited to deliver talks, explaining about the legal aspect related to drugs. Following positive feedback, more talks with Form 5 students were organised at the beginning of scholastic year 2011-12.
- *Meetings:* During this period, the Unit was invited to deliver various talks on the implementation of the Substance Abuse Policy during school/staff development sessions and in induction training for newly-appointed Assistant Heads and Heads.
- *Media:* The Unit recognised the importance of media to make people more aware of the services and of the current policy. Information on how to seek further assistance was also provided. Discussions on the major factors that might contribute to substance abuse were raised (such as low self esteem, peer pressure, personal problems and the like).
- *Training and Research:* The team participated and held regular meetings with Sedqa, Appoġġ: Youth in focus and the Drug Squad. An information meeting was held at the Detox Centre. The team also attended the MACP 8th Training Week with the theme *Fighting Roadblocks of the Mind: Crosscurrents in Mental Health and Addictions*. Team members also attended various other courses and seminars.
- *Supervision Sessions:* During 2011, focal persons working within the Unit were once again given the possibility to attend personal and group external supervision sessions.

Anti-Bullying Unit

The activities of the Anti-Bullying unit during the year were:

- *Consultation:* provision of advice, understanding and support in developing whole-school responses to bullying and promotion of pro-social behaviour; provision of support to individuals, (staff, students, parents) to increase their confidence and competence in dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour; and provision of useful resource, organising and taking part in case conferences, participating in anti-bullying awareness weeks and helping schools draft and implement tailor made anti-bullying policies.
- *Prevention:* provision of a range of activities to maintain a steady input regarding the prevention of bullying in schools, by raising awareness of administration, staff, minor staff, students and parents to the long-term effects of bullying.
- *Awareness/Media:* raised awareness of the issue of bullying through meetings/sessions held with parents, classes and teachers; took part in the organisation of an anti-bullying campaign through the Music 4 Life Concert; took part in TV and radio programmes; interviewed for articles in local newspapers and magazines; held awareness sessions with social gatherings organised by local councils, church organisations, scout groups, parents, classes and staff meetings.

Awareness Sessions				
Classes	Teachers	Parents	Media	Clubs
147	6	10	12	5

- *Intervention:* formulating and implementing strategies to respond to the issue of bullying behaviour. These are held with individuals, classes, staff and parents.

	Primary	Boys' Sec	Girls' Sec
State (Malta)	80	59	27
Church (Malta)	32		
Independent (Malta)		7	
State (Gozo)	3	3	
Church (Gozo)	3		

- **Coordination and Monitoring:** The unit acted as a link between schools and other student services or professional agencies within or outside the Directorate for Educational Services.
- **Referrals:** Referrals were made by school administration, Educational Welfare Services, school psychologists, Guidance and Counselling Unit, social workers from Appoġġ, Support Line 179 and directly from parents and students. The number of individual referrals was 136 between January and June 2011 and 79 between September and December – a total of 215. Constant contact was maintained by telephone with parents or school as the need occurred. All ten state colleges as well as independent and church schools were visited during 2011 for the following purposes: staff development, parents' meetings, individual cases and class contact.
- **Other activities performed during 2011:**
 - The team gave their contribution during the preparation of the 'Music 4 Life Concert'. This activity targeted secondary schools (state, church and independent schools), for which three secondary schools (one girls' state school, a boys' state school and a boys' church school) were chosen to help in the preparation of this event. Around 3,500 students participated in this live concert held in May.
 - Took part in a national effort made of multi-disciplinary professionals to create awareness about Internet Safety.
 - Input during LSAs and INCOs courses/meetings.
- **Group Professional Supervision:** The personnel had group professional supervision.

Career Guidance Service (CGS)

The Career Guidance Service team carries out various duties within the area of career education and guidance.

Development and delivery of a programme of career lessons for all state school form four students

This programme is a set of lessons based on discussions, power point presentations, role-play and exercises (group and individual) carried out on a workbook that is distributed to each student. The themes focus on self-awareness, job-market awareness, life-long and life-wide learning, post-secondary education pathways, and practical issues such as sitting for an interview and compiling a CV. Participants are encouraged to discuss any personal issues/queries with the particular teacher from CG service by asking for an appointment on a one-to-one basis. Besides carrying out this service in-between the delivery of lessons on the same day, CG teachers also visit schools specifically to carry out career guidance duties.

Statistics

During this period, 468 students sought one-to-one appointments with members of the team.

Participation in Media programmes

Team member participated in four educational programmes aired on the TV station Education 22.

Career Guidance/Information Provision for other clients

17 members of the general public accessed the services of the team via email, seeking information or guidance in order to be able to make informed career decisions.

Participation in College-based initiatives

A number of colleges organised various career-related initiatives, including job-exposure/job-shadowing initiatives. Staff members were directly involved in these activities by forming part of the organising committee and monitoring team. Depending on the needs of the particular initiative, this involvement took various forms and included tasks such as organising and carrying out one-to-one interviews (non-selective) – a total of 195 interviews were carried out, finding work-placements, carrying out placement visits and attending committee meetings.

One of the members collaborated with the Learning Zone at St Ignatius College GSS and the Learning Centre (Naxxar) in designing and implementing a programme for a group of students with challenging behaviour.

Delivery of the Hand book 'X'tip ta' Karriera Trid?'

The unit carried out delivery of talks and presentation to all State-schools Fifth Form students of the Hand Book: 'X'tip ta' Karriera Trid?'

Job-Exposure Initiative 2011

Financial Sector: For the third year running, a Job-Exposure initiative for Form Four students was held in conjunction with MFSA, the Directorate for Catholic Education and the Independent Schools Association. The distribution of participating students was as follows: 64 students from the state schools, 40 students from the church schools and 16 from the independent schools. The job exposure consists of a two-week national project, where students are placed for one week within a workplace related to the financial sector, such as a bank or insurance company, and observe workers on the job, while also performing some small tasks. A log-book formulated by Career Guidance Service guides the students through the experience by helping them reflect upon personal and workplace issues through particular questions. During this year's Job-Expo, students were remotely prepared by receiving a number of weekly tutorials posted through their e-mail addressing such topics as: gathering industry-related information, making a good first impression, planning your way to the place of work and making good use of the log book. They were further supported as their queries were followed and appropriate guidance was provided.

In state schools, the selection of students was carried out on the basis of structured personality-based interviews, carried out by a three-member board set up within each school. The format of the interviews was based on research carried out by the team, and each board consisted of a team member, a college-based trainee career advisor and a school-based guidance teacher. In all, 130 interviews were done by the said board. This was done following the student's submission of a letter of application and Curriculum vitae. In this way, a 'real-life' learning experience in interviewing was also provided to those students who sat for the interview but were not selected for participation in the experience.

Throughout the placement, the students were visited regularly by the personnel of the CGS, the College Career Advisor and the trainee-career advisors.

Health Sector: Concurrently, the CGS carried out a similar Job-Exposure initiative in conjunction with the HR & Admin department of Mater Dei and other authorities within the Health Sector whereby state school students were given the opportunity to shadow various occupational roles within the sector. The same interviewing and monitoring procedures were carried out. In this case, 300 interviews were carried out. 179 Form Four students participated from all state schools. Again the job exposure was held in two phases during the month of July.

At the end of the two initiatives, two certificate presentation ceremonies were held, to which the parents of participants were invited. The first part of each ceremony consisted of a short evaluation session where the parents, students and representatives of the sectors were encouraged to give their feedback to the particular initiative. During this year's presentation the CGS tried to emphasise the need for students to start taking a

more active role in their career. Such message was echoed in the organisation of the presentations whereby students were given prominent roles.

Learning Expo 2011

The Education Psycho-Social Services, in conjunction with the Ministry, organised the Learning Expo 2011, so as to promote lifelong learning and further education through the participation of vocational and post secondary schools/ institutions and training institutions.

Learning Expo 2011, held from 1 to 4 March, enabled all those who wished to pursue their education, from 5th Form students to graduates, and adults considering a return to studying, to gain information about the wealth of learning opportunities available. Among the exhibitors from the private and public education sectors were tertiary institutions in the fields of tourism, health, the arts, culture, beauty, IT, finance, and management.

Form 5 state, church and independent school students visited the Learning Expo together with their guidance teachers. The total number of students who attended the Learning Expo 2011 was 3,761.

Youth Days 2011

The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), the YEP team in collaboration with MEEF, organised Youth Days 2011, which was held from 24 to 28 October 2011.

During these Youth Days, more than 35 stands representing art, voluntary organisations, sports, jobs, ICT, the ETC and informal education through workshops, were set up. Fifth Formers had an opportunity to participate and interact with various professionals, offering advice and guidance in the mentioned fields. The information was delivered through active participation in workshops and visits on stands. The total number of state school students who participated in the Youth Days 2011 was 2,775 students. Independent and church schools' students also participated.

Visits to workplaces and post-secondary institutions

The team coordinates all visits by state school students to the following places:

- For Third Form students: Malta Police Force (various sections including Police Academy), Heritage Malta (Bighi Restoration Centre and Museums); a visit to various entities within the ICT industry were included;
- For Fourth Form students: Mater Dei, Malta Financial Services Authority, Malta Stock Exchange, Central Bank of Malta, Middle Sea Insurance, Swatar Training Centre. In the case of the Armed Forces of Malta, personnel visited schools to deliver talks.
- For Fifth Form students: Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (as from this scholastic year, this visit is organised on a tour system, whereby students have the opportunity to visit more than one institute, Institute of Tourism Studies, University of Malta.

MCAST: a total of 990 visited at least one institute

Armed Forces of Malta talks to schools: 7 talks

Police Force: 1,167

Mater Dei orientation visits: 348 students

Middle Sea Insurance: 673 students

Malta Financial Services Authority: 643 students

Malta Stock Exchange: 415 students

Heritage Malta: 623 students

Central Bank of Malta: 484 students

Swatar Training Centre: 598 students

Institute of Tourism Studies: 1,046 students

University of Malta: 1,141 students (in some cases, students talks at their respective school)

ICT industry: 416 students

Career Seminar

Following last year's feedback from various schools administrators, this year, the above named career lessons are delivered in the form of a day seminar, where 37 lessons have already been delivered.

National Level

The Service Manager, Education Psycho-Social Services is the national delegate and a college career advisor is a member on the European Lifelong Guidance Programme Network (ELGPN). The EPSS is contributing in Work Package 1 – Career Management Skills. The participants within this group, amongst which Malta, evaluate European policies on career management skills. As from September 2009, Malta has participated actively in all preliminary meetings and in the workshops organised related to WP 1.

Education Medical Services

Visiting Nursing Services at Schools

The administration of medicines and other nursing services in state schools continued to be offered to 120 students, on a daily basis and covering Malta and Gozo. All students, medically certified and requiring regular medication during school hours for chronic conditions, were seen. Such visits also catered for diabetic students on insulin and requiring blood sugar level monitoring. Others involved urinary catheterisations and the changing of colostomy bags.

Head lice Screening Programme

The head lice screening programme was carried out to meet the demands of individual school administrators. In certain schools (including private and church schools) when head lice infestations was reported, inspection for head lice was carried out without delay. The service was also provided uninterruptedly during the summer months during which 48 Skolasajf centres were visited. During the scholastic year of 2010-2011, a total of 23,907 boys and 24,734 girls were screened (a total of 48,641). Since the beginning of the scholastic year 2011-2012, there were 52 requests by Heads of School for screening, ranging from primary to secondary in state and independent schools.

Hepatitis Immunisation Programme

The Hepatitis B Vaccination programme of special schools staff, due to the particular exposure to body fluids which arises from the nature of their working conditions, is organised by the unit and an updated electronic database has been completed. This service relies heavily on liaison with the Health Division. The EMS purchases Hep B vaccines and immunity tests from the Health Division and the necessary authorisations are issued to eligible special school staff members to be offered Hep B vaccination and relevant tests at Floriana Immunisation Centre.

Health Promoting School Inspections Programme

Health Promoting School Inspections were also carried out and the necessary advice about school clinics and first-aid set-ups as well as health issues about particular students are tackled. Nutritional aspects as well as tuck shop and food availability are also considered and the school administration is advised accordingly.

Liaison with Health Division

The Education Medical Services forms part of an interdepartmental committee set up to discuss issues regarding health and education, which involves frequent meetings. The Unit also represents the Directorate

for Educational Services on the interdepartmental committee to tackle the obesity problem in Malta. Liaison was also developed in a structured manner with the Disease Surveillance Unit and the Health Promotion Unit in areas which involve contagious diseases in school children and execution of related policies as well as health-promoting initiatives which the unit deems necessary. This committee met regularly every month and several projects and initiatives were coordinated between the health and education authorities.

Unit Ghozza

The Unit seeks to provide a support service and an educational programme to unmarried pregnant minors. The unit seeks to achieve its objectives by promoting the psycho-social and emotional well-being of unmarried teenage mothers encouraging them to adopt a positive attitude towards motherhood, as well as emphasising the importance of education and employment by empowering the girls to pursue their career paths.

The main policy remains to provide a positive passage of experience through teenage pregnancy, encouragement to continue with education courses and empowerment to pursue career paths. For this purpose the staff works closely with various sections within the Education Directorates. The unit also liaises with other agents to emphasise the importance of education and employment by collaborating with the Employment Training Corporation as well as scheduled visits held annually at the Valletta Job Centre.

Referral System

The Unit liaises with the Parentcraft team at Mater Dei Hospital and the majority of cases are referred to the unit by personnel after the girl has had her first hospital visit and her medical file opened. A number of girls seek the services of the unit themselves and are therefore self-referred, or referred by members of their family or referred by school personnel or by other professionals giving their service in the colleges. When the pregnant girl is still attending school, she may choose to follow one of the three options: to continue attending school regularly and go to the Unit for counselling or to seek information; stop attending school until the birth of the child and attend the full programme at Ghozza; or to attend two days at school, one day at Unit or vice versa. The Unit also works closely with Heads of School, Counsellors, Social Workers and Guidance Teachers. Pregnant teenage girls who are above school age are encouraged to attend the full programme, but attendance is not compulsory.

Statistics

In 2011, Unit Ghozza dealt with 95 new cases of unwed teenage mothers.

Age of Pregnant Girls		No.
Under the age of 16	14 years	3
	15 years	9
Between 16 and 18	16 years	19
	17 years	21
	18 years	40
Above 18	18+	3
Total		95
Regularly attended the Adolescent pregnancy programme		39
Contacted & given support over the telephone		39
Regularly attended Mother and Baby Support Group		25

Programmes

The Unit offers a number of programmes including;

- *Adolescent Pregnancy*: The Adolescent Pregnancy programme uses a holistic approach that aims to empower the pregnant girl as it focuses on a combination of PSD sessions which deal with self-

development, pregnancy issues and parenting skills. Parent-craft sessions are also held by a midwife from Mater Dei to address further pregnancy issues. Art and design sessions are organised to enhance the girls' creative skills and these sessions are related with the rest of the programme. In addition, the programme also emphasises the importance of education and employment, thus helping the unwed teenage mother to develop personal goals and the desire for a productive future. With this purpose in mind, guidance teachers from the Careers' section are invited to give input. Furthermore, a number of speakers from various agencies are contacted and invited to give talks to the girls pertaining to the physical and psychological well-being of the baby as well as legal matters, social benefits and registration of name. Of particular interest this year, various professionals from different fields (such as Social Benefits, Public Registry, Immunisation, Sedqa, First Aid, Spiritual Guidance, Nutritionist, Health Issues) gave their valid contribution to the Unit so as to help the girls enrich their knowledge in various fields as well as widening the holistic approach that the programmes offer.

On the occasion of Woman's Day, the team once again liaised with Kalkara Primary School and organised a visit to the kindergarten classes in this school. Another successful activity was a Healthy Eating Day organised by the unit for the teenage pregnant girls, where girls together with staff compiled a healthy menu which was cooked and eaten on the premises. Such an activity helped the girls and the staff to work together as a team and interact in an informal setting and gave the girls a sense of achievement and belonging.

- *Parents:* Parents are involved in the programme to gain further knowledge of how they can assist in their teen daughter's pregnancy, by providing a supportive and nurturing family life, supporting the teen in setting a realistic life agenda and encouraging the development of a hopeful sense of the future. Counselling is also offered to the parents of the girl's partner. Parents are always invited to attend for the first time the girl comes to the unit; for the parentcraft/labour session held at Mater Dei; and for a special session delivered by personnel from the Public Registry and social services.
- *Mother and Baby Support Group:* The Mother and Baby Group is held weekly. The programme is designed to offer the teen mothers a supportive and nurturing environment, where they can learn about parenthood responsibility and their obligation to cherish and nurture their infant child. Issues relevant mainly to personal and social situations and parenting skills are tackled and carried out through discussions and inviting different speakers to the Unit. Art and design sessions are also held to enhance creativity and bonding between mother and child and outings are organised to boost social communication and cohesion in the group. As in previous years, the focus was on education and employment in order to help these young mothers become contributing adults. As part of a career orientation programme, visits were organised to the Valletta Job Centre and the Institute of Tourism Studies. In addition, a careers' seminar was organised by the Careers' section in order to help the young mothers format their CV, write a covering letter and how to prepare themselves for an interview, aimed at empowering the young mothers to take the initiative and seek employment, and to improve skills, knowledge, qualifications and past work history.
- *Prevention Programme in Primary Schools:* Talks titled *Nifmhu 'l Uliedna fil-Bidliet* to parents of children in Years 5 and 6 are carried out once a week as part of a prevention programme. During the 2010-2011 scholastic year, such talks were held in 26 state schools, six church schools and two independent schools whereas an annual talk was held at the Gozo College Boys' Secondary School in Victoria, for which the parents of Year 5 and Year 6 students attending the 11 primary state schools and four primary church schools in Gozo were invited to attend.
- *PLASTIK – Drama Unit:* Another project the team was involved in as a Unit was a prevention programme in connection with a play organised by the Drama Unit in Blata l-Bajda that dealt with the issue of teenage pregnancy. The personnel were invited to give input with regard to teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases to the audience which mainly consisted of Form 3, 4 and 5 students attending state and non-state schools. This project was perceived as an opportunity for the Unit to reach out to Maltese adolescents while empowering them to be assertive and not giving in to peer pressure.
- *Counselling Service:* Counselling is offered at all times. It is requested by the pregnant girls and their partners and families as well as by teen mothers. They continue to be considered as clients of the unit until they are married. Helping skills are constantly conducted by the guidance teachers.

- *Research*: Opportunity for research is given upon requested by students pursuing various university courses. Permission is always requested and standards requested by the Data Protection Act are strictly adhered to.
- *Initiatives*: In collaboration with the St John's Ambulance Brigade, a first-aid course was organised for the staff and the girls on voluntary basis at the unit. The course proved to be beneficial for the staff and the girls.

Counselling and Career Guidance Service

Career Guidance Service in the schools

The college career advisors, school counsellors, guidance teachers and trainee career advisors assist learners in managing life situations more effectively and acquiring the necessary key competences so as to attain their curricular performance goals while developing holistically as a person.

The service covers:

- curricular, vocational and career guidance with students and parents;
- developmental guidance based on identifying and meeting the personal and social needs of the pupils/students and helping them deal successfully with their concerns;
- transition programmes for both pupils/students and their parents starting from home to kinder, from primary to secondary schools, from secondary schools to post secondary and workplace;
- choice of subjects for pupils of Year 6 and Subject Options for Form 2; talks, discussions, meetings with students and parents;
- information about post-secondary courses - talks to 5th Formers on various courses available, visits to different post-secondary institutions, individual and group guidance. This exercise is a year-long process;
- orientation visits to different workplaces;
- talks and programmes re Careers' Market, Careers' Week and Career Fairs;
- job exposure initiatives;
- seminars for students and personnel in collaboration with ETC;
- liaison with other entities.
- **Choice Programme**: The Industry Human Resources Development Unit (IHRD) within the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) has been organising the CHOICE programme in collaboration with the Institute for Tourism Studies for the past years. The programme targets Form 4 secondary school students and is aimed at creating more tourism career awareness. Regular meetings were held with the MTA in order to discuss the dissemination of information and the awareness of the tourism sector.
- **Job Exposure Initiatives**: During 2011, nine colleges conducted different job exposures initiatives at different schools in the respective colleges.
- **Walk-in Service** offered at the Colleges during Summer 2011: For the second year consecutively, an event which marked the end of the scholastic year was the Walk-in Service which was held by the college career advisor and the trainee career advisors in each college across Malta. The service is offered to Form 5 students whereby the career advisor holds a one-to-one session with the student, during which they discuss his/her post-secondary career path, so as to lead students as to how to make an informed choice about their post-secondary career path - whether to proceed to further studies or integrate within the world of work. Preparations for this event took the form of talks with 5th Formers before they finished school and in certain colleges, meetings were also organised for parents. During summer 2011, career advisors held one-to-one sessions with 291 students across the Malta colleges.
- **Tracer Study**: Since 1990, the Guidance and Counselling Services have been organising a series of tracer studies - both at school and at the national level (including state, church and independent schools). Over the past few years, there has been a steady increase in the number of students participating in post-secondary courses. All students who completed Form V in 2010 were asked to participate in this Tracer Study - the report indicates that 3,999 young people (81.2% of the total number of students who reached school leaving age and replied to the survey) opted to follow a course in post-secondary schools.

Counselling Services in the Schools

The college counsellors, school counsellors, guidance teachers and trainee counsellors give their service in all the schools at primary and secondary level. Students usually ask for counselling themselves or are referred by teachers or parents. Counselling could range from crisis interventions to personal counselling. There are also a great number of referrals made to other helping and support agencies.

The service includes:

- personal guidance to pupils/students to help them deal successfully with their concerns;
 - seminars and ongoing development, preventive and informative programmes regarding work of other agencies and personal growth/enrichment;
 - parenting skills programmes, consisting of six sessions with parents;
 - individual and group counselling with students and parents, both as preventive action and crises intervention;
 - liaison with other units within the Student Services Department and with external child support agencies.
- *Walk-in Service offered at the Colleges during summer 2011:* Counselling services continued throughout the summer months. Service which was held by the college career advisor and the trainee career advisors in each college across Malta. During summer 2011, the college counsellor and trainee counsellors followed 242 students across the Malta colleges.
 - *Preventive and informative programmes:* Several meetings were organised for both students and parents during the calendar year. Counsellors, guidance teachers and trainee counsellors identified particular needs which were then dealt with during the seminars, talks and discussions. Issues tackled centred round leadership, relationships, communication, internet safety, self-esteem and other relevant topics.
 - *Parental Skills:* Sessions were held throughout the year and delivered by trained facilitators for groups of not more than 20 parents. Requests were forwarded to the Unit, especially by the primary schools. A six-session parenting programme called *Nifhmu 'l Uliedna* was carried out. Topics included self-esteem, decision-making, communication, relationships, drug abuse, assertiveness, health and sexuality.
 - *Meetings:* All professionals giving their service in counselling and career guidance held regular meetings at school, college and national level.
 - *Professional Supervision:* As part of their ongoing development, College Counsellors and School Counsellors were provided with personal and group professional supervision. The personal and group professional supervision proved to be very beneficial and enriching.
 - *Continuous Professional Development:* A total of 438 members of staff participated in a wide variety of CPD activities organised by either the department or by other entities.

College Prefect of Discipline (CPD)

College Prefect of Discipline is part of the multidisciplinary team working in the schools in the respective colleges. The CPD endeavours to uphold discipline as a positive value, promoting the educational and social engagement of all students within the college schools. This concept of discipline is closely related to school effectiveness mainly through: good leadership and school organisation; appropriate values, ethos, and aspirations; and motivated staff. The CPD is responsible for the coordination of policies, procedures and activities that encourage good behaviour in the school communities within the college.

Initiative

The College Prefects of Discipline worked in line with their job description towards promoting and implementing initiatives which favour positive discipline in schools:

- promoting good behaviour strategies in the schools forming part of our respective colleges;
- participation in Learning Expo at MFCC;
- participation in Youth Days;
- monthly meetings between CPDs;
- visit at YOURS, Corradino Correctional Facility;
- participation in Grundtvig project – ‘Let’s Do It Creatively for the Benefit of Adult Learners’ in Dublin;

- leadership skills and assertiveness training for students;
- posters promoting good behaviour in schools;
- college projects.

Prevention

Through professional development sessions for staff, better behaviour management techniques are learnt by the whole school staff thus trying to get all personnel working towards the same direction.

Other prevention activities that take place are talks to parents regarding behaviour management and discipline at home during and after school hours. In some cases the talks were organised in conjunction with parental skills courses, tackling behaviour of children according to different age-groups. Personnel have also have been instrumental in organising transition activities for students who are progressing from primary to secondary school and students who change schools for various reasons.

Apart from the day-to-day activity in schools, the College Prefects of Discipline make every effort to prevent challenging behaviour from occurring in schools through the organisation of the following activities:

- SDPs for Staff – Positive Behaviour Management in Mainstream Primary and Secondary Schools
- Music 4 Life – concert by Ira Losco at MFCC with an anti-bullying theme
- July INSET on behalf of CoBS - Positive Behaviour Management for Mainstream Teachers
- Project with Access B’Kara – The Value of Education and Money Management
- Project with Access St Paul’s Bay – Anger Management and Bullying
- Project with Kunsill Malti Ghall-iSport – Promoting Positive Behaviour through Sport
- Project with Music Group – Promoting Positive Behaviour Through Music
- Organised talks by Sedqa (for students and parents), Police Drug Squad, Police cyber crime
- Presented development sessions about behaviour management in various public and church schools
- Cyber crime talks for teachers organised at San Ġorġ Preca.

Consultation

Personnel offer consultation to school SMT, teachers and LSA on particular problems they encounter in their day-to-day teaching experience. Apart from teaching staff, the College Prefects of Discipline also offer their consultation during case conferences and formal and informal meetings within the Education Psycho-Social team within the college.

Monitoring of cases and coordination of services

Once a referral is received, the CPD monitors the case and coordinates any work that needs to be done by other student services and/or other agencies.

Interventions

Interventions are numerous and of a varied nature depending on the case or issue arising. Very often other services are involved and hence a lot of teamwork and liaising is involved.

Service during the summer months 2011

All officers work on a forty-hour week. The service was offered in all the colleges and therefore all students in state schools could avail themselves of these services. Personnel collaborated with other professionals on certain cases such as participation in the youth club during the summer months.

Training

Personnel was given the opportunity to attend a number of diverse training activities. Training sought varied from the multiple facets of the challenges being encountered.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RESOURCE CENTRES SECTION

The Special Education and Resource Centres Section is housed in Hamrun, and is the base for the following services:

- three peripatetic teachers for students with visual impairment in mainstream schools;
- ten Early Intervention peripatetic teachers for children with special needs who are still of pre-school age or have started their school experience at kindergarten level;
- four resource workers working within the Early Intervention Service;
- three Home Tuition peripatetic teachers for students who are absent from school on a long-term basis due to chronic illness or injury;
- two teachers and one LSA for students who attend the Young People's Unit of Mount Carmel Hospital;
- peripatetic teachers for the teaching of Creative Arts (one teacher for Music, one teacher for Arts and Crafts) to students attending the resource centres and learning support centres;
- two peripatetic teachers for the teaching of PE and Sports to students attending the resource centres and learning support centres;
- two teachers, five kindergarten assistants and one LSA working on the children's wards at Mater Dei Hospital;
- one peripatetic teacher (transition programme organiser) in the transition programme for students moving from the mainstream schools to resource centres and from resource centres to the adult training centres and to other educational establishments;
- two speech and language pathologists, two occupational therapists, one LSA working in the Access to Communication and Technology Unit (ACTU);
- four peripatetic teachers working in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Team;
- twelve peripatetic teachers for the Hearing Impaired who offer support to students with a hearing impairment attending mainstream schools;
- two Social, Emotional, Behaviour Difficulties (SEBD) specialists who support schools which have students experiencing social, emotional, behaviour difficulties.

Peripatetic service to students with visual/hearing impairments

The peripatetic teachers for students with visual impairment provide support to enable these students to access the curriculum, integrate in the school and become active members of society. During scholastic year 2010/2011 the peripatetic teachers worked with students in different localities. A regular service was also introduced to cater for children from up to 5 years.

The peripatetic teachers for students with hearing impairment provide a quality educational and audiological service for deaf, hard of hearing and hearing-impaired students in Malta and Gozo, from the point of diagnosis and throughout their educational experience in the home and in mainstream schools.

During scholastic year 2010/2011, the teachers for the hearing impaired supported a total of 83 students in state, church and independent schools in Malta and Gozo. One of the teachers, who also specialises in audiological assessments, provided audiological services to these students.

During 2010/2011, a number of teachers for the hearing impaired participated in the EU Lifelong Learning Programme, Leonardo da Vinci: Development of Pan-European Competencies for Teachers of the Deaf through Partnership. This project brought together a number of European partners who together worked to ensure that deaf children and young people have access to teachers of the deaf who have the skills needed to promote their learning and well being wherever they live in Europe. The Directorate for Educational

Services was invited to participate in this project by the University of Malta, which was one of the project partners. A number of teachers also had the opportunity to visit Mary Hare School in the UK. In July 2011, this project organised a conference in Malta with the participation of all the partners. Teachers for the hearing impaired attended the conference and benefitted from a number of workshops facilitated by renowned international professionals in the field of hearing impairment.

The following table shows the number of students receiving these services, according to age, gender and school level:

School Level	Visual Impairment			Hearing Impairment		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
State Primary - Malta	14	7	21	18	6	24
State Primary - Gozo	3	4	7	4	3	7
State Secondary - Malta/Gozo	10	7	17	19	6	25
Non-State Schools	0	5	5	13	14	27
Total	27	23	50	54	29	83

Early Intervention Service

The Early Intervention Service provides a family centred and comprehensive support system for children with developmental disabilities or delays and their families in the first five years of life, so as to minimise delays and maximise the chances of reaching typical milestones in development. It also supports and implements screening procedures to increase the early identification of difficulties and provide the family support as early as possible to families.

The service objectives are to:

- enhance the development of children at risk of Individual Educational Needs, including early literacy, language development and communication, motor skills development, self awareness, social and emotional development;
- ensure early identification and multi disciplinary assessment procedures;
- plan family-centred intervention through Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), Individual Family support Plans (IFSPs) and support in transitions between home, preschool, and primary education;
- promote social inclusion of the child together with the family and their engagement in community based systems as part of the commitment in supporting their children;
- facilitate collaborative communities of families supporting each other, which include play groups, training workshops, support helpline, as well as linking families to the resources in the community;
- advance professional development, applying especially to practitioners to develop skills, knowledge and credentials to support early care and education;
- enhance learning environments for children by providing onsite support for early childhood settings e.g. kindergartens in order to create inclusive learning environments especially with children who have developmental needs;
- deliver and coordinate integrated services that meet the holistic needs of children and family.

As part of the service, the Early Intervention Team offers the following:

- assessment and intervention in the child's natural environment e.g. home or school. The programme, *Early Beginnings* focuses on four main areas of development including physical development – gross and fine motor; communication, language and literacy; personal, social and emotional; cognitive and numeracy;
- help to parents and educators in the planning and application of an educational programme tailored to the child's needs;
- support groups and workshops for parents supporting children with various needs;
- group therapy in different areas involving both children and parents/carers;
- support of Early Intervention Team in IEPs and transitions;
- whole school approach targeting a school inclusion programme;
- support and training provision to early years educators as continuous professional development;

- screening assessment;
- attendance in case conferences of children undergoing assessment at the CDAU and providing an educational report.

During scholastic year 2010/2011, Early Intervention teachers and Resource workers worked with a total of 645 persons in Malta and Gozo.

Resource Workers organised a number of whole school approaches in various in different schools in Malta and Gozo. They also organised a number of group sessions that were held at the Student Services department in Hamrun. These included;

- *Hanen It Takes Two to Talk Programme for Parents of Children with Language Delays*: This is a parent programme specifically designed for parents of children with language delays. The programme involves ways how parents can build their child's language skills naturally during everyday routines and activities. Amongst others, the programme involves information about how to recognise the child's stage and style of communication, identify what motivates the child to interact to get conversations started, adjust everyday routines to help in turn taking and keeping interactions going and following the child's lead to build confidence and encouragement to communicate. It involves six to eight training sessions in small personalised groups coupled with individual videoing sessions of parents with their children.
- *Sing Sign Tots*: This is a six week programme for parents/carers and their toddlers aged 18-36 months. It is particularly of interest to families with children who would benefit from singing and signing activities in order to encourage early communication and interaction skills as well as language stimulation. There is a focus on learning of vocabulary through a multimodal approach including keyword signs, visuals, written and spoken word.
- *Sensations*: This is a multi-sensory seven-week programme for children diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder between the ages of three and five years. This weekly programme is highly structured and targets the areas of physical, sensory, play, social and communicative development. Children who use augmentative and alternative communication are encouraged to bring their books/devices to the group in order to learn how to use them with different communicators and in different environments. Parents are given targets after each session to continue the work being carried out in the session, ensuring that this seven-week programme is a success in terms of skills, fun and teamwork.
- *Busy Babies*: This is a six-week programme for parents and their babies up to 10 months. It is particularly of interest to families of babies with Down's Syndrome, or babies who would benefit from singing and signing activities in order to encourage early communication, interaction skills and infant stimulation. There is a focus on the child's gross and fine motor skills. Furthermore, this programme focuses on the learning of vocabulary through a multimodal approach including visual signs, visuals, written and spoken word.
- *Busy Toddlers*: This is a six-week programme for parents and their toddlers aged 18-36 months. It is particularly of interest to families of toddlers with Down's Syndrome who would benefit from singing and signing activities in order to encourage communication and language stimulation. There is a focus on the child's gross and fine motor skills as well as feeding skills. This programme also focuses on the learning of vocabulary through a multimodal approach including keyword signs, visuals, written and spoken word.

Home Tuition Service

This service provides the student with a continuous education and aims to minimise the effects of absence from school. It also helps the student to reintegrate back in school at the appropriate time. During scholastic year 2010/2011, home tuition was given to a total of 15 students in different localities in Malta and Gozo.

Access to Communication and Technology Unit (ACTU)

This unit provides the necessary support to enable students with learning disabilities to access the curriculum and learning through the use of assistive technology. It is also committed to providing the appropriate training on assistive technology to persons supporting these students. During 2011, the unit

assessed and supported 250 students with different levels of difficulties, and gave around 800 hours of training/consultations to various agencies/schools/other parties.

Autism Spectrum Support Team

The autism spectrum support service recognises that each student is an individual and seeks to maximise the student's potential. It aims to empower educators and parents to meet the individual educational needs of the child with autism, facilitating learning, supporting behavioural and social development and maximising on students abilities in mainstream and resource environment.

From the beginning of scholastic year (2010-2011) the Autism Spectrum Support Team observed 140 students. When a school refers a student, the team offers whole school support which includes support to the teacher/s and LSA/s, to the senior management team and parents, as well as involvement in Individual Educational Plans.

Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) Specialists

When referrals are received from schools/parents for consultation of pupils who are encountering social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, SEBD Specialists work collaboratively with other professionals within the department, other outside agencies and also with the parents/carers of the child. The referred pupils are observed in the class so as to give hands on practical measures to the school staff on what positive strategies can be implemented within the class/school environment. School staff is assisted in developing and implementing a Behaviour Modification Programme for pupils with SEBD where the problem behaviour is recorded through observations of school staff and SEBD Specialists and an intervention plan is created to address the problem behaviour. The service of training schools on Emotional Literacy and Positive Behaviour Management of pupils with SEBD is also provided during professional development sessions and INSET courses. SEBD Specialists also offer the service of doing one-to-one sessions with pupils with SEBD. These sessions include sessions in emotional literacy or anger management. Such sessions continue to take place during summer.

During August and September, there was also a summer programme developed by the SEBD specialist and counsellors, intended for teenagers in Form 3 and Form 4 and aimed at helping pupils develop a mastery of skills to enhance self expression, better communication skills, more awareness on the consequences of behaviour, decision-making skills, appreciation of own qualities and enhanced self awareness and self esteem.

A total of 200 students benefitted from the service of SEBD specialists (119 during scholastic year 2010/11; 81 in Sep/Dec 2011).

Resource Centres

The Special Education Section is responsible for the running of four Educational Resource Centres (formally known as Special Schools) in Malta, namely:

- San Ġorg Preca College, Guardian Angel Secondary Education Resource Centre, Hamrun
- Santa Clara College, San Miguel, Primary Education Resource Centre, Pembroke
- San Benedittu College, Helen Keller, Secondary/Young Adult Education Resource Centre
- Maria Regina College, Dun Manwel Attard, Young Adult Education Resource Centre.

The beginning of scholastic year 2010/2011 saw the implementation of the Reform for Special Schools, when these schools opened their doors as Resource Centres. Guardian Angel Secondary Education Resource Centre, Hamrun, and Helen Keller, Secondary/Young Adult Education Resource Centre started to offer their services to students with individual needs from mainstream schools. San Miguel, Primary Education Resource Centre has been offering such service for a number of years.

From September 2010, the Young Adult Education Resource Centre opened its doors to students beyond the compulsory school age of 16 up to 22 years of age. The programme in this centre is designed to continue to give the students personal development skill while also giving them employability skills through various in house and community based activities and experiences.

Learning Support Centres

The learning support centres offer support to students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who due to personal factors are encountering difficulties in coping within mainstream school.

- *Marsa Learning Support Centre:* Boxall profile assessments, literacy and numeracy assessments, communication assessments, self esteem assessments and the SDQ assessments are carried out upon the entry of the students at the centre in order to be able to identify clearly the individual needs of each student, and plan accordingly an individual learning programme for every student. Several programmes are carried out at the centre, which address issues such as behaviour management, bullying, self-esteem, anger management, social skills and life skills. Outreach services include supporting and training mainstream staff and peer preparation programmes. During scholastic year 2010/2011, four students were successfully reintegrated into their primary schools. This successful reintegration was outlined by the results obtained by the readiness reintegration scale assessment and the positive feedback given by the mainstream staff in primary schools.
- *Naxxar Learning Support Centre:* During 2011, the Naxxar LSC opened its doors to welcome secondary aged girls who were experiencing social emotional behavioural difficulties. Once a referral is received the necessary preliminary work to assess these students is carried out, which involves initial meetings with the SMT and SEBD specialist to assess the nature of the problem and also to check how the student was first supported in the mainstream, carrying out classroom observations recorded by the LSA of the LSC to assess and record the student's behaviour in the classroom, and a meeting with the SMT together with the parents or guardians in order to gain their consent and also devise an IBP for the student. During scholastic year 2010/2011, seven of the fourteen students referred started attending the Naxxar LSC. The other seven students received support within their mainstream schools.

With the help of Heritage Malta, a citizenship education programme was organised where students had the opportunity to visit various historical sites with hands-on experience.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

During the year, the total number of personnel (Learning Support Assistants/Supply LSAs) employed to support students with special needs rose to 2,082 (state, church and independent), supporting 3,231 identified learners. Various initiatives taken by the department to support inclusions in schools included the training of another 121 SLSAs (10-week course); 106 SLSAs who obtained the Certificate in Education for Learning Support Assistants which will enable them to apply for the post of LSA 1, and 69 SLSAs who are currently undergoing training. School support visits are held on a regular basis.

In order to facilitate the transition from primary to secondary school, transition exercise for students with special needs were held. These were conducted by the Inclusion Coordinators (INCOs). Primary and secondary school personnel were also involved in the process. In all, 156 sessions were held between April and July within the ten colleges.

During 2011, the Service Manager responsible for Inclusive Education conducted various mentoring and monitoring visits to different schools. During these visits, support and advice is given to SMT, teachers and LSAs supporting learners with Individual Educational Needs. The Service Manager held ten meetings with the Council of Heads of the ten colleges in order to promote and support inclusive issues. This led to various schools asking for PD sessions.

Parental meetings were held in ten colleges for parents whose children were identified with diverse needs and had a 'statement of needs' issued by the Statementing Moderating Panel. The aim of these meetings is

to support the families and discuss the various issues that arise concerning their children. The meetings also update the families with changes, within the Directorates, that concern them. These meetings were held by the Service Manager during the last term of the scholastic year.

INCOs (Inclusion Coordinators)

Presently ten INCOs are working in the primary sector in the colleges. Thirteen Trainee INCOs support all the secondary schools in Malta and Gozo. These teachers are in their third year of studies following a Med. Course in Inclusion which is co-financed by the ESF Project 3.49 – Training of Inclusion Coordinators in Secondary Schools.

Learning Zones and Nurture Groups (LSZ/NG)

During the past scholastic year, more LSZ and NG opened in primary and secondary schools. These zones are within the schools and managed by SEBD specialist teachers with the support of an LSA. The principal aim behind the zones is to support learners with social and emotional behavioural difficulties. At the beginning of the scholastic year 2011-2012, Learning Zones went up to 19, while 13 Nurture Groups were opened in the primary Sector. Common Guidelines developed are adhered to and monthly meetings are held with the Service Manager. In October an induction course was offered to the staff identified to work in the zones.

During scholastic year 2010/2011, 210 learners were supported within the Nurture Groups and 420 learners were supported within the Learning Zones.

Training Opportunities

The Student Services department also offered training regarding Inclusive Settings to senior management teams (SMT) in state, church and independent schools. This training was offered during the months of October to December - 53 participants attended this course.

Unaccompanied minors

A peripatetic teacher was identified to support unaccompanied minors and their inclusion into mainstream schools. The duties of this teacher were to plan and implement a transition programme to support students for entry into mainstream schools, plan the academic work for each student according to his/her individual needs and year group, liaise with coordinator/managers of the residential home, keep updated records of the work done with the students. Six minors were successfully included during scholastic year 2010/2011 while four other students were supported at post secondary level.

Youth Workers

The DES has the support of three Youth Workers who are working in the secondary schools of three colleges. The Youth Workers support learners who attend programmes in the Learning Support Zones. Besides supporting such students, the Youth Workers also organise Youth Clubs and other related activities after school hours, bringing to the forefront the various talents of the learners. Youth activities are also carried out during the summer recess.

Professional Development

The Student Services department is committed to providing training opportunity to all staff. This also includes staff in mainstream and resource centres. The Department organised various training and informative sessions during 2011. These included a course on Inclusion and Support Services aimed for Heads/Assistant Heads of state, church and independent schools and courses for Supply Learning Support

Assistants in Supporting Students with Individual Educational Needs. A number of INSET courses were also organised.

Statementing Moderating Panel

During 2011, the Statementing Moderating Panel interviewed 587 referred students. The role of the Inclusion and Special Education Specialist in this regard includes assisting and consulting the Panel to ensure that the educational, psychological, behavioural, communication, social and physical needs of the student are being met through support and resources already available in or to the school and with the provision of other support as the case may be.

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES SECTION

The Projects and Initiatives Section is responsible for student exchanges, school competitions (both local and foreign), setting up exhibitions of students' works, liaising with various government departments and NGOs, coordinating international relations, as well as HELP, school councils, EU School Milk Scheme, EU School Fruit Scheme, Schools Library Service and Skolasajf.

Student Exchanges

Student exchanges are organised for students in primary, secondary and even post-secondary education. These exchanges are either on a home-stay basis, where the students live in a Maltese home, or on a hostel basis, where the visiting students live at the Marsaxlokk Hostel for the duration of their stay in Malta. During 2011, Maltese students visited Belgium, Holland and the United Kingdom. A group of students from the Guardian Angel Resource Centre, together with their teachers, had a wonderful experience in the UK. During their stay abroad the students had the opportunity to live independently for one week enjoying themselves from a break away from their usual routine. This exchange was so successful that a similar exchange is planned for 2012. Students from Holland, France, Germany and the UK visited Malta.

Competitions

- *Carnival Painting and Craft Competition*: This competition is organised annually to promote Maltese cultural activities. Students were invited to participate by creating a mask, painting, collage or a miniature float. Entries were exhibited at the Education Directorates foyer. Due to the large numbers of submitted entries, only the best ten entries from each school were accepted. Primary and secondary schools, as well as the secondary education resource centres, took part in this competition bringing the total to 32 participating schools.
- *Christmas Crib Competition*: This is another annual activity open for primary, secondary, post secondary schools and secondary education resource centres. A new category was introduced this year to include *Grotta* cribs bringing the total to three different categories – The Traditional Maltese Christmas Crib, The Modern Christmas Crib and *Grotta*. A number of cribs were donated and sold. The proceeds from this sale were forwarded to the Malta Community Chest Fund. The number of cribs participating in this year's Crib Competition increased to a total of 548 cribs from 29 schools. The Acting President, HE Mr Anton Tabone and guests, who attended the Christmas Mass organised for school children at St John's Co-Cathedral, were shown around the crib exhibition held at the Cathedral.
- *Great Siege Events Museum school excursion/competition*: The Projects & Initiatives Section, in collaboration with the Great Siege Museum, for the second year running organised a story-writing and drawing competition for students aged 8 to 16 years. Schools were invited to organise excursions to the Museum and to participate in the competition on the theme 'Walk through the Great Siege of Malta'. Students were asked to express themselves about what impressed them most while visiting the museum. 117 students participated in this competition.
- *European Prize Competition – Toscana Felix*: The Tuscan Regional Council organised an international competition for European countries. The aim of this competition was to highlight the importance of

maintaining Tuscany's rich heritage as well as to promote awareness of its preservation for future generations. This competition was only open to 13 year-old students.

- *40th International Letter-writing Competition for young people*: The Universal Postal Union, through MaltaPost, and in collaboration with this Section organised a letter-writing competition to coincide with the International Year of Forests on the theme 'Imagine you are a tree living in a forest'. The aim of the competition was to increase public awareness of the key role of forests and sustainable forest management, to promote literacy and also promote links with the postal service. 87 letters were submitted from seven schools. Following this competition, MaltaPost sent to the International Bureau the winning letter to participate at international level.
- *Postage Stamp Design Competition*: Maltapost organised a stamp design competition with the theme 'Forests'. This competition was open to students in the secondary sector. The artwork had to feature characteristics of the Maltese environment. The two winning designs were featured on the 2011 EUROPA stamp issue.
- *Slogan Competition*: The Consumer and Competition Department worked with this section to organise a slogan competition to mark World Consumer Rights Day. This competition targeted students attending secondary schools. Students had to submit an original slogan illustrating the theme 'Strengthening trust between consumers and traders'. 122 were received.
- *World Water Day – Poster Competition*: To mark World Water Day, the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, in collaboration with Nature Trust and this section, organised a poster competition to raise awareness among students about the importance of water, its conservation as well as to sustain and use it responsibly. 51 posters from 17 schools participated in this competition.
- *EiiR Children's Art Competition*: An international art competition to celebrate the 85th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II was organised by Look and Learn Ltd. Children up to 18 years of age could participate in this competition. Children were invited to paint the Queen's portrait and the winning portrait was later presented to HM the Queen.
- *Europe Day Competition*: The European Commission Representation and the European Parliament Office in Malta invited Form 3 and Form 4 students to participate in a short essay competition to mark Europe Day. Students were invited to form a team of five members and submit an essay and a related question that they wished to ask the local MPs and MEPs. The six winning teams were then invited to take part in a Parliamentary Debate between secondary school students and serving Members of the Maltese Parliament and Members of the European Parliament. A day of activities for schoolchildren was also organised at St George's Square to mark Europe Day.
- *Food 4U – Your Food, Your Body, Your Video*: The 7th edition of the Food 4U European Awareness Campaign on the importance of a healthy and correct diet was organised for the 27 EU countries and Norway. Participants aged between 14 and 19 years were asked to produce a short video to draw the attention of young people to the importance of being aware of making the right food choices and diet.
- *Me and My Net Competition*: The Royal Commonwealth Society invited students between the age of 11 and 18 years from the Commonwealth nations to participate in this competition aimed to raise awareness of the importance of using mosquito nets. Participants were asked to use any medium such as video, photography, a drawing, an essay or a campaign slogan to demonstrate the importance of using mosquito nets to reduce the risk of malaria.
- *Dogs Trust Photo Competition and Animal Awareness Week*: Dogs Trust and SPCA Malta in collaboration with the Projects & Initiatives Section organised a Dog Photo Competition to promote a greater love for dogs. This competition was open to students in Years 4, 5 and 6 as well as those in Forms 1, 2 and 3. Twenty students from six schools participated in this competition.
- *The Valletta Living History Drawing Competition*: This drawing competition was organised for students between the ages of 6 and 12. They were asked to draw their interpretation of a Knight of St John using their photo as the face of the knight. 996 drawings were submitted for this competition.

Other Activities

Annual Christmas Mass

This section is in charge of organising the Christmas Mass for school children at St John's Co-Cathedral. HE Archbishop Cremona celebrated Mass, while the event was presided over by the Acting President Mr Anton Tabone who also visited the Christmas Crib exhibition organised in the vestry at the Cathedral. The children's Christmas Mass launches the Miled Flimkien Campaign for the Malta Community Chest Fund.

Piggy Bank Campaign

This section liaised with the President's office and schools so as to organise and facilitate matters during Mrs Abela's visits to schools. State, church and independent schools were visited in connection with the distribution of piggy banks as part of the fund-raising activities for the Malta Community Chest Fund.

Crocus Project

Once again, Malta participated in this annual project organised through the Malta UNESCO Youth Association. It is a tangible way that introduces young people to the subject of the Holocaust and raises awareness about the dangers of racism, discrimination, prejudice and bigotry. Students aged 11 years and upwards from all over the world are annually given yellow crocus bulbs to plant in autumn, in memory of Jewish children and thousands of other children who died during the Holocaust. In 2011, 21 schools participated in this initiative.

Turu t-Turist Campaign

The Tourism and Sustainable Development Unit within the OPM, in collaboration with this section, this year organised yet again the *Apprezza* project entitled *Niltaqgħu ma' Turu t-Turist* – a project that promotes tourism among school children with *Turu*, the Octopus as the mascot. Hands-on interactive sessions were held in various schools for Year 3 students. Participating students were also given a copy of the book *L-Avventuri ta' Turu*.

UNESCO Kizuna Campaign

Students and teachers were encouraged, through a letter circular sent to all schools, to show their solidarity with the surviving children of the earthquake and tsunami disasters that hit Japan in March 2011 by taking part in the UNESCO *Kizuna* campaign. This involved students sending a number of postcards to the children of the affected areas in Japan. 967 students from 18 schools wrote a message of hope or drew a picture symbolising friendship on a postcard and these cards were later sent to the affected areas with the assistance of UNESCO Malta.

Humanity for Life

A Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Exhibition: This section, in collaboration with the Development Unit within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coordinated school visits for students in Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 to attend a Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid exhibition, entitled 'Humanity for Life'. The exhibition aimed to raise awareness on Malta's role in development cooperation and humanitarian aid as well as Malta's commitments towards the developing world and humanitarian crisis-stricken countries.

European Day of Languages

The Esperanto Youth Movement constantly strives to raise public awareness that language diversity is an important issue in a fast globalising world. To this end, and so as to set a new record, they asked various countries to prepare a short music video in the native language. The video used the different languages for the subtitles of the music video. This project provided a great opportunity for minority languages to present themselves to a broad and diverse audience. The Projects and Initiatives Section was responsible for providing the translation of the lyrics of the music video into the Maltese language.

Children's Arts Festival

The section coordinated school visits and transport for the Children's Arts Festival which was organised to promote a love among schoolchildren for the performing arts. A week-long of a wide variety of performances were held in various cultural and historical venues around Valletta. All the activities were free of charge and all the performances were targeted for state, church and independent kindergarten, primary and secondary schools as well as Education Resource Centres in Malta and Gozo.

Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector

The section coordinated the school visits for a national event organised by MCVS entitled European Tour to celebrate the European Year of Volunteering. For this event, 20 schools from the primary and secondary sector were invited to visit the exhibition stands and to participate in discussions manned by voluntary organisations. Each of the five days was dedicated to a particular theme namely: environment, animal welfare, arts and culture, sports, youth, financial impact, humanitarian and health. The students were also shown a video about Tomi and Rosi, two cartoon characters that were used to promote voluntary work among the younger generation.

HELP

This section was also represented on the HELP committee, attending various meetings in connection with Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan in schools. The Projects and Initiatives Section also issued a circular to schools inviting them to participate in a new initiative namely, The Healthy Lifestyle Award, which will be awarded to those schools that demonstrate outstanding efforts to promote a healthy lifestyle at school, at home and in the community at large.

School Councils

The School Council Elections were held in January 2011. Most schools did not hold an election since they had the exact number of contestants and hence the Council was automatically formed by the nominated three parents and three teachers. There were 105 councils in mainstream schools (68 in primary, 31 in secondary, four in Education Resource centres and two post-secondary schools). The School Councils' Section dealt with enquires and information regarding school councils. A new database, to include the new Council Members, was created. Other work included collecting, checking and keeping data of: annual administrative and financial reports; monthly council meetings agenda and minutes. Twenty new School Council Presidents were appointed to fill in the vacant posts or replace members who could no longer give their service as School Presidents for various reasons.

EU School Milk Scheme

In 2011, the section was once again involved with the EU Milk Subsidy Scheme. 45 primary state schools, four education resource centres and one childcare centre benefited from this scheme. A total refund of €8,350.54, covering subsidy refund for the period October to December 2010, was passed on to the participating schools during the first weeks of 2011. €15,798.65, covering the subsidy refund for January to June 2011, was sent to the participating schools also in 2011.

Although the Paying Agency for this scheme is the MRRA, the Projects and Initiatives Section is responsible for processing claims filed by schools and generally providing them with support .

EU School Fruit Scheme

During the scholastic year 2010/2011, 138 out of a possible 140 primary state and non-state schools participated in the scheme. A portion of fresh fruit or vegetable was given to every student once a week with a total of 31,155 students and more than 2,500 teachers/KGs/LSAs benefitting from the scheme during the scholastic year. In the current scholastic year, 138 out of a possible 139 schools are participating. A total of 30,542 students and more than 2,500 teachers/KGs/LSAs are enjoying a 75g portion of fruit or vegetable every week. A number of accompanying measures were introduced to promote the scheme. These measures consisted of farm visits, class poster competitions, kitchen gardens, and so on were also covered by all the schools during scholastic year 2010/2011 with 27,038 students participating. The scheme is proving to be very positive. The overall goal is to increase consumption of fruit and vegetables amongst children. Results from an independent research have shown that a majority of parents think that as a result of the School Fruit Scheme, children are learning about and consuming more and fruit and vegetables.

Radio Programme

This section was also involved in coordinating a weekly radio programme, *Familja Wahda* on Radju Malta. Different persons covering various topics about education were invited to provide their input.

Education 22

Between January and August 2011, a representative of this section worked at E22 and produced and presented two weekly TV programmes and also assisted in the production of another daily programme. One programme *Edutainment* promoted good practices in schools whereas the second programme, *Hekk Aħjar* promoted healthy lifestyles and covered general nutritional information, a weekly healthy recipe and a session of healthy exercises. Both programmes proved to be popular with viewers.

Schools Library Service (SLS)

Computerisation Project: Oliver Library Management System (LMS)

This project marked its 7th year following a major upgrade to Version 5 Build 3, Master/Child System. This means that all the various schools and sites were clustered thus making it possible for them to view only their own data. A new Service Level Agreement was entered into with Softlink Europe to make the system more efficient and also more user-friendly. The software was also enhanced by the addition of a number of new features. Following a meeting, held in April, between representatives of Softlink Europe, MITA, SLS, and IMU, a server space was allocated by MITA to provide space on their server to host Oliver LMS.

Pick and Click picture catalogue

In July, the SLS initiated the task of populating the Pick and Click picture catalogue feature on the Oliver LMS. This meant that over 300 cards had to be created and the appropriate pictures to be displayed on the catalogue had to be downloaded. More than 10,000 subject headings which were already created via the cataloguing module were attached to these cards. The Pick and Click picture catalogue enables young and mixed ability students to search for books in a simplified manner.

Collection Development

The central database (the online catalogue) increased to 163,059 items, 23,926 of which were added during 2011. The whole stock of three new libraries, namely: St Paul's Missionary College Rabat; Gozo College Boys Secondary Victoria; and St Nicholas College Boys Secondary Naxxar were added to the central database during 2011. Weeding library collections was carried out in a number of schools. A total of 3,346 books were either recycled or added to the Special Collection Scheme. This collection increased by 274 fiction titles and 1,973 information books by the end of the year.

Training Manual

Before training on the Oliver LMS could commence, a detailed user manual was prepared. A training site was also setup. 40 library staff from all 17 sites, which were live in 2010, were given three days of intensive hands-on training on the upgraded system. By the third week of November, all 17 sites were able to use the circulation module.

New Sites

This year a number of new sites were added to the Oliver LMS. These were Maria Regina College Girls' Secondary Mosta, St Nicholas College Boys' Secondary Naxxar, and a licence for the new girls' school at St Ignatius College, Handaq was also acquired. This means that to date there are a total of 27 sites which are using the Oliver LMS.

Professional Development Courses

Four training manuals on how to use the Oliver LMS were created so as to assist teacher-librarians and other library staff. These manuals were handed out during the three days of intensive training sessions organised for teacher-librarians/library staff in schools and sites which are already using the system. Training on how to run a school library was also given to parents and school staff of primary schools as follows: St Clare College Primary St Julians, St Benedict College Primary Birżebbuġa; St Clare College Primary Pembroke; St Margaret College Primary Cospicua and St Thomas More College Primary B Paola. The Malta School Library Association, in cooperation with the Schools Library Service, launched a two-year evening course in November. This course is aimed for school librarians. Three new Library Assistants have joined the Schools Library Service and are currently undergoing training.

Other activities

- In February 2011, the second seminar for persons taking care of school libraries in the primary sector was organised. The seminar, which was very well attended, was held at St Clare College St Julians Primary School Hall. The participants found the talks extremely useful and said they looking forward to participating in similar events in the future.
- The World Book Day secondary school competition was modified. Instead of the usual quiz competition, the organising committee decided to prepare a crossword puzzle competition. This year, there was an increase in the number of participating schools as well as in the number of individual entries. 726 entries were received from 20 schools, an increase of 25% in the number of participating schools. A total of 123 students obtained full marks, a feat never achieved in previous years. This made it more difficult to decide on the three winning entries. The organising committee decided to draw the winners by lot and hence first place went to St Clare College Girls Secondary Pembroke. Consolation prizes were also awarded to the best entry from each school.
- The 2011 story writing competition for the primary schools centred round the theme 'theatre' and pupils were asked to submit a short story of not more than 400 words on the theme. The theme choice may have kept many pupils from participating. In fact, this year there was a marked decrease in the number of participating schools. Ten schools, five from the state and five from the non-state sector participated in this competition and 586 entries were submitted. Prizes were awarded for the best entry for Years four, five and six. The winning schools were St Monica School, Gżira; St

Francis Victoria, St Benedict College Siġġiewi Primary; Maria Regina College Mosta Primary B; Sacred Heart Junior School, St Julians. Numerous consolation prizes were also awarded.

- The Ministry sponsored 60,000 bookmarks which were distributed to every student in both state and non-state schools on the occasion of World Book Day. The Tourism and Sustainable Development Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister also participated in this year's World Book Day activity by providing 250 copies of the *Turu* books as well as the book *Il-Ġrajja tat-Teatru* by Trevor Zahra. These were distributed to the students during the activity. The film *Meta nħaraq it-teatru* was premiered during the activity and was well received by everyone. Trevor Zahra also delivered an interesting talk highlighting the background of his book. During the activity guests were entertained by a short play specially prepared for the occasion by St Clare College St Julians Primary pupils.
- Thirty library helpers from St Margaret College Girls Secondary Żejtun visited the SLS, accompanied by the teacher-librarians at their school. During the visit SLS staff explained the services offered to schools and showed the students how a library book is prepared before it arrives on the library shelf.

Lists of new books/Exhibition centre

Eight monthly booklists for primary and secondary schools respectively were sent to state schools. All the books on these lists were added to our exhibition collection. These lists were also made available online through the Oliver School Library Management System. A number of primary and secondary schools requested and were provided with lists of suitable titles for adding to their respective libraries.

Book processing for schools outside the computerisation project

The demand for this kind of work was more than this section could handle. A considerable number of books from primary and secondary schools were sent to the SLS for processing. A total of 6,915 books were received, for processing, from St Nicholas College Boys' Secondary Mtarfa; St Nicholas College Girls' Secondary Rabat; St Ignatius College Girls' Secondary Blata l-Bajda; and St Margaret College Girls' Secondary Cospicua. There were also a number of schools that sent their whole book stock for processing; these included St Clare College San Ġwann Primary B; San Ġorġ Preca College Marsa Primary; and St Clare College Boys' Secondary Gzira. Parents from St Clare College San Ġwann Primary B, under the guidance of personnel from the SLS, assisted in the processing of books from the said school.

Upgrading libraries

To take into consideration the new student cohort and at the request of FTS, detailed site plans for Maria Regina College Girls' Secondary Mosta were prepared. The tender for the purchase of library furniture for Maria Regina College Girls' Secondary Mosta was issued by FTS. A new library was set up at the newly established school (temporary premises) at Naxxar (St Nicholas College Boys' Secondary Naxxar) for which school, the SLS prepared detailed site plans whereas the FTS allocated a sum of money for the purchase of new library books. Maria Regina College Boys' Secondary Naxxar was relocated to its present site during 2011. All the books were sorted, moved to the new site and organised on the shelves. Detailed site plans were also prepared by the SLS to use the available library space for the setting up of library furniture and to install power and network points. Detailed school library site plans were also provided for the primary schools at Żebbuġ and Marsa. The Head of School from St Theresa College Boys' Secondary Birkirkara requested the assistance and guidance of the SLS for the refurbishment of their school library. A meeting was held with the Precinct Officer and the Teacher-Librarians to discuss what is required. Detailed site plans were prepared by the SLS indicating the power, telephone and network points and how to use the available new space to its maximum. A separate site plan was also prepared indicating additional new library furniture for 2012 together with furniture specifications.

DVD collection

During the year under review only 200 DVDs were added to the DVD collection for the purpose of lending to schools. A larger stock of DVDs is required before the loan service can be initiated.

Archives

The SLS is the custodian of school admission registers of schools that have closed down. There are now a total of 113 school admission registers at the SLS. In 2011, the section issued 279 school attendance certificates, 61 of which were issued in November and 77 in December. The Schools Library Service advocates that all state schools should keep their School Admission Records updated, both in STS and in a hard copy format.

Library Statistics

Statistics from 33 secondary schools were collected. The total number of books in these schools is 175,907 and the total number of students was 16,237 during the year under review. This gives a ratio of 10.8 books per student. It is pertinent to point out that more than 55% of the books in the school libraries need to be replaced and make way for newer publications. Additions to stock were made up of 3,703 books which were purchased and 4,622 books that were donated. The number of purchased periodicals fell to 48. The number of books borrowed in 2011 was 45,847, which is approximately 2.8 books per student, signifying a slight decrease from 2010. Funding of school libraries remained precarious in many schools.

Interviews

Interviews for the post of teacher-librarians in state schools for scholastic year 2011-2014 were held in March. 82 applications from Malta were received and 81 applicants were interviewed. A total of 13 applications were received from Gozo and 12 applicants were interviewed. All vacant posts were filled and a number of new teacher-librarians were appointed to replace ones who either retired who had been promoted to new posts.

SLS new site

The SLS continued to enjoy a peaceful co-existence with the surrounding school with both sides supporting each other in various ventures. Preparations are under way for the extension of the current premises. It is envisaged that the four classrooms and the adjoining sanitary facilities found on the same floor housing the SLS will be transferred for use by the SLS to provide more work and storage space.

Skolasajf

Launching of Skolasajf 2011

Skolasajf 2011 was officially launched by the Director, Student Services at the Żejtun Day Care Centre on 25 May 2011. The main theme chosen for Skolasajf 2011 was 'Volunteering – Giving our Share'. Skolasajf catered for primary school pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. A promotional brochure was distributed to all primary schools to inform parents about the Skolasajf programme. Some 3,786 pupils participated in the Skolasajf programme at 62 centres in Malta and Gozo. The centres in Bahrija, Sliema, St Julians, and Hamrun Secondary School did not open due to the very small number of pupils who wished to enrol. Interested pupils were offered the opportunity to enrol at nearby centres. St Margaret College, in conjunction with the Skolasajf office, organised a special programme for the Cottonera students. This year there was a record increase of 17% in the number of pupils who enrolled for Skolasajf.

The children attending the Resource Centres were offered the opportunity to attend and participate in the programme – Special Centres were opened at Wardija, Guardian Angel, San Miguel and Helen Keller in Malta and at the Sannat Resource Centre in Gozo. 13 Project Coordinators, five Coordinating Mentors, 124 Centre Coordinators, 80 Learning Support Assistants, 234 university students and 28 MCAST students were deployed throughout the whole Skolasajf 2011 programme.

Seminars

A separate seminar was held for the first and second session Centre Coordinators and Project Coordinators at the National Curriculum Centre, Ħamrun. The aim of these meetings was to provide the Coordinators with the opportunity to learn about the Skolasajf 2011 activities and programmes. These workshops proved to be well attended and very fruitful.

Klabbsajf

The *Klabbsajf* programme catered for Year 2 and Year 3 pupils who, during the scholastic year 2010/11, were receiving complementary education. 12 centres in Malta and four centres in Gozo were opened to cater for some 284 pupils who enrolled for *Klabbsajf*. Educational materials for this programme were sponsored by HSBC.

Special Programmes

Special programmes were conducted by various entities, namely: the European Commission Representation in Malta, Sedqa, Caritas, Heritage Malta, Heritage Malta (Gozo), Campus FM, the Malta DanceSport Association, WasteServ Malta Ltd, the Tourism and Sustainable Development Unit, the Institute of Tourism Studies, the Peace Laboratory, MRRA, the Oral Health Education Programme, San Anton Palace/Verdala Palace, the Malta Tourism Authority – MTA Blue Flag, the Malta Ten-Pin Bowling Association, SPCA DogsTrust, MEPA – Biodiversity and St Vincent De Paule.

New Initiatives

Skolasajf 2011 saw the introduction of several new initiatives:

- Valletta 2018 Candidate City – European Capital of Culture
- Heritage Malta
- Ten-Pin Bowling
- The Catch the Drop Campaign
- Visits to the President’s Kitchen Garden
- Biodiversity
- MCVS Children’s Art Competition
- National Children’s Policy
- Voluntary Work at St Vincent De Paule
- Questionnaire for pupils enrolled for the Skolasajf Programme 2011

Competitions

- *Weetabix Painting/Drawing Competition*: The theme for 2011 was ‘Reaching out and helping others’. Some 701 entries reached the Skolasajf Office. The 27 winning entries were each given a book voucher. The three overall winners and the respective centres where they were enrolled were also awarded book vouchers. The winners were rewarded during special ceremonies held in both Malta and Gozo. Pupils were accompanied by their respective parents. The book vouchers were sponsored by Paolo Bonnici Ltd, agents in Malta for Weetabix.
- *3D Model/Photographic/Drawing Competition*: The European Commission Representation in Malta and the Skolasajf team launched the 3D Model/Photographic/Drawing Competition at all Skolasajf centres. The organisers were very satisfied with the number of entries and the high level of models, photos and drawings submitted. A prize-giving ceremony was held at Dar l-Ewropa on 30 August.
- *John XXIII Peace Lab Competition*: Two competitions were organised – drawings and/or prose writing – on the theme: ‘St Francis and Nature’ and ‘Giving our Share like St Francis’. The prize-giving ceremony was held on 25 October at the Education Directorates.
- *Arts Competition and Exhibition*: The Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector organised the first edition of the MCVS Children Arts Competition and Exhibition on the occasion of the European Year dedicated to

Volunteers. The chosen themes included: Local Volunteering, Youth and Volunteering, the Elderly and Volunteering and Volunteering in the context of European Citizenship.

- *Draft National Children's Policy – Painting/Drawing Submissions*: This exhibition was organised by the Ministry. The policy was aimed at presenting pertinent topics such as active participation, protection, inclusion, rights and obligations, creativity, wellbeing and socialisation. The competition included drawings/collages aimed at parents, guardians and more importantly, the children themselves. A good number of entries were submitted.
- *Centre-Based and Pupils' Portfolios*: Skolasajf centres and their respective pupils were encouraged to submit portfolios related to the experiences encountered during Skolasajf 2011. Entries were presented during the final week of Skolasajf and the works submitted at the office were of a very good standard indeed. The prize-winning ceremony was held at the National Curriculum Centre on 7 September.
- *Collection in aid of the Community Chest Fund*: The sum of €3641.12 was raised in aid of the Community Chest Fund. Such funds were collected during the centre-based talent shows and from the voluntary door-to-door collections performed by pupils who participated in the Skolasajf programme. The sum of money collected was presented to HE the President of Malta, Dr George Abela on 7 November.
- *The Weetabix Educational Quiz*: Skolasajf in conjunction with Paolo Bonnici Ltd held a quiz which covered different educational aspects. This quiz turned out to be a very successful initiative. Each participating team was made up of two boys and two girls. All except one Skolasajf centres in Malta and Gozo participated in the quiz. The pupils were very prepared thanks to their commitment and the help of the Centre Coordinator and the university students. Learning, enjoyment and fun were the main aims of this quiz. 'Arriva', 'Kids' Movies', 'Word Construction' and 'Basic First Aid' were the innovative sections featured in this year's Weetabix educational quiz. All the pupils participating in this quiz were given a polo-shirt and a cap and all those participating in the quiz final were given a medal whilst the centres reaching the final were each awarded a commemorative plate.
- *The Weetabix Fun Games Festivals*: All Skolasajf centres participated in the 2011 Fun Games Festivals. In some cases small centres teamed up and made a joint effort to take part in the Weetabix Fun Games Festivals. The seven preliminary festivals were held in different Skolasajf centres. These were Hamrun GP, Żurriq, Paola and Birkirkara. The two semi-finals of the Fun Games were held at St Vincent De Paule. The final was held at the Cottonera Sports Complex, Cospicua. All centres reaching the final stage of the Fun Games were awarded a commemorative plate whilst all the finalists were each given a medal. All participants were given a T-shirt sponsored by Sedqa.
- *DanceSport Performance/Presentation*: The DanceSport sessions conducted by the Malta DanceSport Association were held, on a twice weekly basis, at six Skolasajf centres. The programme ended with a DanceSport Performance/Presentation which took the form of an Inter-School Team Match Latin American Dancing. All the six centres participated in this activity which was held on 24 August at St Therese College Boys' Secondary School Birkirkara. The winners were the Lija Skolasajf Centre. All participating finalists were presented with medals and certificates of participation.
- *The Apprezza Presentation*: Ten Skolasajf Centres – eight from Malta and two from Gozo – participated in this project. The Apprezza Project is a project which aims to create an awareness regarding the need of good habits in dealings with tourists who visit our islands. The project was conducted in collaboration with the Tourism and Sustainable Development Unit and the Malta Tourism Authority. Each centre had a full programme to implement. This included the creation of a restaurant at centre level. The overall joint winners were the pupils attending the Mtarfa and Kirkop Skolasajf Centres. On 2 September, these pupils delivered a short but interesting presentation about the restaurant activity they organised at their centre during Skolasajf. The pupils were then presented with a certificate and a gift. The Apprezza Celebration was held at the Inquisitor's Palace, Vittoriosa.

Other Activities

- *St Vincent de Paul Residence Activity*: The celebration activity at St Vincent de Paule was held on 31 August 2011. Some 350 pupils from 12 Skolasajf centres attended this celebration. The Parliamentary Assistant, Dr Stephen Spiteri and Mr Robert Farrugia, Chairman of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector addressed the gathering. Then it was the turn of Skolasajf students to go round the wards and deliver their performances to the staff and inmates.

- *Open Days/Talent Shows*: The talent shows/open days were organised by the university students under the guidance of their respective centre coordinators. The pupils showed great creativity and commitment when rehearsing for these activities and on the actual day they gave a good performance. Parents and other relatives attending these talent shows/open days could see for themselves the pupils' works which were prepared during Skolasajf 2011.
- *Skolasajf Centre Presentations*: The Skolasajf Centres of Pembroke, Lija, Ghaxaq, Żejtun, Siġġiewi and Qormi Secondary were invited to present short stage performances during the launch of the Induction Course for Newly Qualified Teachers. The activity was held on 16 September at St Clare College Pembroke Primary.

GEORGE BORG

Director (Student Services)

Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education

The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education manages the curricular and quality assurance aspects of education provision in Malta and aims at providing quality education and training relevant to the needs of the education community in Malta and Gozo. It has two departments:

- Department of Curriculum Management and eLearning (CMeLD)
- Department of Quality Assurance (QAD)

The Research and Development Department (RDD) falls under the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education as well as the Directorate for Educational Services (DES).

The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education functions in collaboration with the Directorate for Educational Services and other key stakeholders responsible for compulsory education in Malta.

PROF GRACE GRIMA

Director General (Quality and Standards in Education)

Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education

Department for Curriculum Management & eLearning

The Curriculum Management and eLearning Department (CMeLD) was responsible, during the year under review for the management of the sections falling within the department with the Director coordinating the work and being responsible for the finances allocated to the department.

Five Assistant Directors worked on the following areas of responsibility: Assessment for Learning in particular training of teachers in this area, the Humanities, languages, training and professional development and Summative Examinations and Maths and Science.

During the year under review, the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department was involved in a number of initiatives. These mainly focused on the launch of the draft National Curriculum Framework which was led by the Director General of the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE), the publication of a document focusing on a Vision for Science Education from Primary to Secondary Schooling, a Form 1 Curriculum that caters for different levels of ability, an End of Primary Benchmark, the Secondary School Certificate and Profile and the introduction of new technology.

The draft ‘National Curriculum Framework 2011 – Towards a Quality Education For All’ (NCF) was published and launched for consultation by the Director General, in May 2011. The NCF recommends a developmental approach to education. It proposes the development of early childhood, primary and secondary education curricula in a seamless manner to ensure continuity. It recommends the adoption of constructivist pedagogies, the identification of learning outcomes, the adoption of student-centred learning, and the use of ICT-based technologies to support student-centred learning. Various consultation meetings were held with different stakeholders after its launch. The Director participated in many of these meetings that were led by the Director General (DQSE).

The Vision for Science Education in Malta was published as part of the documentation published with the Draft National Curriculum Framework. A working group was composed of science experts and representatives from the DQSE, the University of Malta and state, church and independent schools. Feedback on this consultation document was accepted till the end of the year under review.

During the first term of scholastic year 2011-2012, the consultation process on both the National Curriculum Framework draft document and The Vision for Science Education in Malta document focused on main stakeholders in schools: students, parents, educators, the public and society-stakeholders.

Consultation with students

In state primary and secondary schools, the consultation process was carried out by PSD teachers during one PSD lesson between 17 October and 11 November 2011. PSD teachers were provided with a number of five-minute age-appropriate videos clips that introduced the key NCF proposals in language accessible to students. These videos were used as prompts for class discussion.

Two questionnaires, one for primary-age and one for secondary-age students, were also available to be filled on paper or online. Non-state schools had the same resources available to them and were encouraged to undertake this consultation process with their students.

A National Children's Conference was held on 19 November 2011 at St Ignatius College, Siġġiewi Primary School organised in conjunction with the Directorate for Educational Services (DES). Primary and secondary school students from state, church and independent schools were the centre stage during the conference.

Consultation with parents

In state colleges two consultation meetings were held for parents, one for those in the primary sector and another meeting for those in the secondary sector – 20 meetings in all. These meetings were held between 17 October and 18 November 2011. Colleges were provided with a 20-minute video clip explaining the NCF proposals.

Guide books on the proposed NCF were produced for parents, in Maltese and English. An introductory video clip for use during the meetings was also prepared by DQSE. Non-state schools had the same resources available to them and were encouraged to undertake this consultation process with their parents.

Consultation with educators

In October/November all state and non-state colleges and schools organised a day of discussion on the NCF proposals. Colleges and non-state schools/colleges were also provided with a 20-minute introductory video clip to initiate discussion during the meeting on the NCF. An additional staff meeting was also organised in Term 1 in all State Schools.

Teachers in state and non-state schools were encouraged to fill in the NCF feedback questionnaire sent to schools on 28 June 2011 that was also available on www.meef.gov.mt. 3,692 replies and comments were analysed by the Research and Development Department within the Directorate and findings were disseminated by the Director General and NCF Chairperson during the National NCF Conference held on 2-3 December 2011.

Public consultation

A public meeting was held in Malta on 11 June 2011 in Malta, with a repeat on 24 June 2011 in Gozo. Attendance to both meetings was excellent.

Members of the National Curriculum Framework Review Committee were invited and took part on several radio and television talk shows and programmes. Phone-ins were numerous and reflected the interest generated on the subject. Interviews and newspaper articles were on-going features all throughout the consultation process.

Consultation with Society Stakeholders

The DQSE held consultation meetings with 56 society stakeholders with the aim of enabling wide-ranging and authentic discussion and debate on the proposed National Curriculum Framework. These meetings served to highlight the main recommendations of the NCF; the implications arising for the various stakeholders as envisaged by the NCF; and the role of stakeholders in the consultation process, in terms of both their personal contribution to the process and their role in bringing together the feedback and responses of the learning communities for which they are responsible

Stakeholders were also invited to actively participate in generating a national, reflective professional discussion and debate about the updated national curriculum framework proposals, so as to initiate a process of sharing critical and constructive feedback, in preparation for the final version of the updated National Curriculum Framework.

The highlights of the National Curriculum Framework consultation process were a two-day National Consultation Conference held on 2-3 December 2011 and the submission of written feedback. Participation was very active with excellent feedback response.

The implementation of the reform of the Secondary School cycle involved the removal of streaming as a means of grouping students. School curricula were redesigned at Form 1 level to ensure that differentiated teaching would take place in classrooms with learners working at their own levels. This embodies the principles found in the new draft National Curriculum Framework. The Director CMeLD took an active role in leading the development of this tool that is meant to ensure that all students are adequately catered for irrespective of their level of ability.

The Curriculum and eLearning Department focused on the development and implementation of a pedagogical framework for the curriculum for state schools in Malta and worked on the planning, coordinating, managing, preparation, delivery, liaison, and training of Education Officers, Heads of Department and teachers, including those in special schools for the writing and production of the Form 1 curriculum used by schools as from September 2011 under the direction of the Director, Curriculum Management and eLearning. The work involved Education Officers and other staff in developing the pedagogical framework, identifying strands of learning for each subject, writing a teaching objectives framework for each of the 23 subjects taught in secondary schools, writing attainment level descriptors, writing a unitised scheme of work with mainstream objectives (levels 5-8), writing a unitised scheme of work with mainstream related inclusive objectives (levels 1-4), writing hyperlinked lesson plans in the style of student centred learning, trialling the units in schools, the production of a handbook for all the subjects on CD, and the production of all the units of work for all the subjects on CD.

The approach taken with the Education Officers and other staff was based on the notion of progressive focussing. Key concepts were explored through lectures and seminars and the participants worked in groups to produce materials that related to the agreed pedagogical framework.

From September to December 2011, Education Officers visited schools and supported teachers in the development of the Form 1 curriculum. Feedback was obtained from schools and it was decided that the school year would be considered as consisting of 27 teaching/learning weeks to better reflect the school year and provide schools with some degree of flexibility.

The Primary Benchmark was introduced last year with students from the state sector and the majority of non-state primary schools sitting this examination. A hallmark of this Primary Benchmark involved the testing of aural and oral skills apart from the testing of reading and writing in Maltese and English as well as the introduction of a mental paper in mathematics in addition to the written component. While the work connected with the preparation of the examination papers, their printing and the organisation of the Benchmark was the responsibility of the Educational Assessment Unit, the Director General (DQSE) and the Director CmeL were actively involved in the planning and preparation of this benchmark.

Meetings were held in all colleges, as well in church and independent schools, in order to explain the rationale behind the benchmark and to present the proposed examination. A meeting was also held with the Faculty of Education.

The following is a breakdown of consultation meetings held on the subject:

- 10 afternoon meetings (17-28 January) with teachers, SMTs and Principals in the respective colleges;
- 10 evening meetings (17-28 January) with parents in the 10 respective colleges;
- a public meeting (29 January) at the Catholic Institute Floriana;
- an evening parents' and teachers' meeting for independent schools (31 January) at St Martin's College, Swieqi;
- an evening parents' and teachers' meeting (1 February) for church schools at the National Curriculum Centre, Hamrun;

- a consultation meeting with heads of school and teachers was held on Monday 21 November 2011 at San Ġwann Primary B between 1,230 and 1,400 with primary school teachers from state, church and independent schools. A similar meeting was held on 25 November in Gozo;
- television/radio interviews and newspaper articles - various.

The Secondary School Certificate and Profile (SSC&P), a certificate at Level 1 within the European Qualifications Framework, is another initiative being taken by the Department for Curriculum Management and eLearning. Spearheaded by the Director General (DQSE), its philosophy is to accredit all learning that happens in the life of a student during the years of secondary education both within and outside school. It validates and documents all learning in order to give a holistic picture of the individual student and shows the development taking place over the years. It incorporates the following factors: attendance, formal education, personal qualities, non-formal education and informal learning. Each of these areas is allotted a particular percentage of marks. Meetings were held in all colleges as well in church and independent schools in order to explain the rationale behind the SSC&P.

The following is a synthesis of meetings held on the subject throughout 2011:

- meeting with and presentation re SSC&P to MUT
- presentation re SSC&P to assistant heads of schools (secondary)
- participation in all College Council of Heads re SSC&P
- training of school clerks re SSC&P at SIS, Blata l-Bajda
- PD sessions carried out as requested at secondary schools: Gzira BSS, Żebbuġ BSS, Mosta
- GSS, Gozo College GSS, Gozo College BSS
- SSC&P presentation to heads of schools (Church schools) at the Curia
- meeting with representatives of parish priests re SSC&P at Curia
- informative meetings with requesting heads of independent schools
- six Working group meetings to review the SSC&P
- television/radio interviews and newspaper articles – various.

Initiatives developing from Malta's National ICT Strategy were carried out in the year under review. The improvement of infrastructure, the acquisition of skills and the expansion of ICT content were three areas that were tackled. A tender for the purchase of over 1,800 interactive whiteboards was issued through ERDF funding. Boards started to be fixed in state kindergartens, primary and secondary schools and training to educators through ESF funds amounting to €45,675 has nearly reached completion. Preparatory work was carried out concerning the implementation of an eLearning Solution consisting of a Management Information System and an eLearning Platform provided by Fronter. This project materialised as a result of a successful application for ERDF funds. €399,519 were allocated for training on the Management Information System and on the training on the eLearning Platform for staff in primary and secondary schools. In addition, Local Area Networks and Wide Area Networks are being improved to enable the new technologies to function effectively. The outcomes that are expected to be achieved through this investment are that all learners will develop and use independent learning skills that will support them in lifelong learning and in employment; pedagogical use of technology will facilitate differentiated teaching and support and encourage sharing and collaboration as well as encourage creativity.

The Director, Curriculum Management and eLearning served as a representative of the Education Directorate on the Matsec Board and the Assistant Director Summative Examinations. He was also a member of the eSkills Alliance and a member of the Fronter Virtual Learning Environment

Training and Professional Development Branch

The Training and Professional Development Section organised in-service training, as stipulated by the Government-Malta Union of Teachers agreement, on the following dates: 7, 8 and 11 July and 16, 19 and 20 September.

Compulsory courses held in July and September focussed primarily on two issues:

- classroom strategies for enhancing oral competence (six courses: three in July and three in September). All Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 Primary Schools have now been given training in oracy strategies over the past two years;
- the development of the new syllabus for Form 1 – all subjects were involved in this exercise with Education Officers taking responsibility for the delivery of the sessions.

A total of 2,964 teachers attended the 82 different courses which were offered in both sessions. All the information relevant to these courses was published in a catalogue which was made available online for the first time this year.

During the year, 281 professional development sessions were held with a total of 11,785 staff attending these sessions. Six persons participated in events in the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, Austria, and five persons participated in events organised by the Council of Europe.

Early Years, Literacy, Inclusion and Languages Section

The Assistant Director responsible for Languages coordinated the work involved in the teaching of Languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Maltese, and Spanish) with responsibility of the Education Officers of this area. The Assistant Director is also responsible for Early Years, Literacy and Inclusion.

Humanities Section

The Humanities Section was responsible for coordinating the work involved in the teaching and learning of Social Studies, History, Personal and Social Development, Citizenship, Democracy, Human Rights Education, Media and Communication, Religion, Art, Drama, Music and Physical Education.

The Humanities Section contributed towards the management of the National Minimum Curriculum by liaising with Education Officers to ensure the development, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and by providing support to teaching and learning.

In collaboration with the Director Curriculum Management and eLearning, the Forum of Catholic Lay Associations and Movements, and the Catholic Secretariat, a National Conference for Catholic Educators ‘Teaching to Transform’ was organised.

Together with the Director Curriculum Management and eLearning and the British Council, work was carried out on the *Connecting Classrooms 2010-2013 Project* in 10 state and non-state schools to develop an appreciation of and respect for the rich and diverse cultures in a global setting, to raise awareness of the pupils’ own culture in their own setting/country and of other cultures in their own and partner countries, to identify similarities and differences between these cultures, to develop skills and attitudes to enable the students to become global citizens, and to promote the project in the wider community.

The Humanities section continued to develop, together with the Jesuit Refugee Service (Malta), the School Outreach Project in schools to combat hostility and prejudice towards refugees and asylum seekers, to foster understanding, solidarity and a culture of welcome through the organisation.

Summative Assessment, Mathematics and Science and Technology Section

All subject Education Officers carried out regular school visits throughout the year and gave the necessary advice and support to teachers and Heads of School. They also carried out, on a regular basis, evaluations and confirmation reports on the performance of individual teachers. They were all involved in the setting and drawing up of camera ready examination papers in their respective subject. They also delivered in-service training for teachers in the July and September sessions and all were appointed, either as members

or as chairpersons, on interviewing boards to recruit new teachers or on boards to select teachers for posts of special responsibility.

Student Assessment and the Educational Assessment Unit

In 2011, the Educational Assessment Unit coordinated the construction of all the annual examination papers in state schools at both primary and secondary level. It carried out the proof-reading, editing, printing, binding and distribution of these papers and was responsible for the drawing up of the timetables. 450 different examinations were held, this involved the printing of 392,569 booklets. The Unit was also in charge of the new specimen examination papers for Year 4 and Year 5 and the specimen papers based on the new curriculum for all the subjects at Form 1 level.

The Unit organised, for the first time, the End of Primary Benchmark, which replaced the Junior Lyceum Entrance Examination into Form 1. Preparations for this Benchmark included various meetings with stakeholders which included teachers and parents. Meetings were held in the ten colleges, as well as in church and independent schools. These meetings were led by the Director General DQSE and by the Director Curriculum Management and eLearning. The Benchmark was held in Maltese, English and Mathematics. Aural and oral skills were tested as opposed to merely reading and writing skills in languages. In the case of Mathematics, a mental component was included for the first time. This new examination took place at the beginning of June 2011, with a second session held later on in the same month. The Unit was responsible for the exemptions and access arrangements for the candidates who took the Benchmark examination.

The *End of Primary Benchmark June 2011 Report* (in print) was produced by the Educational Assessment Unit. This annual report included, amongst other information, detailed statistical information, a review of the examination procedure, an analysis of the examination items, a Chief Examiner's Report on each of the examination papers, as well as copies of the examination papers and marking schemes, provided for the first time on CD.

Student scripts were returned to the schools, together with detailed statistical information about the school's performance in the End of Primary Benchmark against national performance. Sample scripts, together with the corresponding markers' sheets, were kept at the Educational Assessment Unit for archiving and research purposes. Meetings were held at the Educational Assessment Unit with the Education Officers for Maltese, English and Mathematics to review a sample of these scripts in order to analyse student performance in the Benchmark.

In 2011, the Unit also organised staff development sessions on the setting of examination papers for newly appointed Education Officers and Heads of School.

In keeping with current practice, the Unit took care of the administration, maintenance and updating of www.curriculum.gov.mt, the website of the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department. The daily work on this website involved providing access to the various areas within the department. This included disseminating information about the services provided by the CMELD, the regular uploading of Primary and Secondary Syllabi, Articles, Resources, Publications, Writings and all other matters related to the CMELD. The Educational Assessment Unit also managed the generic email address of the CMELD website which involved receiving and replying to emails containing feedback and queries from students, teachers and parents.

Assessment for Learning

The following are the main activities carried out by the Assistant Director and the Education Officer for Assessment for Learning (AfL).

The SIS programme was reviewed and upgraded to be able to encompass the data needed for the Secondary School Certificate and Profile. This upgraded version is now also used to produce half yearly and annual results. Further improvements are currently being discussed.

2011 marked the start of the compilation of data for every secondary school student in Forms 1, 2 and 3 with regard to the Secondary School Certificate and Profile (SSC&P). The data required included the formal education annual results and assessments, attendance. It also included marks allocated to Informal education, Non-Formal education and Personal Qualities. Currently, all the aspects of this certificate are being reviewed.

A new section was created on the *Skola* website <http://skola.edu.mt/secondary-school-certificate-and-profile/> entitled Secondary School Certificate and Profile. An article serving as an introduction to this and a power point presentation on Personal Qualities together with information on all the aspects of the certificate were included in this section. Information includes: Frequently Asked Questions on the SSC&P, Personal Qualities, Personal Qualities - Guidelines and downloadable forms in English, and Maltese on Non- and Informal Education Courses.

The section produced articles that featured in the department's magazine *Resources*. These were: *Getting into their Picture* (January 2011), *Science Learning Communities* (May 2011), and *Learning Intentions and Success Criteria* (October 2011).

School visits were held to observe and, eventually support teachers implement AfL. A number of good practices were filmed and screened during professional development sessions. PD sessions about AfL strategies and how these can enhance learning were carried out in a number of state and non-state schools. Such sessions were held with a number of peripatetic and support teachers, as well as with regard to the SSC&P with state and non-state schools.

A 15-hour course in the implementation of AfL was organised for Assistant Heads in the primary sector between 11 and 25 November 2011. Another eight-hour course in the implementation of AfL was organised for Heads of Department in the secondary sector of church schools starting 7 October, with the last session scheduled for 13 January 2012. The participants of both courses were provided with detailed presentations on the implementation of AfL. Two two-hour sessions on AfL were held with teachers who were being trained in the Basic Skills course. A four hour session was held with the Quality Assurance Department newly appointed Education Officers. AfL sessions were held for Form 1 teachers during the July 2011 In-Service Courses. Curriculum hour sessions were held in several primary schools on the basic strategies of AfL. Subject meetings were similarly held in secondary schools.

Together with staff from the Educational Assessment Unit and subject Education Officers, the AfL section carried out an exercise of studying benchmark results and comparing them to attainment levels. This will provide information for informed decisions to be taken.

A job description for Heads of Department Primary (Assessment) was developed and on 30 November, the first Heads of Department Primary Assessment were appointed. Currently, they are being trained in all the aspects of AfL and they are expected to produce prototype lessons and to be showcasing good practices among the primary schools.

A number of meetings on the Assessment of Key Competences were attended in Brussels. A policy handbook is being developed with the aim of informing policy makers on how key competences should be assessed in order to find them in every learning programme.

The Assistant Director AfL attended the 12th annual Association for Educational Assessment conference in Belfast between 9 and 12 November. The theme of this year's conference was *Assessment: an opportunity to learn*. Both the Assistant Director and the Education Officer AfL were nominated to sit on a working

group which is revising the format and implementation of the SSC&P. The Assistant Director AfL was appointed chair of this group.

Peripatetic Service

The peripatetic service encompasses the following areas: Art, Drama, Music, Personal and Social Development – Primary (for pupils in Year 4 to Year 6), Personal and Social Development – Alcohol and Drugs Prevention, Let Me Learn, Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), Physical Education and Sport, eLearning, Core Competences – Mathematics, Science, Home Economics, Design and Technology, Birdlife, Eko Skola and Eko Gozo.

The following table shows the number of teachers in each area/programme/subject as on January 2011 and October 2011.

Teachers in the Peripatetic Service in Malta and Gozo				
Area/ Programme/ Subject	January 2011		October 2011	
	<i>Malta</i>	<i>Gozo</i>	<i>Malta</i>	<i>Gozo</i>
Art ¹	19	3	21*	3
Drama	17	2	18	2
Music ²	26	3	23*	5*
PSD Peripatetic Primary ³	31*	7	29	7
PSD Alcohol and Drugs ⁴	2	Nil	3*	*
Let Me Learn ⁵	4*	Nil	5*	Nil
Specific Learning Difficulties ⁶	10	2	11*	2
Physical Education and Sport ⁷	28	3	28*	3
eLearning (Peripatetic and Support)	39	3	50	3
Core Competences – Mathematics	2	1	4	2
Science	19	2	22	2
Home Economics	10	0	11	0
Design and Technology	7	Nil	7	Nil
Birdlife	1	Nil	1	Nil
EkoSkola	5	1	5	0
EkoGozo	NA	1	NA	1

¹ one teacher on long sick leave and two supply teachers are performing peripatetic duties

² four supply teachers (Malta) are performing peripatetic duties: one teacher (Gozo) is shared with Gozo School of Music

³ one teacher on parental leave

⁴ three teachers covering Malta and Gozo

⁵ one teacher on study leave

⁶ one teacher on parental leave

⁷ one teacher is on loan with Malta Olympic Committee

Let Me Learn Unit

The Let Me Learn (LML) Unit resumed its training in The LML Professional Learning Process in January. This training was terminated by the end of June 2011; by then the LML Unit was instrumental in certifying 57 participants coming from various areas in the educational sphere as LML practitioners. At the beginning of November 2011, the LML Unit restarted the training among a new cohort made up of 56 state and non-state educators.

The LML Unit continued to focus on delivering classroom support to mentees who opt for this service in order to improve teaching and learning embedded with LML concepts and skills. This was achieved by carrying out classroom visits and one-to-one on-site meetings, combined with email contact, to ensure the sustainability of provided mentoring services.

With the addition of a representative for the Curia Secretariat to the LML team, the LML Unit was able to extend its services to Church School Senior Management Teams (SMTs) and Heads of Department

wishing to infuse the LML process within their school ethos and respective departments. The same support was provided to an increasing number of interested state and independent school SMTs.

The LML Unit offered a number of two-hour professional development sessions in various schools. These sessions aimed at either creating awareness about the LML process among teaching staffs interested in attending to the training or showing how both teachers and students can benefit from the implementation of the process within their classrooms.

The LML Unit conducted a number of whole day LML activities in various schools in order to heighten awareness of learning patterns among students and provide them with initial knowledge about how these can impact their young academic lives.

The LML Unit hosted and collaborated with its BRIDGE-IT (Be Relevant to Intercultural Diversity Generation in Europe – Integration Team) partners in designing an online platform aimed at bringing together service providers and adults-in-mobility electronically. Coverage of the different modules that make up this platform equips the platform's community with the necessary skills that enable a more effective and efficient communicative and working relationship between its members, respectful of the intercultural diversity pertaining to them. The LML Unit is currently in charge of developing a series of informative brochures that shed light on how trainers and trainees, aware of who they are as learners, use this knowledge to develop better pedagogical training programmes and collaborate more effectively with each other.

Specific Learning Difficulties Unit

The Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Unit supports dyslexic students, their teachers, parents and in some instances also Language Support Assistants.

A main thrust of the work of the SpLD team continues to be that of assessments – this year a larger number of students were referred for assessments and a total of 931 students were assessed because of different concerns and also for the purposes of examinations. A total of 110 students requested special examination arrangements at MATSEC level so this implied that lengthy assessments had to be carried out to determine whether students required a reader, extra time or spelling considerations. Though special arrangements are not allocated for the Maltese and English Benchmark Examination, it was still necessary to assess a total of 338 students in view of the possibility of a reader for the Mathematics paper. Moreover, 443 students of various ages were referred to SpLD service and the necessary assessments carried out. Of interest may be the fact that requests for assessments were also put forward by individuals who have already left school and in fact four adults were assessed in relation to employment or further studies.

Apart from assessments, the SpLD Unit supports students in schools in as much as is possible. Following assessments, meetings are set up with the parents so as to give them feedback regarding attainment levels reached and to discuss the required support strategies required at home. These are followed by meetings with the teacher and also with the student. This year focus was made very specifically on the *Form 1* students so as to support their transition from primary to secondary school. Students were invited to discuss their concerns with the SpLD teacher and these were followed up with the subject teacher. The Transition Booklet, piloted during 2010, was given to each student. This enabled both students and teachers to have a clear point of reference. Moreover, schools also requested specific training for Language Support Assistants who were supporting students with co-morbid conditions – dyslexia being one of them.

SpLD staff also contributed to the training of kindergarten staff. Two SpLD teachers were invited to contribute to the teacher training course held at MCAST and discussed and illustrated pre-literacy strategies which are of particular relevance for the dyslexic child.

Another clear focus of the SpLD service is that of contributing to the development of dyslexia-friendly schools – this implies that rather than making amendments and accommodations for only one student the accommodations are extended to the whole class. Opportunities for such discussions and illustrations were made available by schools to the SpLD staff member servicing the college during the professional development sessions or during departmental meetings or during some free time. Moreover, a Dyslexia Working Group was initiated which invited professionals to discuss and share views on dyslexia and classroom strategies.

Sessions for parents were also held throughout the year. The objective of all parental meetings is to get parents together to primarily offer them opportunities to meet others who are encountering similar difficulties and to illustrate some practical tips and strategies which could be of use in the home. For example in the first term of this academic year meetings for parents both of primary and secondary school students were held in an attempt to ensure adequate understanding of the condition.

The SpLD staff has also worked in line with the National Literacy Strategy – supporting the use of the checklists in the early identification of dyslexia and liaising with the literacy support teachers as regards the nature of appropriate intervention for children encountering difficulties in the early years. Additionally, SpLD staff also contributed to Year 4 In-Service training held both in July and September.

It is envisaged that the dissemination work which continued to develop during the year 2011 will be consolidated during the next year and teachers who have dyslexic students in their class will receive the support required so as to enhance the learning opportunities of the student with dyslexia.

Early Years

In collaboration with MCAST, the two Education Officers (EOs) responsible for this area worked on the coordination of a 210 hour course for Kindergarten Assistants with 15 to 19 years of service. Practicum placements took place between May to June 2011. Certificates were awarded to participants by the Minister of Education, Employment and the Family in December 2011.

The two EOs were involved in the design and setting up of the Extended Training Programme for MCAST students who complete the Diploma in ECEC. This entailed organisation, lecturing and visiting students during their practicum placements and meetings with MCAST.

Development and collation of data on courses attended by Kindergarten Assistants was initiated.

Professional support was given to Kindergarten Assistants during confirmation visits, (about 42 visits), as well as routine and follow-up visits. Activities in kindergarten classes were observed and strengths and areas for improvement were identified and discussed. All feedback was given in constructive ways to help improve practice.

Participation in various selection boards involved the vetting of applications and interviewing applicants for supply and regular Kindergarten Assistants II, supply teacher posts and interviews of retired Kindergarten Assistants ‘on call’. Furthermore, participation in interviewing boards also involves coordination of meetings/interviews, record keeping and the drafting up of a final report for the Public Service Commission.

Two in-service courses for Kindergarten Assistants were organised in July 2011. One was on a compulsory basis regarding Planning in the Kindergarten and the other on a voluntary basis about Outdoor Play. The courses were planned and organised in collaboration with MCAST personnel or other Education Officers.

One of the EOs together with a group of experts in the Maltese language was appointed chairperson for the selection of Maltese textbooks for Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 in primary state schools. This required extensive

meetings, discussions and an accurate analysis of the textbooks presented. A final report was drafted and presented to the Director Curriculum Management and eLearning.

In collaboration with a Head of School, one of the Education Officers was requested to evaluate the content and validity of a proposed new course for training prospective Kindergarten Assistants. This entailed extensive research and analysis of the material submitted and a comparative study of the proposed course with a local institute recognised by the Malta Qualifications Council. A report was drawn up but further research is being undertaken.

Seminars, workshops, conferences (locally and abroad), induction and training sessions were attended during 2011. These included professional development sessions on various topics such as: Validating Learning for an Inclusive Society, Assertiveness, a Learning Outcomes Approach to Implement the EQF, Think Equal, and Student Centred Learning: A Bologna Process International Conference.

Professional development sessions on: ICT in the Kindergarten Class, Literacy and Language in the Kindergarten, Phonological Awareness, and The Role of Kindergarten Assistants in Emergent Literacy were carried out.

Preparation of draft guidelines on Language Development and Pre-Writing Skills were worked on.

Inclusive and Special Education

Listed below are the activities that the Education Officer responsible for this area contributed to or was responsible for.

- Professional support in Primary and Form 1 classes – observing lessons, giving feedback, identifying teachers' strengths and areas for improvement in classroom practice, discussing teaching points and strategies, setting targets for improvement of specific areas related to teaching and learning in the context of differentiated teaching and learning and the new Form 1 curriculum. Coordination of work involving the Form 1 Curriculum was carried out.
- As the nominated expert for Malta in the project entitled *Teacher Education for Inclusion*, the EO for Inclusive and Special Education coordinated and planned a Country Study visit to Malta for the European Agency for the Development in Special Needs Education in connection with the writing of a profile of competences for teachers for inclusion. In May, there was a country study visit to London to work on a profile of competences for teacher education for inclusion. Furthermore, several seminars and training sessions were attended during 2011.
- The EO for Inclusive and Special Education was a member on the interviewing boards for internal calls of applications.
- INSET was delivered in July and September and also a number of professional development sessions were delivered in schools throughout the year. Training was delivered to teachers of PSD on responding to student diversity and to Heads of secondary schools on the new Form 1 curriculum. A workshop was delivered during the Children's conference held on 19 November 2011, as part of the consultation process of the National Curriculum Framework.

Arabic and the Arabic Language Centre

The Education Officer responsible for this area carried out the following initiatives during the year under review:

- Additional teaching resources were given to teachers; these resources are in booklet format with transcription texts in Arabic for listening comprehension exercises which are found in the Form 4 and Form 5 textbooks. This booklet which was distributed by the beginning of scholastic year 2011-2012 is of assistance to the teachers for the preparation of students for the new SEC Examination and the Annual School Examinations.

- Information was given to teachers of Arabic on various websites, online teaching links, online DVDs and online research papers or information on methodology such as differentiated teaching, student centred learning and also on the teaching of Arabic language and culture. Thus channels of communication have been kept open.
- Continuous support was given to teachers of Arabic who sought help from the Arabic Language Centre. Teachers were helped to prepare powerpoint presentations to promote the teaching of Arabic in schools. Various teaching resources and traditional Arab items/artefacts were borrowed by the teachers from the Arabic Language Centre to accompany their presentations.
- College Principals were supported in connection with orientation talks and workshops which were held in January to promote the teaching of Arabic among state school students.
- Support and assistance was given to the Arabic teaching staff of a local independent school in the teaching of Arabic. Recommendations regarding resources, textbooks, setting of examinations and mentoring were given.
- Organising and coordinating cluster groups of teachers of Arabic in connection with the setting of the half yearly examinations. Meetings were held regularly on Thursday afternoons at the Arabic Language Centre during the first term of each academic year. The purpose of this cluster group is to maintain the quality and standards of the Half Yearly Examinations for Arabic.
- The Education Officer Arabic set up the Annual Examination papers and marking schemes, proof-reading and moderation for Arabic.
- Regular routine school visits, confirmation visits and follow-up visits in state schools in Malta and Gozo were held. Through classroom observation, identification of strengths and areas for improvement in classroom practice was carried out. Feedback and support were given with emphasis on differentiation and the integration of ICT in teaching.
- Participation in various interviewing boards involved the vetting of applications and interviewing of applicants for regular, peripatetic and supply teachers.
- Various meetings with Arab Embassy officials and Ambassadors on different issues were held on a regular basis. The purpose of these visits is to consolidate and uphold the excellent relations with the Embassies and to continue to provide resources for the Centre and implement the Protocol Agreements reached. The Education Officer also initiated relations with the newly established Kuwaiti Embassy.
- Purchase and distribution of Arabic reading books for the teaching of reading for different levels were carried out. A number of books, which serve as supplementary readers, were donated by the Tunisian and Egyptian Embassies.
- Organisation of the adult Arabic evening classes in collaboration with the Directorate for Life Long Learning and Adult Education was carried out. This year, the responsible Education Officer was involved by the MQRIC to inspect the course description of MQF Level 1 and eventually in the writing and developing of the MQF Level 1 Arabic Course for Adult Learners.
- A number of seminars, conferences, workshops, meetings and professional development sessions were participated in. These included the 9th Session of the Maltese-Tunisian Joint Commission held in Malta, Curriculum Development workshops delivered by Mr Keith Humphries, and two conferences organised by the MQC on Skills Plus and the Euro Pass Mobility, both held locally.
- The Education Officer carried out interpretation tasks and translations in connection with the North African conflicts that ensued during the year in question.
- Maintenance and upkeep of the premises of the Arabic Language Resource Centre was carried out.

Italian

The highlights of the Curriculum projects of the Italian section within the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department for 2011 included the following activities:

- Examination papers (track 2 and 3) were prepared in collaboration with the Heads of Department and delivered on time at the Education Assessment Unit. Work started on a graded paper for Form 1, a sample of which was uploaded on the Educational Assessment Unit website.
- In March 2011, the Italian section continued its active participation in the European Survey on Language Competences – Survey Lang. The Education Officer and the Heads of Department scrutinised the scripts

of form 5 students from state and non-state schools. The work was carried out in collaboration with the Education Officers in charge of Research and Development.

- During the month of May a new Education Officer for Italian was appointed.
- As part of the introduction of the Form 1 syllabus, meetings were held with different groups in order to explain the underlying concepts of the new syllabus.
- The Italian section met university students who were in their final year of studies in the BEd and PGCE courses. This information session was possible with the collaboration of the Department of Arts and Languages in Education at the University of Malta.
- In July, a three-hour training session was held with the teachers of Italian in church schools on the set-up of the new Form 1 syllabus. The meeting was held at the Curia with the help of the Head of Department responsible in church schools.
- In-service training on the Form 1 syllabus was carried out during July. The workshops held were mainly focused on the set-up of a graded reading comprehension. To further support teachers in their classroom practice, all the material produced in the workshops was reviewed and uploaded on the website dedicated to *Lo Stivale*, <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/lostivale>. *Lo Stivale*, the magazine published twice a year with resources for the teaching of Italian, celebrated its 30th year of publication with the magazine being given a new look.
- To further promote the use of technologies in education, the Italian section worked to update regularly the website with useful material such as powerpoint presentations, comprehensions, videos, reading texts and other printable material. Plans to continue providing such resources are underway.
- The Italian Language Awareness project in the primary continued in the scholastic year 2011-2012 with the participation of 11 teachers. All colleges in Malta and Gozo benefit from the project with one college carrying out the language awareness in Year 5 and nine colleges in Year 6.
- The contacts between the Italian section and the Italian Cultural Institute and Embassy were maintained.

French and the French Resource Centre

The Education Officer responsible for this area carried out a number of activities during the year under review:

- Schools visits were carried out in Malta and Gozo to support and monitor teachers of French; for confirmation purposes and to participate in departmental meetings. Reports were written on school/classroom visits and regularly sent to teachers.
- Regular weekly meetings with Heads of Department of French were held. During these meetings issues in connection with the teaching and assessment of French were discussed. Other activities, like the annual *Francofête*, were discussed and planned during these meetings.
- Organising and coordinating cluster groups of teachers of French in connection with the half yearly examinations.
- Examination papers and mark schemes were prepared with the support of Heads of Department.
- Cluster groups of teachers of French in connection with the preparation and proof reading of resources for use with the new units for Form 1 were organised.
- In-service courses for teachers of French in state and non-state schools were held. Two training sessions were held: one for state school Form 1 teachers in July and another one for state, church and independent school teachers in September.
- The Education Officer responsible for this area coordinated and monitored the implementation of the awareness programme of French in primary schools. This also involved the preparation and distribution of resources to teachers who participated in this programme as well as regular visits to teachers involved in this programme during its implementation in the primary schools.
- Contacts with the French Embassy were kept through regular meetings with the *Conseiller de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle*. During these meetings, cultural and educational activities for students of French were discussed. Furthermore, another donation of €1,300 for the purchase of pedagogical material, and magazines on French Culture and Civilisation were given by the French Embassy.
- The *Francofête* was held at San Ġorġ Preca College Boys' Secondary School Hamrun. The Director CMeLD and the French Ambassador were present; the latter distributed pedagogical material to all state schools.

German and the German Resource Centre

During the year in review projects started in 2010 were reviewed and strengthened and new projects were initiated which include the following:

- Networking and e-mail support of state and non-state teachers of German continued. Teachers worked in groups to exchange and share materials. Worksheets, newsletters, personal development material with emphasis on student centred learning were constantly distributed to teachers. A catalogued list of materials and sites supplied by e-mail throughout the year was provided to teachers. A CD with role play exercises reflecting the new MATSEC examination format was compiled and shared.
- Focus on the use of ICT in teaching was maintained. The website was continually updated and new individual school/classroom websites were set up. Software for interactive whiteboards for teachers and interactive CDs for student complementing the text book in use were purchased and distributed.
- The Cluster Group for the writing of half-yearly examinations was continued. Teachers met regularly every week. These meetings also provided time for discussion on the proposed National Curriculum Framework.
- The Initiation to Foreign Language in Primary Schools which was started last year was evaluated and continued. The new scholastic year 2011 started with an increase of 130% of students choosing German in Form 1. This year the Education Officer supported the College Principals and the Human Resources Department in identifying teachers for the Project and provided schemes of work and material.
- The July in-service course focused on the new Form 1 Curriculum and was attended by state and non-state teachers of German. Training was also provided for teachers who did not attend the in-service but who were assigned Form 1 for the scholastic year 2011-2012.
- With the cooperation of the Education Officer for eLearning voluntary hands-on training was provided on the use of interactive whiteboards for groups of teachers in different colleges.
- An Intensive Reading project was launched. The first phase covered the purchase and distribution of reading books with CDs for Forms 1 and 2. Material for teachers of Form 5 to support student preparation for the new Secondary Education Certificate Examination was also purchased and distributed.
- The Education Officer served as Chairperson or Member on various interviewing Public Service Commission (PSC) boards and held aptitude tests as requested by the PSC.
- Liaison with the German Embassy was maintained and requests addressed. Aid was provided to German nationals wanting to act as Lingua Assistants in Maltese schools and requests for information and contacts with Maltese schools for exchange purposes were given assistance. A European project signalled by the Embassy was undertaken with of the Education Officer for Art. Lija Primary school participated in the project Children Paint their Europe organised by the *Kinderinitiative für kulturelle Bildung*. (www.stiftungskultur fuer kinder.de). The canvas work representing Malta will be displayed in Brussels in May 2012 and a video about Malta will be shown.
- Replacement of old equipment and the acquisition of two PCs with German Word for Windows for use by teachers was undertaken and nearing completion.
- Through the initiative of the Director Curriculum Management and eLearning, talks were held with the Department of German at the University of Malta on the promotion of German in schools and the supply of German native Lingua Assistants to carry out support work in primary/secondary schools.
- The Education Officer participated in various professional development sessions, workshops and seminars including those held by the European Union Programmes Agency on the Bologna Progress and VET.

Spanish

- Clustering of teachers for the review of annual/half yearly examination papers was carried out. Meetings were coordinated and monitored by the Heads of Department of Spanish.
- An expression of intent was submitted for publication in the Government Gazette which entailed the presentation of Spanish books for evaluation. A set of textbooks, *Companeros*, was selected and distributed to schools for scholastic year 2011–2012. The selected books which are compatible with the Form 1 curriculum substituted the present textbooks for the teaching of Spanish in secondary schools.
- Language Assistants of Spanish are participating in the teaching of Spanish in secondary schools. Their role is to share the Spanish Culture with students who are studying Spanish.

- Setting of annual examination papers and marking schemes, proof reading and moderation were carried out by the Heads of Department.

English Primary

- The Education Officer for this area chaired the National Benchmark Examination Board for English during paper setters meetings held regularly in the months preceding the examinations – marking schemes, rating scales and scripts for the Oral, the Listening and Reading Comprehension, and the Writing Examinations were set for the two examination sessions that were held in June 2011. Preparation for the examinations entailed the reviewing of information for Year 6 teachers in addition to specimen papers following feedback received from schools. Scripts and marking schemes were revised, proofread and edited, and electronic marking sheets were created. Markers' meetings were coordinated, marking of scripts was moderated, students' responses were analysed, and a report was written. Follow-up feedback sessions for Heads of School and Year 6 teachers were held in Malta and Gozo – presentations included information on the tasks set in the different components assessed, analysis of students' performance, and implications for teaching and learning.
- State primary school examinations and marking schemes for English (Year 4 and Year 5) were set for the June 2011 Annual Examinations. Furthermore, in preparation for the Annual Examinations 2012, specimen papers and marking schemes for English were set and published online.
- Feedback regarding planning for college-based half-yearly examinations was given during and/or following professional support visits in colleges. Primary teachers were given professional support on teaching and learning.
- Evaluation of educational material and resources included feedback on materials for the teaching of English at primary level, the draft of a book on children's rights to be published by the Commissioner for Children, and the draft of a college's Literacy Framework.
- Participation in selection boards involved the vetting of applications and writing of reports. Interviews included the posts of Regular Teacher (Primary), Kindergarten Assistant II, Supply Teachers (Primary), and Supply Teachers (Resource Centres) in the DES.
- The launching of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), related consultation meetings, and the two-day National Conference on the NCF were attended. Training sessions on the writing of a new curriculum for English involved participation in the writing of the Handbook for English, including work on the Teaching Objectives Framework and Attainment Level Descriptors for English. Preparatory meetings with prospective teams of primary teachers were held in connection with the writing of the new English Primary curriculum in 2012.

English Secondary and the English Language Resource Centre

- The English Language Resource Centre (ELRC) is run by an Education Officer within the English section of the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department. It is a resource centre for teachers of English. Resources, such as books, journals, magazines, CDs, DVDs that have a bearing on the teaching and learning of the English language are regularly updated. These resources are made available to the teachers of English in the state, church and public sectors. The ELRC is also the venue for regular meetings between Education Officers and Heads of Department of English.
- The Education Officer who runs the Centre has continued to maintain the ELRC website which contains general information on the English Section and links to useful articles and other sites that are of interest to teachers of English. The English Section website consolidated its role of supporting teachers in the subject. It contains general information on the English Section, announcements of important developments in the local field, and links to useful articles and other sites.
- European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC Survey Lang): An English Education Officer attended a two-day seminar at the *Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogique* (CIEP) at Sèvres, Paris. The seminar trained the participants in the coding of writing scripts in English produced by students taking part in this survey's final testing session. The Education Officer then coordinated the training of several markers and the marking exercise. A number of Heads of Department for English from state and church school sectors took part in the marking exercise.
- An In-Service Course on the Implementation of the New Form One Curriculum was held in July for Form 1 teachers of English from state and non-state sectors.

- One EO facilitated a seminar for church school teachers of English on the implementation of the New Form 1 Curriculum.
- Another EO was involved in the evaluation of age and language appropriacy of a booklet about Children's Rights to be published by the Commissioner for Children. The same Education Officer contributed in the selection of Benchmark Writing exemplars at Level Descriptors 5, 6 and 7.
- Routine tasks performed by the English section are school visits (constant support to Basic Skills and Form 1 teachers), confirmation of appointment of teachers, production of 17 annual examination papers each with related mark-schemes, specimen Form 1 papers with mark schemes, moderation of annual examination papers conducted in 20 schools, sitting of interviewing boards for various teaching posts, attendance at and active participation in Departmental and Directorate meetings and seminars, and regular meetings with Heads of Department at the ELRC.
- The English Section has been assigned work under the Directorate of Quality Assurance, supporting Form 1 Basic Skills teachers of English by designing a diagnostic tool, providing in-service training and monitoring the teaching and learning of Form 1 Basic Skills students.

Maltese Primary

The Education Officer performed the following tasks:

- chaired a selection board of experts for updating the list of supplementary readers for all primary years; new language textbooks and workbooks for years one to four were introduced following the recommendations of the selection board set up for the purpose;
- acted as a member of the National Benchmark Examination Board for Maltese; assisted the chairperson in coordinating markers' meetings and in moderation of scripts during meetings held regularly in the months preceding the examinations; set marking schemes and scripts for the two examination sessions that were held in June 2011 and revised, proofread and edited them;
- analysed, in conjunction with the Assistant Director and Education Officer responsible for Assessment for Learning Students, responses to the National Benchmark Maltese; held feedback sessions with Heads of School and Year 6 teachers in Malta and Gozo; carried out an analysis of students' performance and practical suggestions for the improvement of teaching and learning;
- put online specimen annual Maltese examinations papers for 2012, for years 4 and 5 and marking schemes; advised and assisted teachers in the setting up of college-based half-yearly examinations;
- gave professional support to primary teachers on teaching and learning and delivered professional development sessions to teaching staff and parents regarding the last orthographical decisions as issued by *Il-Kunsill tal-Ilsien Malti*;
- was the DQSE representative in the preparation of festivities for the marking of the 50th Anniversary of the death of Malta's National Poet - a special ceremony and commemorative programme was held for all state and non state schools students' representatives on 14 October;
- maintained the Maltese website as a teaching resource for teachers in primary schools;
- acted as a member on the selection board for the posts of Regular Teacher (Secondary) - tasks involved vetting of applications and writing of interview reports.

Maltese Secondary

The Education Officer responsible for this section carried out the following activities:

- Organised in-service courses on the teaching-learning-assessment processes, during which teachers were presented with a range of varied approaches easily applicable at the classroom level.
- The language component of Maltese was updated with diversity as a key issue. This was published in book form – *Grammatika bil-Livelli (Oħroġ il-Għerf)*. Apart from the necessary updates of recent orthographical changes, this exercise served to revisit the levels of teaching in line with the curriculum.
- Multileveled resource material was prepared on the linguistic and literary domains of the Maltese syllabus. Various ramifications of the Maltese learning experience as it is developing in our times were tackled not only with regard to content, but most importantly with the emerging notion of Maltese as a developing language.

- The Education Officer for Maltese acted as a catalyst to Heads of Department of the subject in question in accordance with the new unfolding scenarios of the new National Curriculum Framework.
- Learning-teaching material was extensively researched from e-sources with the aim of making e-learning part of the culture of the linguistic-teaching-and-learning continuum.
- Innovative ideas of the Scribe's approach were put forward to kindergarten assistants to adopt this approach, language (Maltese and English) being the responsibility of all teachers irrespective of their subject area. The idea of having certain subject content being taught half of it, in terms of content in Maltese, and the other half in English, was put forward.

Mathematics Primary

- The new Mathematics Education Officer for Primary was appointed in July 2011 and started performing duties as from August. Responsibilities and duties undertaken by previous Mathematics Education Officer for Primary were carried forward.
- During the period July to November 2011, a representative sample of the End of Primary Benchmark Mathematics Papers were analysed and feedback was given to schools during two seminars organised separately in Malta and Gozo. During the seminars, the Education Officer for Primary Mathematics outlined the common difficulties encountered by students in the End of Primary Benchmark and outlined practical suggestions for further support in line with the ABACUS programme.
- The team of Core Competences teachers, at present referred to as Mathematics Support Teachers (MSTs) has grown from three to six. During September-December, priority was given to ensuring that the whole team is thoroughly grounded in skills, resources, processes, procedures and mind-set. The MSTs were given the opportunity to work within four colleges, namely, St Clare College, St Theresa College, St Nicholas College and the Gozo College. One to one meetings were set between MSTs and class teachers (Years 1-3) and observations of Mathematics lessons were carried out. All this was done with the primary aim of setting a coherent framework of strategic action. Throughout the same period, a set of Mathematical Tool Kits containing lesson ideas and resources aimed at supporting Year 1-3 teachers were developed. The MSTs gave assistance and support to class teachers on request. In December a Mathematics Support Teachers Pilot Project Plan for January-July 2012 was formulated. Currently all the MSTs and the Primary Mathematics EO are participating in 'Let Me Learn' training.
- Besides the day-to-day school support visits, further assistance was also given by the Primary Mathematics EO to colleges in reviewing Mathematics schemes of work and in giving feedback regarding half yearly Mathematics papers.
- The Primary Section was involved in the drawing up of Specimen Papers for Year 4 and Year 5 Mathematics Annual Examinations including Mental Papers (20% of the Global Mark). Mental Mathematics Question Ideas and various teachers suggested links were uploaded on the Primary Mathematics website <http://primarymaths.skola.edu.mt>.
- The Primary Mathematics EO was involved in the completion of the TIMSS & PIRLS Curriculum Questionnaire, in the analysis of TIMSS scripts and in the writing of the new TIMSS 2011 chapter in the TIMSS 2011 Encyclopaedia.

Mathematics Secondary

- The new EO for Secondary Mathematics was appointed in July 2011 and started performing duties in August.
- In February an intensive Basic Skills Training course was held for a week for those teachers teaching Mathematics to students following a Basic Mathematics Programme.
- In July an in-service course for Form 1 Mathematics teachers was organised at St Ignatius College, Boys' Secondary on the Implementation of the New Form 1 Mathematics Curriculum. The new format of the Mathematics Curriculum was explained and teachers had workshops on the suggested resources and teaching approaches.
- Form 1 Annual Exam Specimen Papers were developed in Level 7-8, Level 6-7 and Level 5-7, which reflected the New Mathematics Curriculum levels. These specimen papers were eventually uploaded at http://curriculum.gov.mt/exam_papers.htm.
- A specific meeting was held in October with the teachers teaching Form 1 Basic Class, where an explanation was given on how to carry out the Diagnostic Test with their students based on Level 4.

- Six hands-on activities after school hours were organised for Gifted and Talented Form 4 students from state and non-state secondary schools.
- Two issues of the Mathematics magazine *Mathsline* (in April and December) were also published; this magazine is a publication for the professional development of teachers at both primary and secondary state & non-state schools.
- Three colleges started taking part in the PRIMAS Project (Promoting Inquiry Based Learning in Mathematics and Science). Professional development facilitators were assigned a group of Mathematics teachers in a school to hold meetings with them over two scholastic years in order to support their development of IBL in the course of teaching their subject. During this period, professional development facilitators attended regular meetings with the PRIMAS team from the University of Malta.
- Besides the usual support visits to schools, participation in school subject department meetings on the implementation of the New Curriculum were carried out. Furthermore, the Secondary Mathematics Education Officer participated in a College Staff Development Programme on the concerns and challenges of the New Curriculum Framework.
- Participation in the two-day National Conference *Lejn Edukazzjoni ta' Kwalita' ghal Kulhadd* held in December 2011 was beneficial in awareness of the views of all the stakeholders.
- Both Primary and Secondary Mathematics Education Officers were involved in the completion of the TIMSS and PIRLS Curriculum Questionnaire and in the writing of the new TIMSS 2011 chapter in the TIMSS 2011 Encyclopaedia.

Science Primary and Secondary and the Science Centre

- The Science Secondary section organised two science seminars for teachers in state and non-state schools. The first seminar entitled Science Education Research, held on 17 February 2011, disseminated local research findings in science education by MEd students and explored issues related to students' attitude to science learning presented in the keynote speech by Prof Judith Bennett, from the University of York. A second science education seminar was held on 22 October 2011. This seminar focused on the NCF consultation document 'A Vision for Science Education in Malta'. During the seminar, teachers participated in a number of workshops during which their feedback was collated for the possible amendments of the final document. A large audience of science teachers from state and non-state schools participated in both seminars. These seminars were organised in collaboration with the DMSTE within the Faculty of Education, University of Malta.
- The Science Secondary section started collaborating with the Faculty of Education on PRIMAS – a research project supported by the European Union within the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) in which the University of Malta is a partner. The Secondary Science Education Officers took up the role of Professional Development Facilitators to create a supportive environment for enquiry based learning within a number of local schools. Currently a total of 25 science teachers are participating in this project.
- The Science Secondary section in conjunction with the Across Limits (Malta) Consultancy Agency facilitated the organisation of a week-long professional training for four science Heads of Department in Dublin. The training focused on the inquiry based pedagogy in science teaching and the participants were provided with ample hands-on opportunities. The Heads of Department later disseminated their experience during locally organised INSET sessions.
- The Science Secondary section liaised with a number of local entities interested in promoting science education, namely NSTF, MCST, Faculty of Education, Nature Trust and MATSEC Board. Secondary Science Education Officers promoted the NSTF Science Week in local schools and were actively involved in the adjudication process of the science projects participating in the competition. Meetings with MCST officials were held on a regular basis to discuss issues related to the project for the implementation of the Interactive Science Centre at Bighi. A number of sessions with science teacher undergraduates were held to discuss the proposed Science Education Strategy and the newly designed Form 1 Science Curriculum currently piloted in secondary state schools. A number of talks with the environmental NGO Nature Trust were held to discuss the facilities offered at the new environmental centre at Xrobb l-Għagin. Professional contacts with the Matsec Board officials were maintained to facilitate a link between local schools and the Matsec Board.

- The international TIMSS seminar held in Malta in May 2011 was attended by the secondary science Education Officers. During the seminar, the details of the marking procedure and the scoring guides related to the TIMSS study were explored through practical sessions.
- The Science Secondary section further contributed in the Science Strategy Steering Committee discussions related to the finalisation of the document, 'A Vision for Science Education in Malta'. Furthermore, the science teachers' feedback following the INSET courses and the school-based discussions were analysed, compiled and forwarded to the Directorate.

Science Primary

- In a bid towards Science popularisation, the members of the Primary Science Peripatetic Team conducted Fieldwork excursions with Year 1 to Year 6 pupils from both state and non-state schools at the Kitchen Garden of the Presidential Palace. The main objectives were the exploration and investigation of the natural environment in a controlled and scientific manner appropriate to the age of the participants.
- Furthermore, Primary Science Team members actively involved themselves on a regular basis in a large spectrum of other school or college based activities such as Science Days, Science Exhibitions, Science Competitions and Science Challenges amongst many others initiatives. As from the beginning of the scholastic year, they were involved in an intensive course of professional development. This is being developed through regular afternoon sessions every other Friday at the Science Centre, Pembroke.
- The Education Officer for Primary Science worked closely with other bodies related to Science teaching and learning such as the Maltese Association of Science Educators, Malta Council for Science & Technology and the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta amongst others.

Integrated Science

- The Integrated Science section launched a new Form 1 science curriculum. Regular visits were carried out in schools to support science teachers and assess their feedback. Furthermore, regular contact was also kept with the science teachers in church schools through their Science Head of Department. For example, the Education Officer for Science was invited to address science teachers in church schools re the education reform and the document 'A Vision for Science Education in Malta'. A similar input was given to a group of teachers in two different schools as part of their SDP and to the Primary Peripatetic science teachers. Prior to their teaching practice, a number of sessions were held with BEd students in which these students had the opportunity to go through the Integrated Science syllabus and present some lessons as part of their training.
- As part of this reform, the Science section introduced a new text book in state schools. This book comes with a number of resources such as teachers' book, homework and class work book, interactive book, assessment CD and other resources.
- Contact was maintained with the organisers of the Science Picnic, Europe's largest outdoor science event organised by Polish Radio/Copernicus Science Centre in Warsaw, Poland. The EO for Science attended the event and Malta was invited to participate once again.
- Contacts were maintained with different entities and NGOs including EkoSkola.

Biology

- The Biology section collaborated with entities such as environmental NGOs particularly BirdLife (Malta) and Nature Trust (Malta) to sustain and promote the role of education for sustainable development within local schools. Indeed, the environmental projects *EkoSkola*, *Dinja Wahda* and *EcoGozo* were further supported and promoted in such a way that an increasing number of participating schools are even qualifying for the Green Flag or Silver Award and the *Dinja Wahda* awards. The Biology section represented the DQSE in the *EkoSkola* and *Dinja Wahda* annual award ceremonies. The section also promoted and supported individual teachers in their participation in national and/or international science related events such as the Young Reporters for the Environment, SEEP and the NSTF science week.
- The Biology section also represented the DQSE in the consultation process of two national consultation documents related to the environment: A National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Malta and the National Environment Policy. Furthermore, the EO for Biology represented the Ministry in the 6th meeting of the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD that took place in Genève on 7/8 April 2011. The meeting focused on the progress and challenges faced in the implementation phase II of the Strategy for

Education for Sustainable Development and the considerations necessary for the adoption of the work plan for phase III (2011-2015).

- The Biology Section launched a new Intermediate level Biology syllabus for 1st and 2nd year Intermediate Biology classes in state post-secondary institutions. The compilation of the final version of this syllabus reflected the feedback gained from post-secondary biology teachers during the INSET session entitled 'Biology Post-Secondary – Moving On' held during September 2011. The Biology section also prepared common Advanced level 1st and 2nd year papers and is currently embarking on common intermediate level papers.
- The practical aspect of the biology curriculum has been further reinforced through the compilation of assessment criteria for the five different types of biology practical work. The feedback forthcoming from biology teachers indicates the widespread use of these criteria that in turn strengthened the reliability of marking practical reports.

Chemistry

In addition to regular school visits aimed at giving support to Chemistry teachers with regard to the implementation of innovative teaching methodologies, the use of new resources and the level of content knowledge required, the following initiatives were taken:

- In January, the EO assisted the Head of Department for Chemistry to work on a project entitled Nitrate leaching through diverse soil structures. This project, which was awarded first prize in the NSTF annual science exposition, was made possible through the cooperative effort of a number of Chemistry students at St Thomas More Girls' Junior Lyceum, Żejtun.
- On successive Friday afternoons in February and March 2011, informal training sessions for peripatetic teachers of science in primary schools were organised on a voluntary basis. These sessions were a follow-up for the formal Chemistry course organised in October/November 2010. The training was mostly devoted to laboratory practice and was aimed to provide teachers with the necessary skills required to implement basic Chemistry practice in the primary classroom.
- In collaboration with other science EOs, an INSET course was held for Form 1 and Form 2 science teachers in July 2011. The aim of the course was to familiarise teachers with new methodologies essential for the implementation of the proposed science curriculum.
- Science EOs collaborated in a joint effort to organise a half-day science seminar for science teachers in state and non-state schools in October 2011 in view of receiving feedback about the consultation document 'A Vision for Science Education in Malta'. The proposals and recommendations that emerged from this seminar were presented in a document to the National Curriculum Framework Committee.

Physics

- The work of the Physics section focused on the promotion of Physics teaching and learning in schools, through the use of new technologies, the promotion of inquiry based learning methodologies and through the support provided to teachers.
- Training in the use of the interactive whiteboard and the data-loggers was held both during the INSET courses of July and September and during a voluntary course held in the summer recess. 30 teachers and science technicians attended the voluntary course.
- The Physics Education Officer attended a number of meetings of the EU Thematic Working Group for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education (MST). The remit of this working group was to analyse the issues of low achieving students in MST, including the support services provided, inquiry based learning methodology, assessment and school autonomy.
- For the second year, the Physics Section continued coordinating the U4Energy competition at local level. This is a European challenge for teachers and students to learn about energy efficiency by performing short and long term actions to help reduce energy consumption.
- This section has launched an innovative local Physics website, <http://physics.skola.edu.mt> where Physics teachers share digital resources and are informed about forthcoming events related to science. It also published three editions of the Sci-News in collaboration with the Maltese Association for Science Educators.

Social Studies Primary

- The Education Officer responsible for Social Studies carried out a number of school visits identifying teachers' strengths and areas for improvement in classroom practice. Professional support and feedback (regarding confirmation visits and routine visits and follow-up visits) were provided.
- The website/blog at <http://primarysocialstudies.skola.edu.mt> continued to be developed for the benefit of all primary school teachers, students and parents. The blog contains numerous links to and complements the Social Studies website at <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/socialstudies> (which was developed and is being maintained by the EO responsible for this area). On the website, numerous teaching resources supplied voluntarily by primary school teachers themselves continued to be uploaded. This facilitates sharing and pooling of resources. The blog at <http://primarysocialstudies.skola.edu.mt> focuses primarily on the teaching of Social Studies at primary level, but it also contains various documents relating to various subjects and disciplines taught at primary level. The focus for the present year was Year Two. Numerous teaching resources for Year Two were this year created during a voluntary in-service course, which resources were uploaded on the mentioned blog; these can be viewed at <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/socialstudies/year2.htm>.
- To give Social Studies a new dimension, fieldwork notes and resources continued to be developed and disseminated through the blog. A number of fieldwork notes and instructions for primary schools relevant to the teaching of Social Studies were developed. To complement each set of fieldwork notes, short video clips that were uploaded onto *Vimeo* and/or *You Tube* were created. By means of these clips, teachers and/or parents leading the fieldwork trips can view and follow beforehand the itinerary they have to follow.
- A voluntary course for Year Two teachers was organised and coordinated by the EO responsible. The course was held at St Benedict College Safi Primary, a number of resources for Year Two teachers were created and uploaded online; these can now be viewed at: <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/socialstudies/year2.htm>
- The EO Social Studies Primary participated as member of the interviewing board that processed and held interviews for the posts of Regular Teacher in Primary Education.
- The EO Primary set music to lyrics published by San Ġorġ Preca College Floriana Primary in a special booklet named *Għanjiet u Taqbil*. The provisional results are already online and can be viewed at: <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/socialstudies/Rizorsi/inkantaw.htm>. Initial feedback shows that the works are being extensively used by Kindergarten Assistants and teachers of Early Years.
- The Education Officer acted as chairperson of the Maltese Benchmark panel which comprised other EOs, teacher representative of church and independent schools and a representative of the Faculty of Education. The task involved the coordination of the two sets (sessions) of Maltese papers; each set included (a) orals (b) listening and reading comprehension (c) creative writing and the coordination of the marking of the Maltese papers.
- Coordination of professional development sessions in state and non-state schools was carried out.
- An online document, which can be viewed at <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/socialstudies/malti.htm>, was developed to provide teachers with an easy reference online tool about the *DEĊIŻJONIJIET* by the *Kunsill Għall-Ilsien Malti* was developed.
- Support was given to the St Benedict College exam committee that set and evaluated the half-yearly (college-based) exam papers. As a support to the committee, two schemes (*Pjanijiet ta' Hidma*) were drawn up - one for Year 4 and the other for Year 5, so that the colleges would be in a better position to coordinate their half-yearly exams. These suggestions can be viewed at: <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/socialstudies/Rizorsi/hy/yr4-pjan-hidma.pdf> (*Pjan ta' Hidma 4 sena*) <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/socialstudies/Rizorsi/hy/yr5-pjan-hidma.pdf> (*Pjan ta' Hidma 5 sena*).

Social Studies and European Studies

- As part of their preparation for the Social Studies SEC examination at the end of Form 5, Form 4 students study in detail the work and function of different institutions. In this connection, the EO Social Studies, in collaboration with the respective institutions, organised a programme of fortnightly school visits for these students, to the Courts of Justice and the House of Representatives. The institutions visited were:
 - Courts of Justice: The programme consisted of a tour round the main sections of the Courts of Justice, complemented by a talk and presentation to students delivered either by the Chief Justice himself or by one of the members of the Judiciary. Students had the opportunity to ask questions related to the justice

system in Malta, how judges are appointed to the Bench, and how this institution maintains the rule of law in the country. During the year under review about 600 students visited the Courts of Justice.

- House of Representatives: The programme consisted of a general tour around the main sections of the House of Representatives, further complemented by a talk and presentation to students delivered either by the Speaker of the House, one of the Members of Parliament, or an official. About 700 students visited Parliament.
- In collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister and the management of St James Cavalier, another programme of visits was organised for Form 4 students. The programme consisted of a general tour around the main departments of the Auberge de Castille, further complemented by a presentations and workshop at St James Cavalier. Here students learned about democracy and politics, with particular reference to the parliamentary system in Malta. These visits were organised on an almost weekly basis. Between October and December 2011, about 600 students visited the Office of Prime Minister.
- Furthermore, a programme of visits to Dar l-Ewropa in Valletta were organised for Form 2 students. The aim was to provide students with an insight on the EU, its main institutions, and the benefits one enjoys as a citizen of the EU. During these visits students follow a talk and a presentation about the history of the EU and how this has developed till the present day. The theme of the EU is one of the topics in Social Studies, while at Form 2 students choose European Studies as one of their Option subjects for Form 3. These visits were organised once every two weeks. In 2011, about 480 students visited Dar l-Ewropa.

Art

- The Art department organised an in-service course for Form 1 Art teachers in secondary state and non-state schools. In September, an INSET course was held for peripatetic Art teachers in the primary sector.
- Meetings were organised for primary peripatetic Art teachers where various Art workshops were planned as extra curricular activities to complement the art syllabus. School visits in primary, secondary and church schools were carried out.
- Subject meetings for Heads of Department were carried out every Tuesday.
- The national annual examination papers for the subject were set by the collaboration of the EO and the Heads of Department. Once again the Art Department and the National Museum of Fine Arts worked in collaboration on one of the questions posed in the form five papers. A sample Form 1 paper together with a marking scheme was put online to help teachers to implement the New Form 1 Curriculum.
- Initiatives taken by the teachers of Art in various colleges were encouraged and given support. This is especially so in Art Links, an art exhibition carried out by the Secondary schools of St Margaret College, St Benedict College and St Thomas More College. This year the exhibition was held at Żejtun Girls' Secondary School.

Music

- A syllabus leading to Music SEC Level was designed with input provided by the EO responsible for the subject. The syllabus encourages and motivates creativity and related cognitive abilities of the candidates. Such knowledge is associated to the four main areas of Music studies at SEC level and aims to develop musical abilities through the use of various skills explored in the four main areas. The syllabus offers local and cross-cultural elements that broaden the concept of music.
- The continuation and expansion of the Music Option Programme in Form 1 classes in all colleges in Malta and Gozo and the furtherance of the Music Option Course at the Gozo College in Form 3 classes were areas focused on.
- A new music textbook entitled 'Music Shines I' was compiled and distributed to all students in years 1-3 classes. The recording of a music CD as part of 'Music Shines Book I' was carried out. The CD comprises songs and various sounds as part of the exercises covered in this music book.
- The second part of a recorder course was organised for primary Music teachers to enhance their skills in recorder tuition. The Head of Johann Strauss School of Music conducted the course at Guardian Angel School, Hamrun.
- Every Friday afternoon, primary peripatetic Music teachers followed professional development sessions, including recorder lessons and methodology and pedagogy tutorials by various specialists in music education.

- Two recitals were organised for Form 1 Music students attending the Gozo College secondary schools. These concerts, part of the Music option curriculum programme, aim to help students perform to an audience in a performance hall set-up.
- Pre-concert talks are being organised in conjunction with the Manoel Theatre board members to enhance students' musical knowledge and listening experiences. These talks, which last approximately 20 minutes, are free to all ticket-holders attending the various concerts held at the theatre. Students of both primary and secondary schools are always encouraged to attend.
- A vocal training course for Music teachers, teaching in both primary and secondary schools, was conducted by Ms Zimfira Poloz from the University of Toronto. This three-day course was held at St Claire College Pembroke Primary with the participation of two choirs from the Gozo College and St Claire College respectively.
- A music newsletter was compiled and published in conjunction with MAME (Malta Association for Music Educators). This newsletter is intended to be published and sent, on a regular basis, to members of the Association and other Music educators in Malta and Gozo.
- Attendance and participation in various conferences related to Music Education such as EQAVET and ECVET were carried out.
- Music pedagogy courses to students studying at MCAST as part in part fulfilment of their studies were organised.

Drama and the Drama Unit

- During 2011, the Drama Unit presented six 'Theatre in Education' (TIE) projects. Most of these were presented at the Drama Unit. The projects were:
 - *4 Drammi ta' Oreste Calleja* for Form 4 and Form 5 students. This was held in January 2011 at the Manoel Theatre, Valletta. This TIE served as an introduction to the work of the Maltese playwright Oreste Calleja. It also helped students to appreciate theatre and Maltese literature. A total of 729 students attended.
 - *Stejjer ta' Chekov* for Form 1 students. This was held in February and March 2011 at the Drama Unit. The aim of this TIE was to introduce students to the works of the great Russian playwright, Anton Chekov, and to create theatre culture. A total of 900 students attended.
 - *Plastik* for Form 3, 4 and 5 students. This was held in March and April 2011 at the Drama Unit, in collaboration with the PSD Section, the Health Promotion Unit and Unit Għożża. This TIE tackled the theme of sexuality and sexual health. 1,384 students attended.
 - *In-Nannu Nesa' X'Jisimni* for Year 3 students. This was held in May 2011 at St Vincent de Paule Theatre. The aim of this TIE was to help students understand people who are suffering from dementia. 929 students attended.
 - *Mickey* for Year 2 students. This was held in June 2011 at the Drama Unit. This TIE was about diversity. 555 students attended.
 - *X'Se Ndoqqu* for Year 6 students. This was held on Thursdays and Fridays, during October to December, at the Drama Unit. The TIE included workshops with students and a rehearsal and a performance of a play Calypso and Ulysses, the aim being that appreciation of our culture and of understanding Maltese music and Maltese instruments and how these can be used during a performance. 980 students attended.
- Three Drama projects were held in schools, namely:
 - *It-Tlett Iqżieqż* for Year 1 students. The aim of this project was to make students aware about individual and collective responsibility and decision making.
 - *Hans u Greta* for Year 3 students. The aim was to make students aware of the importance of healthy eating habits.
 - *112 (WanWanTu)* for Year 4 students. This touring drama project's aim was to instil awareness about the proper use of the hospital's emergency department. The project included the active participation of students in a play and drama workshops.
- The Drama Unit teachers visited schools throughout the year. During the second and third term of the scholastic year 2010/2011, they gave drama lessons, helped teachers to use Drama in their teaching, helped in the staging of the Prize Day plays, as well as other activities related to Drama and Theatre. During the

first term of the scholastic year 2011/2012, Drama teachers were delivering lessons in schools on Mondays to Wednesdays, and were involved in TIEs/Projects on Thursdays and Fridays.

Personal and Social Development

- Meetings, seminars and induction courses were organised for the Personal and Social Development (PSD) teachers in the primary sector and compulsory INSET Courses for Secondary PSD Teachers on the introduction of the new syllabus. The Continuous Development Course started in 2010 of Primary PSD teachers continued throughout the beginning of the year. Training for PSD church school teachers on the introduction of the new PSD syllabus was delivered. In collaboration with the PSD association, a day seminar entitled ‘The Media and I, who is in control?’ was held on 10 December 2011, and was open to PSD teachers and other professionals interested in the topic.
- There was active involvement in the formulation of the new National Sexual Health Strategy through participation in meetings and workshops and in written feedback on the draft document, ‘The Be Smart’ online project co-funded by the EU through the Safer Internet project, Children’s Consultative Conference regarding the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), and the delivery of a consultative lesson with all primary and secondary students regarding the NCF.
- In collaboration with Lombard Bank, Malta continued the anti-smoking campaign entitled ‘Smokey Sue Campaign’ to help students become aware of the negative effects of smoking on themselves and others.
- A review of the teaching and learning of the PSD programme in state primary and secondary schools was carried out.
- The promotion and setting up of student councils in the primary sector was continued and strengthened.
- Maintenance of the PSD website, with updates on a regular basis, was part of the work of the PSD section..
- Meetings were held with PSD Heads of Department of both state as well as church sector, a number of Heads of School, with other EOs, the Service Manager for Psycho-Social Services regarding a pilot project in two colleges on the Health Bones Campaign, with University of Malta members of staff, and with various organisations and agencies, amongst which Sedqa, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b’Dizabilita’ and MPDSA.

Religion

- The Education Officer for Religion works in close contact with the Religious Education (RE) Office (which is made up of representatives from the Episcopal Conference and the Education Officers). Together with the RE office, the EO contributed towards the following: promoting and developing Religious Education; developing and updating syllabi, according to the new reform; introducing the new form 1 textbook; working on the Form 2 textbook; coordinating of religious counsellors and their role in spiritual formation in schools; and organising religious celebrations for school children.
- Professional support was given to Religion teachers during confirmation visits, routine visits and follow-up visits. Lessons were observed (especially in Form 1 classes) and strengths and areas for improvement were identified. Feedback was given and new reform strategies were shared and discussed, especially during subject meetings.
- Participation in selection boards involved the vetting of applications and interviewing applicants for supply religion teachers, regular religion teachers and Heads of Department of Religion in church schools.
- The Education Officers also worked on the in-service courses, the aims of which were to strengthen the process of the reform in Religious Education at secondary level and to present the Form 1 syllabus to Form 1 teachers.
- Regular weekly meetings were held with the Heads of Department of Religion. During these meetings issues related to the teaching and learning of Religion were discussed.
- A new initiative involved changing the way assessment is carried out in the primary sector. When this is finalised, students will present a project as part of their annual examination.
- Preparation of annual examination papers and marking schemes, proof reading and moderation was carried out with the help of the Heads of Department.
- The Education Officer and the Heads of Department created a website for Religious Education aimed at supporting teachers and students in the teaching and learning of the subject. The site contains general

information on Religious Education and useful hyperlinks. It is continuously updated and maintained by the Education Officer and the Heads of Department.

- The EOs attended various seminars/courses/conferences to keep in touch with modern issues and themes related to the subject. One such conference was the Catholic Conference in March in which the Education Officer gave a presentation on the subject of Virtues.
- Meetings were also held with Religion Heads of Department in the church sector, and a day seminar was organised for Religion teachers in church schools.
- Meetings were held with the Faculty of Theology to reform the Religion PGCE course at university. The Education Officer gave lectures to PGCE students.

Physical Education and Sport

- The Education Officer sustained regular meetings with Heads of Schools and College Principals to help improve Physical Education and Sports in schools.
- School visits to support teachers and to help improve their practice were carried out. Each teacher was given a feedback report to help him/her improve on current practice and to understand how such performance could be improved.
- Every Thursday afternoon, professional development meetings for secondary school teachers to create a learning community to share information and to disseminate good practices were held. These were held in small groups in seven different centres and teachers applied for the areas that they needed most training. These sessions were well attended and teachers commented very positively on them. Peripatetic teachers attended regular meetings every Friday and similar issues that catered for their level were addressed. Practical and theoretical sessions were held and these helped to equip the teachers in terms of content and pedagogy. Teachers were asked to present a lesson and this was critically analysed by the rest of the group.
- An in-service course focusing on the Form 1 curriculum where teachers got in touch with new approaches to teaching and the content of teaching was held. Another INSET course for Kindergarten Assistants was organised in conjunction with the Education Officer Early Years. Theory and practice on gross motor skills and lesson organisation were held.
- Many sports events in conjunction with the *Kunsill Malti għall-iSport* and Sports Promotion Unit were held. The gymnastics festival and the dance festival were very well attended and there are plans for the coming year to improve them due to the demand and great participation. 'Great Outdoors' was organised in Comino, where a group of 50 teachers experienced various outdoor activities such as climbing, abseiling, trekking, canoeing, team building and tent pitching in Comino.
- A seminar was held, focused on technology in Physical Education. Gadgets and software that can impact both the theoretical and the practical elements of the subject were presented. This was attended by a group of 50 teachers.
- The PE website was revamped thanks to a teacher who is investing precious time and energy in this project. The EO is posting regular posts of common interest such as Effective Teaching and the Form 1 curriculum.
- A programme on the teaching of PE, the coaching of sports and technology in Physical Education was produced. Selected PE teachers and coaches gave their input. This manifested a new way of doing Physical Education and Sport.
- Meetings with various entities to discuss the concept of Health were held. Meetings in the HLP committee, Cancer Support strategy and review of the Malta Food and Nutrition Policy were held. Other meetings with various sports organisations were held to improve the school community link.

Media Education

- Work covered by the Media Education Officer during 2011 included media awareness talks with students, teachers and parents from different colleges regarding the awareness and uses of different types of media. These talks included the use of presentations, analysis of print media and short film clips. While visiting schools the Media Education Officer offered educational audiovisual material, handouts and website addresses to teachers for the enhancement of differentiated teaching and learning.
- The Media EO is monitoring a pilot project on Media Education being trialled in two secondary schools in St Theresa College.

- The Occupational Health and Safety 20th Anniversary Photographic Competition was co-coordinated together with the EO for Art.
- In September and November the Media EO attended the first and second Media Literacy Experts Group Meeting of the European Commission in Belgium wherein participants from the European member states are discussing the role Media Literacy is to have in the National Curricula. This group will continue its meetings during 2012.

History

- Professional support was given to teachers through regular school visits for confirmation, routine and follow-up purposes.
- A syllabus based on a greater emphasis on the acquisition of historical skills and concepts was prepared. Together with units of work for Form 1 and a history handbook.
- 14 national examination papers supplemented by their translations into English and the relevant mark-schemes were prepared.
- Two INSET courses were held, one dealing with the new Form 1 syllabus which was held in July while the other one entitled Birgu Hands-On was held in September.
- Interviews for the selection and eventual employment of regular teachers of History and European Studies and supply teachers of History were held.
- A history textbook entitled *Il-Gzejjer Maltin fi Żmien il-Ħakma Ingliża* was introduced for Form 4 (General) history students.
- Meetings with Heritage Malta and participation in departmental and directorate meetings and seminars were carried out on an ongoing basis.

Geography

- The Geography department was fully engaged with the preparation and writing of the new curriculum documents consisting of a handbook for the teaching of the subject and a number of curriculum units to be covered in Form I. A trialling exercise of the new units and related documents was conducted in eight secondary schools. In July, an in-service course entitled 'Implementing the Form I Curriculum' was organised by the Geography department. This was a compulsory training course and Form I teachers had the opportunity to become familiar with the new syllabus objectives, framework and design, and had the chance to discuss the educational principles underlying the new curriculum. Teachers attending the course were provided with an interactive DVD containing a variety of resources such as maps, annotated diagrams, images, video clips and hyperlinks to help them realise the new curriculum and its pedagogy.
- The Geography department was engaged with the preparation and setting of 26 annual examination papers as well as marking schemes and specification grids for both Geography general and option classes. A new graded specimen examination paper for students working in attainment levels 5, 6, 7 and 8 at Form I level was also prepared and presented to schools in September.
- A new Geography website was launched with the aim of bringing teachers of the subject on a single platform, through which they can share good practices and resources. This website is supporting teachers to implement the new Geography curriculum by providing resources and ideas on how to make learning more meaningful, catering for students with different learning abilities and aptitudes. The site provides suggestions to facilitate the delivery of the new curriculum through an enquiry-based learning approach thus providing students with the ability and motivation to become active learners, able to find information and to use it rather than remembering and repeating it.
- To support teachers of Form 1, the Geography department produced six games to help students learn map work skills in a highly interactive manner. The designed games include all the elements of learning in an enjoyable way and will keep students engaged for hours through a highly interactive interface, offering amazing learning experiences combining a range of multi-media functions using visuals, interaction, sounds and at the same time allowing learners to interact with the content themselves. Through these specially designed games, teachers can engage and motivate students particularly now that all students will have access to IWB facilities by the end of this scholastic year. The games are intended to deliver complex map work skills, such as grid reference, through a combination of interactive activities that are relatively easy to use, and which will keep learners entertained and at the same time engaged in effective learning.

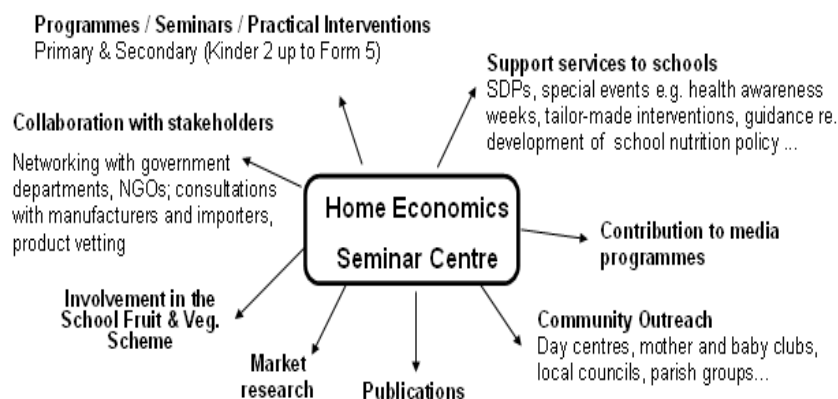
- The Geography department also produced a large wall map (100cm x 70cm) of the Maltese islands which will be distributed to schools. Each and every class will be supplied with such a map. This new map is an excellent teaching tool and will enable students to display, record and analyse information about their local physical and human environment.
- The Geography department, in collaboration with other entities, gave advice, supported, organised and monitored educational programmes in secondary schools. The Global Education Week is now being organised on an annual basis, in collaboration with the North South Centre. The theme chosen last year was Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World. Through the constant encouragement of the Geography department, many teachers of geography were actively involved and participated in a number of projects run by various NGOs as ‘Global Action Schools’, ‘Connectando Mundos’, ‘Young Reporter for the Environment’, *EkoSkola* and ‘European Week for Waste Management’.

Design and Technology and the Design and Technology Learning Centre

- The Design and Technology Learning Centre (DTLC) continued focusing on the maintenance and refurbishment of the Design and Technology school laboratories with the required tools and equipment. In addition, new Design and Technology laboratories were set up in various colleges. The Centre offered its expertise both to state and non-state schools with regard to Design and Technology laboratories, their requirements and specifications of tools and equipment. The unit carried out site inspections on the proposed new laboratories and procured various tools and equipment for various colleges. The Centre also provided support in various tenders and their adjudication as requested by the Directorate.
- The DTLC gave support to teachers on Computer Numerated Control (CNC) machines, Food and Textiles strands both at the Centre and in schools. Besides, continuous support was also provided to Resistant Materials and Electronics teachers at the school level.
- This year the Centre participated again in the EMBED exhibition where a vinyl cutter and a heat transfer printing on fabric machine were the items displayed and used. The Centre evaluated new software to be introduced in various colleges in order to enhance the teaching and learning of the subject.
- The Centre supported the EO (Primary) in introducing Design and Technology in the primary sector, the Home Economics EO in regarding designing Food Labs and the Heads of Department of Graphical Communication in the use of Computer Aided Drawing (CAD).
- The Centre was responsible for the new Form 1 syllabus, its trialling and for the provision of the necessary support for its implementation. Besides, detailed information was delivered during the INSET course about the new syllabus. The DTLC organised an orientation talk for university students specialising in Home Economics having credits in textiles.
- The Education Officer for Design and Technology was responsible for the continuation of the upgrading procedure of senior tradesman to perform duties as technician in Design and Technology Laboratories and for the recruitment of regular teachers for the subject.
- Support was also given to the resource centre in respect of structural layouts, tools, furniture and equipment required. There was ongoing coordination with the Foundation for Tomorrow’s Schools and the Centre in regard to layouts of various laboratories, on-site clarification, inspections and specifications required.
- The setting up of the annual examination papers and the relative marking schemes was undertaken by a group of teachers working with DTLC staff under the supervision of the Education Officer.
- The Design and Technology website (http://schoolnet.gov.net/des_tech/default.htm) was updated regularly to ensure ongoing support to teachers and students in the teaching and learning of the subject.

Home Economics and Textiles Studies and the Home Economics Seminar Centre (HESC)

- Through the execution of its duties in schools and in the community, the HESC focused on primary prevention of non-communicable diseases, hence promoting community action for health. This was done through a variety of means as indicated in the HESC’s remit snapshot below:



- Novel Programmes and Interventions: a fundamental premise on HESC's yearly agenda:
 - *Hamsa Illum ... Kul minna Kuljum!* – Target Group: Kinder 2
 - *Ikel Bnin għall-Festin* – Target Group: Year 1
 - *Nutrition CSI* – Target Group: Secondary Sector Forms 3 and 4
 - *Kuluri u Staġuni fil-Villagġi Avventuruzi* – Target Group: Year 4. Was offered as an accompanying measure to the EU School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. In line with Malta's National Strategy School Fruit Vegetable Scheme 2011-14, the HESC has developed a tailor-made nutrition programme to promote fruit and vegetables. This initiative included the development of educational material and other resources, to enable children to develop healthy eating habits as part of a healthy life style. A practical intervention which conveys food preparation skills was a significant component of this programme.
- Parents' Programmes: Parents, being indispensable partners in empowering their children to make healthy lifestyle choices, were also targeted through the implementation of special programmes and seminars. One innovative programme addressed both theoretical and practical components in the promotion of fruit and vegetables and involved the preparation of healthy fruit and vegetable based dishes for the family.

Computer Studies, eLearning and the eLearning Centre

- The eLearning peripatetic teachers in the primary created lesson packs for Year 5 teachers focusing on the interactive whiteboard software 'Smart Notebook 10'. Social Studies and Maltese were the main focus of this task. Lesson packs were also created for the Hitachi interactive whiteboard using 'Starboard Software' catering for all the primary classrooms. These lesson packs were delivered with students while teachers were undergoing training to familiarise themselves in using the Hitachi interactive whiteboard. Resources were also created with '2 Simple' software as part of the 'Be Smart Online!' project.
- Training sessions were also organised throughout the year. The eLearning peripatetic teachers were given training in creating learning resources. The training featured various software and hardware such as 'Clicker 5', 'Story Phones', 'Espresso', 'Abacus Evolve' and 'Power Point 2010'. Professional training was also scheduled in using the Hitachi interactive whiteboard and *Fronter*, the eLearning platform currently being deployed in primary and secondary schools.
- Another project the eLearning peripatetic teachers were involved in was the 'Abacus Mathematics' pilot project. The software was installed on the teachers' laptops and desktops of all the pilot schools. The eLearning peripatetic teachers started to be involved in collecting feedback about this pilot project.
- In the light of the introduction of new technological tools (namely 1,876 interactive whiteboards and the introduction of the eLearning platform), nine newly-qualified teachers were recruited specifically to help champion eLearning in the secondary sector. These are in addition to the 20 peripatetic teachers present in the primary sector.
- Preparatory work concerning the introduction of an eLearning platform was carried out during the year in question. This was launched in September and the first launch briefing was carried out in December. In November, all the teachers at the eLearning Centre were trained to become accredited trainers by *Fronter*.
- During this year, the eLearning peripatetic teachers conducted classroom visits in order to help teachers implement eLearning across the curriculum. These sessions also focused on promoting innovative technologies across the curriculum. Lessons in connection with the 'Be Smart Online!' project were also

delivered to Year 6 students in Maltese primary schools. A number of professional development sessions were delivered in Maltese primary schools to meet the specific demands set by individual schools. Continuous support was also given to schools related to EMBED projects.

ICT

- During July 2011, an ICT in-service course was organised. This focused on mixed ability teaching. It also targeted the recycling of past-papers, sharing documents online using *Google docs* and the use of related media.
- The ICT Education Officer contributed in the Computing fields by designing and delivering JAVA courses for Computing and ICT teachers teaching ICT and/or Computing at secondary level.
- As part of the ESF ECDL course, a number of visits in a number of ECDL tuition centres in various localities were carried out. Meetings were also held with MITA officials on a regular basis regarding Open Source software and applications.
- As part of the current ECDL framework, meetings were held in order to update the current office automation software used at schools. The office automation software used in secondary schools is currently being updated to MS Office 2010 and Windows 7.
- The job description of the Technician posts was reviewed in conjunction with other EOs who depend on technical support.
- Audio recording, editing and preparation for publishing of audio media were carried out in collaboration with staff from the Educational Assessment Unit to support the Benchmark examination.
- In view of the ICT syllabus reform, regular meetings and full participation were held and carried out with ICT stakeholders as part of the eSkills alliance. In this alliance, representatives from MITA, the industry and from various educational/post-educational institutes met for a number of times so that a set of requirements definitions and others issues was drawn up and a detailed and technical report produced.
- As part of continuous ICT education across all ages and for all people, an ICT radio slot was prepared and was broadcast live on RTK radio, once every two weeks. This programme addressed various fields of ICT. Listeners participated actively through telephone calls, e-mails and SMSs. The overall feedback was very positive.
- The Education Officer for ICT attended and participated in various conferences related to ICT such as EQAVET and ECVET to keep abreast with the latest developments in these important areas.

ICT Special Educational Needs Unit at the eLearning Centre

- The ICT Special Educational Needs (SEN) unit liaises with members of the school administration team, INCOs in the primary and INCO trainees in secondary schools to provide support and training of ICT related equipment across the curriculum.
- Throughout the year under review, there were 116 visits related to the following areas: support with methodology and ICT implementation for teachers and learning support assistants, support with training and implementation of ICT SEN in the classrooms installation, and training on the use of various assistive technology hardware and software. The ICT SEN unit conducted an intensive exercise to retrieve the equipment procured in schools between 2006 and 2009. During this process, the unit retrieved all the serial numbers for the equipment which was retrieved. A sticker coding system is currently being implemented for all the equipment loaned in schools since 2006.
- The person responsible for the ICT SEN Unit underwent various training initiatives during the year under review on Clicker 5, Fronter, IWB and Tobii.
- The unit is collaborating with FITA to produce a software program which, through the generation of key-word signs, builds a grammatically correct sentence using signs. This will be beneficial to students who rely on key-word signing as a means of communication. The unit was involved in the selection and writing of the specifications for a number of items in line with tender specifications. The equipment which includes specific hardware and software is geared to ensure that services for children with special needs are enhanced.
- The unit started compiling a draft document in line with guidelines for schools and colleges in the identification, evaluation, assessment, and procurement of assistive technology (AT) equipment in schools. Roles and responsibilities of all entities involved in the selection and implementation of the AT are

discussed. The guidelines also discuss storage, breakages, repairs and troubleshooting hardware and software.

- The person responsible for the Unit is a Board Member on the National Commission Persons with Disability and a Board Member on the FITA board of directors.

eTwinning National Support Service

- The main objectives of the eTwinning National Support Service housed at the eLearning Centre are to facilitate teacher communication across Europe, through the eTwinning Desktop and TwinSpace tools, to assist teachers in their professional development through courses, both face to face and online, contact seminars and professional development workshops, in Malta and abroad and to offer support to teachers who wish to register or have registered eTwinning collaborative projects.
- During 2011, the eTwinning National Support Service organised a wide range of training targeted at teachers across all teaching grades. The training included workshops or seminars for specific target groups, professional development sessions (after school PD sessions) for the whole school, online training opportunities and training for senior management teams in schools during college-based Council of Heads meetings.
- Apart from these audience specific seminars, the eTwinning National Support Service also organised one to one school visits for those teachers who required additional assistance. Teachers can book these individual sessions by contacting the National Support Service office by phone or e-mail.

Documentation and Teacher's Documentation Centre

The aim of the department was to deliver most of the books for scholastic year 2011-12 before the schools closed down for the summer recess. This occurred with the exception of Maltese textbooks which needed to be reprinted. The data from requisition orders from all primary and secondary schools were vetted before the final order request was forwarded to the Procurement Section. Schools were contacted when requests seemed unjustified in order to eliminate unnecessary expenditure on new books. Regular visits to school Textbook Stores were carried out.

Annual meetings with teacher librarians in the secondary sector and with Heads/Assistant Heads in the primary sector were held towards the end of October. A separate meeting for the Gozo College was held at Victoria. Books procured during 2011 for the primary sector amounted to a cost of €277,845, while those for the secondary sector were €208,513. The CMELD provided ten College Principals with a total sum of €52,780 to meet costs incurred in the implementation of the reform with regard to the Form 1 curriculum, especially the purchase of resources in the core subjects. Additional funds, €10,000, were sent to all schools in the secondary sector for the decentralised purchase of English and Italian reading books. The Education Officer (Documentation) participated in the United World Colleges (UWC) Malta Committee. Several meetings were held to discuss IB scholarships, summer courses and the roles played by the different members. Malta was awarded a full scholarship from UWC of the Adriatic. In February, all state and non-state schools received a circular regarding a two-year fully funded scholarship at the College of the Adriatic, a partially funded one at UWC USA and two unfunded ones at the UWC of the Atlantic. Interviews were held but only the Adriatic scholarship was taken up. The annual report was drawn up and all questionnaires sent by the central office in London were duly filled. Work was carried out in connection with the Resources Newsletter - three issues were published once again in 2011.

The sorting and weeding of duplicated material at the Documentation Centre was finalised and the Centre is available for teachers to access dissertations and other material.

RAYMOND J CAMILLERI

Director (Curriculum Management and eLearning)

Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education

Quality Assurance Department

The main highlights of the Quality Assurance Department (QAD) in 2011 were:

- the launch of the new Performance Management and Professional Development Programme (PMPDP) for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs);
- the development and start-up of the mentoring programme for NQTs;
- the renaming of the Non-State Sector to the Education Regulatory Compliance Section (ERCS);
- the widening of the remit of the QAD to include the Core Competences Strategy in the primary and secondary sectors.

EXTERNAL REVIEW SECTION

Expanding the Team

2011 saw the employment of the second group of five QAD Education Officers, bringing up the complement to eight members, together with another one chosen during December, specifically engaged to undertake external reviews. It was therefore essential that this team fully understood and internalised the philosophy and ethos of the QAD as emanating from the Education (Amendments) Act of 2006. This was accomplished by an induction and training programme of over 150 hours with QAD senior staff and foreign experts, as well as a vigorous continuous development programme. The training programme included involving the whole team in the review of previous inspection process in Malta and numerous school inspection regimes in Europe and around the world, and comparing these analytically to the Maltese context and the education vision of the National Minimum Curriculum and the Education Act. For this purpose and in order for the newly employed EOs to be exposed to what is happening abroad, a visit to the ESTYN inspectorates of Wales, in Cardiff, was organised.

SICI and QAD related activities

In 2011, various members of the QAD, the Director, Assistant Director and two of the EOs benefitted from being associate members in the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates, an international organisation that presently groups 31 entities. This membership opened access to regular high-level training opportunities for QAD staff, and direct input from the experiences of other inspectorates that has been instrumental in informing the QAD development process through attendance at various seminars and conferences held abroad. These experiences are of special benefit to QAD members in that they are exposed to different methods of quality assurance that are actually happening in these foreign countries. The following study visits were organised in 2011: Prague on 18 April; Oslo on 15-17 June; Amsterdam/Haarlem on 27-29 September; Stockholm on 23-25 November.

The QAD also took part in the election of the SICI Executive Committee. Another benefit of membership is that it enables us to access the profiles of 18 European inspectorates from whom a lot can be learned about good practices being applied in these European countries.

Strategic Partnership with Estyn, Wales

As one of the direct outcomes of SICI membership, the QAD established a strategic partnership with ESTYN, the Welsh Inspectorate, that has over 100 years of experience. This partnership is ensuring

regular high-level continuous professional development for the five newly-enlisted QAD EOs, as well as the quality assurance of the external review work of the QAD. Estyn provided the new QAD staff with external audit training in Wales.

Developing and implementing a new Quality Assurance framework for schools

The QAD has set up an infrastructure which is wholly transparent to all schools (state, church and independent) and which has enabled the department to conduct external reviews (i.e. inspection) without causing unnecessary stress to schools being reviewed. This has been proved true in all the 24 reviewed schools where the QAD efforts were met with apprehension in the weeks before the reviews, but which then resulted in satisfaction by all schools concerned with regard to the approach methods and results obtained.

The schools reviewed in 2011 were: Żabbar Primary B School; Archbishop’s Seminary Tal-Virtu Rabat; San Andrea Early and Middle Years; Ghaxaq Primary School; Xewkija Primary school; Gharb Primary School; St Monica Girls Secondary School B’Kara; Newark Junior School Gżira; St Angela KG Valletta; St Francis KG San Ġwann; Little Angels KG, B’Kara; St Francis KG Luqa; Fleurette KG Kappara.

During October, the QAD EOs reviewed a total of 11 schools which were due for a follow-up visit. These schools also served as a good training ground for the five newly-employed EOs to assimilate the ways and methods used by the QAD in their approach to schools being reviewed.

Various internal seminars and meetings were organised for the ongoing development of an External Review Protocol and Operating Procedures according to the arising needs and reforms which are taking place in the directorates. These and other key documents, which are regularly updated, are available at http://www.education.gov.mt/edu/qad/external_review.htm. To ensure that the QAD perspectives were in line with what is happening abroad, inspectors from England, New Zealand and Wales were engaged to assist in the professional development and reflection process of QAD staff.

School Profile

The ‘Our School Profile’ document, which was in use during the previous audits, had to be completely restructured to reflect the new mentality behind external reviews, that is, schools evaluate their own development processes and then the QAD verifies that such self-evaluation and development plans lead to school improvement. This has become an important tool for Heads of School to reflect upon their schools’ background, realities, achievements and challenges, as this document has to be built up as a reflective and collaborative exercise, in preparation for the school’s development review and planning process. Then the QAD will follow up all information provided and ensure that statements of opinion are evidence based.

Besides providing statistical information, the emphasis is now on the curricular vision and meeting the range of needs and interests of learners and of the quality of the learning process, besides taking into consideration the views of all stakeholders.

Reference guidelines for the external reviews and other documents

Upgrading the Reference Guidelines was another key task undertaken by the QAD education officers. This exercise also served as training ground to help them feel better prepared to conduct reviews in schools. The guidelines are primarily intended as an internal document that informs the judgement that review officers make about the quality of education experienced by learners in schools. However, the QAD felt it would be appropriate to disseminate these guidelines for transparency’s sake, so that all teachers and school administrators would have a clear understanding of the parameters of engagement that external reviews entail.

This enabled the QAD to send the message across nationally that teachers need the skill of evaluating their own practices while reviewing the effectiveness of their own schools. It is envisaged that the Reference Guidelines will inform the internal discussion in schools on school improvement to shed new light on areas which may have been ignored or need to be followed more closely.

Besides these, other documents have been finalised such as the Code of Ethics, the Protocol and the Handbook which contains all the documents used during an external review.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires regarding the perception of the schools' senior management teams regarding the impact of the council of heads meetings with the College Principals together with a separate questionnaire on the effectiveness of the Directorates were distributed to all schools with the resulting information being disseminated to those concerned. Feedback received from schools was uniformly very positive.

Another questionnaire was about the perceptions of SMT and Year 5 teachers. The results were disseminated to all schools and published in the national media. Lectures, describing the new approach to external reviews by the QAD, were also delivered to over 50 Kindergarten Assistants attending a course at MCAST and also to around another 40 PGCE students at the University of Malta

Meetings with Heads of School and Teachers in state and non-state schools

The QAD annually draws up a list of around 25 schools which are scheduled to be reviewed during the following scholastic year. This includes a sample from all sections, state and non-state, kinder, primary and secondary. The exercise was again carried out in 2011, following which, in September, a meeting for these Heads of School was organised at the National Curriculum Centre. The participants, which besides the 25 Heads included as well some Assistant Heads or, in the case of independent schools, Chairpersons of schools, were informed regarding the preparation of documents that will help schools adequately prepare themselves for the external review and what the new system of external reviews entails as it was felt of utmost importance for these Heads of School to be informed directly and personally of what to expect from the QAD and also what is expected from them before, during and after their school has been reviewed.

Schools are informed about five weeks in advance, by phone and by post that they will be hosting an external review and discussions are held with the Heads of these 25 schools prior to any scheduled visits. These meetings, held on a one to one basis by the Assistant Director External Reviews, help in smoothing the way so that the process of the reviews is achieved as smoothly as possible for the school to obtain the maximum benefit possible.

Subject Audits

The QAD also conducts subject audits as directed by the Director General. In 2011, three subject audits were conducted. One was on 'Personal and Social Education' in state schools and another is on the 'Let Me Learn' Programme. The 'Personal and Social Education' audit is in its final stages and is shortly expected to be presented to the proper authorities, while the audit of the Let Me Learn Programme has started and is in the process of distributing the questionnaires, while regular meetings among the audit members are being held.

The third subject audit, which reviewed the work of the Malta Writing Programme, was held in March 2011, on the occasion of its tenth anniversary. This was instituted to assess the validity of the adaptations of the National Writing Project model that have been implemented in the MWP Invitational Institute and to evaluate the effectiveness of the institute experience, its classroom applications, and the MWP family writing experiences. To obtain the data that would provide insights into such concerns, the reviewer

participated in the 2011 Invitational Writing Institute, observed primary and secondary classrooms in Malta and Gozo, met with Heads of schools in Malta and Gozo, attended Family Writing sessions, interviewed parents and students, conducted a focus group of MWP teacher leaders, spoke to a Teachers' Convention, visited Young Writers' Clubs, examined MWP documents, and visited various workshops. The reviewer was Prof Ann Dobie from the National Writing Project. The review and recommendations for changes in the work of the MWP were presented to the Director General, DQSE.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SECTION

Introduction

The main highlights of the School Improvement Section in 2011 were:

- the development and start-up of the Induction and Mentoring programme for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs);
- the launch of the new Performance Management and Professional Development Programme (PMPDP) for NQTs;
- the development and introduction of a Performance Appraisal system for newly appointed Education Officers in the QAD mirroring the PMPDP for NQTs;
- the development and implementation of a professional development programme for the QAD staff.

Development and start-up of the Induction and Mentoring programme for NQTs.

An induction seminar for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) was organised on 16, 19 and 20 September 2011 based on the experience and feedback obtained during the previous year's seminar. The aim of the seminar was to assist the NQTs in familiarising themselves with the structures of the two Directorates and to introduce the concept of induction and mentoring and the PMPDP. As in the 2010 seminar, NQTs from the church schools were invited to attend on the first day.

107 NQTs from the state sector attended the 2011 induction seminar. An analysis of the feedback forms compiled by the participants indicated an overwhelming positive response that superseded the already positive results of 2010. Participants were particularly satisfied with the organisation of the seminar (1.63 on a scale of +/- 2) and level of preparation of providers (1.71 on a scale of +/-2).

During the scholastic year 2010-2011, the induction and mentoring process for 2010-2011 catered for 52 schools evenly split between primary (26) and secondary schools (26). 143 NQTs were included in the induction and mentoring process. 56 heads of department (HODs) were designated as mentors and another 43 acted as IM coordinators. Another 13 people had the dual role of mentors and mentor coordinators. Nine NQTs were mentored by the Principals or QAD representative. A comprehensive evaluation of the induction and mentoring process was conducted. This included all the stakeholders involved, and included different methodologies [direct observation, questionnaires and focus groups] to allow for data triangulate. All stakeholders in the induction and mentoring process were asked to fill in an anonymous questionnaire. All the HODs and IM coordinators and 93% of the mentees returned the questionnaire. 97% of the mentees stated that they were extremely satisfied or somewhat satisfied of the mentor. Moreover, 82% of the mentees stated that they were extremely satisfied or somewhat satisfied of the mentoring process.

The QAD designed training courses for both mentors and IM coordinators. The mentoring courses were accredited by the Malta Qualification Council at Level 6 and were transferable. 112 mentors and IM coordinators completed the course work. Also, a call for application for prospective Teacher Mentors was issued before the summer recess, for which 163 applied.

During the scholastic year 2011-12, the Induction & Mentoring process for 2010-2011 catered for 155 NQTs that came from the post-secondary sector (seven), secondary sector (97), primary sector (24), peripatetic staff (17) and the resource schools (10).

103 were trained as Teacher Mentors during November and they were supplemented with 28 HoDs and Assistant Heads that did not fulfil the practicum element of the course during the scholastic year 2010-2011. Special arrangements were undertaken with the peripatetic staff and the resource centres to capitalise on the feedback received during the evaluation meeting of July 2011 and enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring process. Similarly, special arrangements were made with the Higher Secondary School. A course for IM coordinators was also organised and 35 people attended the course.

Initial feedback indicates that the courses provided maintained or exceeded the previous year's effectiveness.

Launch of the new Performance Management and Professional Development Programme for Newly Qualified Teachers

In September 2011, the new PMPDP for Newly Qualified Teachers was introduced during the induction seminar. Monthly sessions were organised to cater for the teachers employed during the scholastic year 2011/2012. Training sessions were also provided to all the EOs and HoS of the state sector. Feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive.

Familiarisation sessions were introduced to the mentors and induction coordinators reading the mentoring and induction coordination course organised by the QAD.

Development and introduction of a Performance Appraisal system for newly appointed EOs in the QAD

As of August 2011, all newly appointed Education Officers in the Quality Assurance Department are conducting a performance appraisal (PA) as an integral part of the probation year. The aim of the PA is to: speed up integration in the QAD, enable the EO to obtain feedback in a timely way, shift emphasis from a summative evaluation to formative developmental process, introduce internal practices that reflect the policy and objective of the QAD, and assist the appraiser in forming the overall judgment of the EOs performance in the probation year.

The process was based on a developmental model of PA but integrates the confirmation process previously adopted. Particular attention is given to skills and attitudes that enhance the effectiveness of EOs in their specific role including: improving self-awareness/knowledge, identifying and improving potential, enhancing employability, fulfilling aspirations, strengthening leadership traits and personal autonomy, and improving social abilities and teamwork.

Development and implementation of a professional development programme for the QAD staff

In line with the QAD's policy for staff continuous improvement, the professional development of its human resources was given priority. A training programme for all EOs, based on a three month rolling plan, was designed. The programme was designed to be flexible to the changing needs and aimed to tackle three aspects of learning: knowledge, skills and attitudes. The main focus of the 2011 programme was to enhance the soft skills of the EOs in particular teamwork, giving and receiving feedback and listening skills. Moreover all the internal methodologies and practices used aimed at fostering EOs self-esteem and leadership skills.

Staff in the QAD was also encouraged to apply for training courses abroad. All EOs applied and one was selected to attend training seminar. A twinning exercise was conducted with ESTYN and six QAD staff attended a one-week training programme in January 2011 that was purposely designed by ESTYN for the QAD. Links with ESTYN were continued and all newly-appointed EOs are to attend training and shadowing sessions in Cardiff in March 2012.

All participants were asked to identify areas of interest and were assisted to proceed with their professional development in these areas. All EOs attended at least two PD sessions during 2011.

Formal meetings were organised every month to complement the frequent informal meetings to ensure that the training programme was on track and meeting EOs expectations.

EDUCATION REGULATORY COMPLIANCE SECTION

The Education Regulatory Compliance Section is responsible for church schools, independent schools, and international schools, tuition centres and independent summer clubs. The main functions of this section are to regulate and ensure compliance on the part of non-state educational institutions, to register new schools, tuition centres and summer clubs, to approve the appointment of all staff recruited by church schools and confirm teaching staff in independent and international schools, and to ensure that all schools follow the National Minimum Curriculum and adhere to the National Minimum Conditions as listed in the Education Act of 1988 as amended in 2007, and the related legal notices.

The main tasks carried out by the Non-State Schools Sector during 2011 were:

- Preparations and conclusion of process to start formal Compliance Check Visits to non state schools. These are due to start in January 2012.
- Provide information and support to all church schools in connection with the education reform taking place.
- Approval of all staff members recruited by church schools and the determination of their relevant salary scale. The confirmation of recruitment of administrative and teaching staff by independent and international schools. In the case of independent and international schools, the reimbursement process to parents of children with a statement of needs for expenses incurred for services rendered by Supply/Learning Support Assistants under the “Supporting Learners in Independent Schools” scheme.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching and compliance to National Minimum Conditions of non-state schools. Necessary surprise visits were made to different schools and reports were drawn up, and recommendations passed on to the schools concerned.
- Complaints by parents were investigated and the necessary remedial action taken.
- School visits were held in non-state schools when necessary. Officials from the section attended Prize Days, Open Days, School Concerts, School Exhibitions and other activities organised by the schools. Officials attended these activities even when not held during school hours.
- Regular meetings were held with the Church Secretariat for Catholic Education to discuss the approval of teachers, administrators and non teaching grades, salary scales and other issues which came up during the year.
- Meetings were also held with representatives of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority to discuss plans submitted to the Section for the building of new schools or tuition centres or the extensions of already licensed schools or tuition centres. Visits were also made on site when necessary.
- Separate meetings were held with DSWS, ME and other entities.
- Collection and update of statistical data which includes school population, absenteeism, staff, SEC examination results and school fees. As from 2001, a record of absenteeism has been kept on a monthly basis. As from 2003, the collection of statistical data has been in line with that collected by state schools. A database has been set up to update statistical returns regarding absentees in non-state schools.
- Providing information requested in PQs.
- Statistics have been upgraded to record also Heads of Department, Guidance teachers, Teacher-Librarians and Health and Safety teachers in church secondary schools and complementary teachers in church primary schools.
- Compiling records of statements for students with individual needs. A new database was designed for statistical data re. Statemented students in non-state schools. A due diligence exercise was carried out.
- Ongoing support to non-state schools in the School Development Planning process.
- Consolidation of NSSIS procedures and support through on-site visits to all schools which requested help in submitting these statistics.
- Answering queries from the general public, teachers, parents and education officials regarding non-state schools and tuition centres and recruitment of teaching and non teaching staff.
- The Education Regulatory Compliance Section is also represented, through the Assistant Director, on the Verdala International School Board of Directors representing the Maltese Government.

- School staff lists are checked against approvals given and recorded in separate folders. Data about approved members of teaching staff in non-state schools is logged and updated regularly.
- A database has been set up for school licences of non-state schools.
- Registration of non-state summer schools as per Legal Notice 185 of 2009.
- Registration of child care centres as educational establishments.
- Providing information to schools about conferences/seminars/courses, including induction and mentoring programmes organised for state and non-state schools.
- Constant liaison with the Council for the Teaching Profession about the issuing of temporary and permanent warrants.
- Processing of applications by church schools for a Grant related to Eligible Expenditure for Works of a Capital Nature in relation to the reform regarding the transition from primary to secondary level.
- Finalising and signing a Service Level Agreement with Malta Enterprise in connection with the Business First project.
- A member of the section occupies the post of Inspector for European Schools.

The Education Regulatory Compliance Section assists authorised personnel from various entities to conduct research.

Church and Independent/International Schools

As in October 2011, non-state schools were providing education to 23,506 students (16,678 in church schools and 6,828 in independent/international schools).

Tuition Centre/Child Care Centres

In 2011, there were 70 tuition centres and 16 child care centres registered with the Education Regulatory Compliance Section. Registrations for both categories of centres are increasing every year.

Statistical Data about the Non-State Sector

The Education Regulatory Compliance Section is directly or indirectly responsible for about 40% of the total student population in compulsory education in Malta and Gozo.

Number of Schools in Non-State Sector

	Pre-Primary	Primary	Secondary	Post Secondary
Church Schools	32	27	22	4
Independent/International Schools	24	15	13	4
Total	56	42	35	8

Student Population and Number of Classes in Non-State Sector

School Population (at the beginning of Scholastic Year 2011/2012)					School Population (at the beginning of Scholastic Year 2011/2012)				
Church Schools Population					Independent School Population				
Sector	Male	Female	Total	Classes	Sector	Male	Female	Total	Classes
Pre-Primary	453	629	1,082	65	Pre-Primary	820	648	1,468	78
Primary	3,149	4,048	7,197	280	Primary	1,672	1,240	1,912	140
Secondary	4,059	3,598	7,657	313	Secondary	1,243	964	2,207	115
Post Secondary	388	355	743	18	Post Secondary	118	81	199	5
Total	8,049	9,630	16,679	676	Total	3,853	2,933	5,786	338

Teaching Staff in Church and Independent/International schools

Church Schools				Lay Teaching Staff 2011/2012			
Religious Teaching Staff 2011/2012					Male	Female	Total
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
Heads of School	7	17	24	Heads of School	6	8	14
Assistant Heads	2	10	12	Assistant Heads	16	50	66
Head of Department	0	0	0	Heads of Department	9	18	27
Complementary Teachers	0	1	1	Complementary Teachers	0	21	21
Teachers	15	10	25	Teachers	213	732	945
Instructors	0	0	0	Health & Safety Teachers	7	8	15
Supply Graduate Teachers	5	3	8	Instructors	3	8	11
Supply Teachers	1	1	2	Supply Graduate Teachers	18	72	90
Kindergarten Assistants	0	6	6	Supply Teachers	10	35	45
Kindergarten Assistants II	0	2	2	Kindergarten Assistants	0	39	39
Supply Learning Support Asst	0	1	1	Learning Support Assistants	0	6	6
Sub Total	30	51	81	Learning Support Assistants I	7	43	50
				Learning Support Assistants II	7	173	180
				Supply LSA	38	309	347
				Sub Total	334	1,522	1,856
Grand Total					364	1,573	1,937

Independent Schools			
Teaching Staff 2011/2012			
	Male	Female	Total
Heads of School	11	5	16
Assistant Heads	3	3	6
Teachers	84	251	335
Head of Department	0	4	4
Supply Graduate Teachers	22	69	91
Supply Teachers	11	51	62
Kindergarten Assistants	3	95	98
Supply Learning Support Assistants	5	52	57
Learning Support Assistants II	0	3	3
Total	139	533	672

Total Number of Teaching Staff in Church and Independent Schools			
Total Staff in Non-State Schools 2011/2012			
	Male	Female	Total
Church Schools	364	1,573	1,937
Independent Schools	139	533	672
Total	503	2,106	2,609

Approvals and renewals of staff in 2011

Approvals for staff in Church Schools	
Heads of School	2
Assistant Heads	18
Head of Department	4
Complementary Teachers	5
Teachers	178
Health & Safety Teachers	1
Supply Graduate Teachers	103
Supply Teachers	20
INCOS	1
Kindergarten Assistants	17
Learning Support Assistants	159
Supply Learning Support Assistant	151
Domestic/Cleaners	167
Operative	1
Secretary	4
Clerks	16
Computer Lab Technician	1
Science Lab Technician	6
Total	854

Approvals for staff in Independent/International Schools	
Heads of School	3
Assistant Heads	3
Teachers	38
Supply Graduate Teachers	67
Supply Teachers	6
Kindergarten Assistants	5
Learning Support Assistants	4
Supply Learning Support Assistant	67
Total	193

CORE COMPETENCES STRATEGY

In September 2011, the QAD was given the remit of coordinating Core Competences attainment support in the primary and secondary sectors.

Mathematics Attainment in the Primary

During the first term of 2011/2012, the team of Mathematics Support Teachers led by the EO for Mathematics in the Primary carried out an intensive action research project in four colleges so as to determine the quality of Mathematics teaching and learning and to assess the best way forward for teacher support in Mathematics attainment. The outcome of this research exercise was that the best way to support teachers in Mathematics attainment for all learners, including those at risk, was to ensure as effective a use as possible of the mandated Mathematics programme and attendant resources. It was concluded that the best was for this to take place within the remit of the Curriculum Department. An Action Plan in this sense was presented and approved; as from 2012 the Mathematics Support Teachers will be continuing its work within the Curriculum Department to better achieve its targets.

Literacy Strategy for 2011

The Literacy Strategy was launched in October 2010 for scholastic year 2010/2011. This entailed the reaching of six targets. The work to reach these targets was continued throughout 2011. During the year, the Literacy Strategy continued to be more positively received in schools and taken on board with deeper understanding and enthusiasm. This is now leading to the improved identification of those children requiring support and to the enhancement of classroom reading strategies. The literacy strategy is being implemented through the three different programmes which complement each other by different groups in the peripatetic service.

For scholastic year 2011/2012, the targets became more focused, as shown below:

- Ensuring the effective implementation of the Year 4 Action Plans
- Consolidating the effective use of checklists in Years 1-3
- Maximising teachers' support structure, by starting the Restructuring Complementary Service, focusing LST support, maximising LSA contribution, and enhancing external support.

PERIPATETIC SERVICE

The peripatetic service encompasses the following areas: Complementary Education; Literacy Support Service; and Malta Writing Programme. With such multiple-faceted teams, central support in the area of literacy has been expanded to all colleges and state schools.

Calls for applications for the above mentioned post of peripatetic teachers were issued and interviews held. The following table shows the number of applicants and the number of teachers chosen for each subject:

Applicants for Posts in the Peripatetic Service		
<i>Subject/Area</i>	<i>Applicants</i>	<i>Employed</i>
Complementary Education - Malta	18	11 ¹
Complementary Education - Gozo	Nil	Nil
Literacy Support Service - Malta	4	4
Literacy Support Service - Gozo	2	2
Malta Writing Programme	1	0
Total	25	17

¹ four were already serving as Class Teacher Support during scholastic year 2010/2011

The following table shows the number of teachers in each area/programme as on January 2011 and October 2011:

Teachers in the Peripatetic Service				
Area/Programme/Subject	January 2011		October 2011	
	Malta	Gozo	Malta	Gozo
Complementary Education	70 ¹	11 ²	79 ³	11 ⁴
Literacy Support Teachers	13	0	15	2
Malta Writing Programme	3 ⁵	0	3 ⁶	0
Total	86	11	87	13

¹ two on reduced hours, five Class Teacher Support, two on parental leave, three doing other work, four on pre retirement; ² one giving other service; ³ two CTS, one on parental leave, one on pre retirement; ⁴ one giving other service; ⁵ one on parental leave; ⁶ one on parental leave

Complementary Education (CE)

Complementary Education is an intervention programme for primary school learners who have not mastered the Core Competences in Literacy and Mathematics or who have fallen significantly behind in the class literacy and mathematics programme. They contribute to the implementation of the National Policy and Strategy for the Attainment of Core Competences in Primary Education.

The purpose of Complementary Education is to help these pupils to fill gaps in their knowledge of written and spoken forms of words, meanings of words, and meaningful contexts in which words function and to develop interconnection between these kinds of knowledge.

The number of children who were receiving the service is as follows:

Children attending Complementary Education					
January 2011			October 2011		
Year	Children in CE	Schools	Year	Children in CE	Schools
1	449 (24%)	49	1	6 (0.3%)	3
2	563 (26%)	57	2	597 (27%)	58
3	522 (24%)	59	3	644 (29%)	60
4	487 (24%)	58	4	560 (25%)	59
5	335 (19%)	47	5	235 (11%)	34
6	77 (21%)	9	6	173 (8%)	29

During scholastic year 2011/2012, there has been a shift from support given to all Year groups to focused support from the CE sector so as to cater for the demands of the early years especially of children in Year 4 who have a statutory action plan (SAP) drawn up by the school. This action plan shows how each identified learner, who has already been assessed and needs more help in achieving core competencies as identified through the Literacy checklist, is going to benefit from the support given as per his/her learning needs. Given that the Year 1 learners are still being identified and the first formal checklist assessment for these learners is done later on during the year, the October percentage reflects only a small portion of the number of learners that will be receiving support during the scholastic year 2011/2012.

Literacy Triads Scheme

During the first part of the year a new voluntary Triads Scheme was launched where primary school teachers together with teachers of Complementary Education and Literacy Support Teachers could work together to develop, implement and review individual or class-based learning plans that foster differentiated teaching and learning. 31 applications were accepted for this scheme. These triads operated in the second and third term of the scholastic year 2010/2011. It is envisaged that the scheme will run again next year. In all, by closing date of application (15 December 2011) there were 78 applicants: 67 from primary schools in Malta and 14 from primary schools in Gozo.

Intensive Support Programme

During the first five months of 2011, six state colleges benefited from the Intensive Support Programme offered. The Head of Department for Complementary Education worked with particular CE teachers in those colleges for a stretch of eight weeks addressing specific core literacy competencies. The other four colleges received said support during the first term of scholastic year 2011-2012.

Resource Packs

During the first months of 2011, the CE teachers under the guidance of the HoD produced a number of resource teaching packs which address all competences found in the first two literacy checklists. All the 90 CE teachers received a printed copy of the resource pack to be used in their in school support. In all, each resource pack given to each CE teacher comprised ten resource sets made up of 1,552 printed pages. These resources packs covered the Maltese and English checklists for Years 1 and 2.

Literacy Resource Centres in Malta and Gozo

The Literacy Resource Centre is housed at the National Curriculum at Hamrun. The Gozo Literacy Resource Centre is housed at Rabat Primary. The Resource Centre is still a separate entity but within the library building of the same school. The number of educators (mainly teachers and LSAs) who visited the Resource Centres in 2011 was 173 in Malta and 69 in Gozo.

Literacy Support Teachers in Primary Schools

During the first part of the year, the Literacy Support Teachers (LSTs) supported schools and teachers in interpreting and carrying out the checklists. They also supported schools in planning and devising the Statutory Action Plans for those children in Year 3, who continued to struggle and who consequently required a structured plan of intervention in Year 4. LSTs attended handover meetings with teachers in Years 3 and 4 and offered advice regarding the intervention programmes and required support. LSTs were also involved in meetings held with the SMT to devise the School Initiated Action Plan which identified the literacy needs and policy for the whole school.

In May and June, the LSTs together with a number of complementary teachers were involved in scoring the PIRLS comprehension scripts. Since this assessment was carried out in two languages and with all children attending the three school sectors, public, state church and independent, it was necessary to correct a total of 10,000 scripts. Scorers were given a full week's training on scoring procedures and techniques based on international standards and practice. The month of June was then dedicated to the scoring of scripts. Though this work hindered the LSTs from supporting teachers in schools, it nonetheless gave them a very focused insight into the general strengths and weaknesses of the comprehension skills of children at Year 5 level. Such information is now being relayed back to classroom teachers through SDPs and in-service training courses thus giving them the opportunity to extend their classroom practice in line with the PIRLS requisites.

LSTs were also invited to contribute to the in-service course targeted for Year 4 teachers. This course gave classroom teachers the opportunity to understand the national strategy, to come to terms with the checklists, and also to take on board the notion of differentiation – catering both for the highflier and lower achiever.

In October 2011, the number of LSTs increased to 17 - this meant that five colleges had two LSTs each while the Gozo College, though formally having no LSTs, now had the full complement of two LSTs. Unlike previous years, it was not possible to commence school visits at the beginning of October since LSTs were involved in identifying levels of attainment of a random sample of children at the start of Year 3 through the administration of Checklist Level 2. This meant that 30% of the Year 3 population had to be

assessed on both the Maltese and English checklists in order to determine levels of attainment. Though again this exercise proved time-consuming, teachers were again empowered with hands-on information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of children. They were able to note areas which proved to be difficult for all children and to give immediate feedback to the classroom teacher regarding the needs of the individual children assessed. This information, which will be gathered every year, will eventually serve as a national baseline for the beginning of Year 3.

The newly recruited LSTs were greatly supported by those already in place to understand the literacy strategy, the checklists and the implications of the work involved in literacy support. The new recruits quickly settled down and once testing was over, after having shadowed an 'older' LST for a short while they were able to contribute to literacy development in their new role.

Feedback from various stakeholders indicated concern regarding the contents and extent of Level 1 Checklist. Following deliberations, an abridged version was produced and circulated to schools. This abridged checklist can now be administered by the end of first term and outcomes will give Year 1 teachers clear indications of the skills which require further development before the end of the first year and the administration of the full checklists.

The main achievement of the Literacy Strategy team is the tangible contribution to the enhancement of literacy skills. Gradually, teachers are now more ready to embrace a wider variety of strategies for the purposes of reading development and enjoyment - following the various meetings held during curriculum time and also with the SMT more schools have accepted the concept of shared, paired and guided reading, have invested in new graded reading materials and are therefore enthusiastic to try out the different techniques. These aspects are in the process of developing but there is no doubt it augurs well for the future development of literacy.

Malta Writing Programme (MWP)

- *School Support:* The MWP worked with 15 state and non-state schools by providing 252 primary and secondary school teachers with the necessary support to implement the writing process methodologies. This was offered in the form of in-class teacher support, demonstration lessons as well as meetings with class teachers and Heads of School.
- *Implementation of the Writing Process in Schools:* St Ignatius College, Luqa Primary School, and St Joseph Mater Boni Consilii School Paola had committed themselves to the comprehensive implementation of the Writing Process methodology. In 2011, both were in the third year of this programme with MWP's continued provision of teacher training, creative writing resources, parental empowerment, weekly in-class support and mentoring. MWP delivered 60 demonstration writing lessons to the teachers within the project and held meetings with the schools' administration. Thus, the two schools were assisted in the process of developing in-house capability to continue implementing the writing process methodology with minimal support as from September 2011.
- *Closure Ceremonies at MWP Writing Process Schools:* Towards the end of the last scholastic year, two closure ceremonies were held at the following project schools: St Joseph Mater Boni Consilii School and St Ignatius College Luqa Primary. Both events were a fitting celebration of the work done over the three year support given by the MWP to both schools from October 2008 to June 2011. On these occasions the pupils had the sterling opportunity to exhibit and read out the creative writings they produced throughout this three year holistic implementation of the writing programme. The teachers also showcased examples of integration of the writing process in different areas of the curriculum and expressed their reflections on how the support given within this project has influenced their teaching.
- *Writing Sessions with Parents:* During this year, 211 parents participated in ten school writing activities held by the MWP on the requests of the respective school's Senior Management Team. The parents were given an overview of the writing process and had the opportunity to put pen to paper and write with their children.
- *Professional Development/INSET/Writing Workshops:*

- organised six two-hour PD sessions at the following schools: St Nicholas College Bahrija Primary, St Ignatius College Luqa Primary, San Ġorg Preca Pieta Primary and Paola A, Maria Regina College, Naxxar Primary and St Benedict College, B’Bugia Primary - a total of 211 educators attended these sessions;
 - a five-hour PD session was held at St Joseph Junior School Blata l-Bajda on 13 June, aimed at introducing the Writing Process to the 35 participating educators to make creative writing a more significant experience for their young learners;
 - organised two three-day in-service courses during at St Francis School Cospicua and at Theresa Nuzzo School Marsa respectively - a total of 71 educators attended this training;
 - held a training session for new teachers of Complementary Education during their induction course;
 - held follow-up sessions in schools of the respective 21 teachers who participated in the November - December 2010 training regarding Differentiation, in order to support implementation in the teacher’s own context;
 - delivered four writing process workshops during the one week Basic Skills Training attended by 28 teachers; in addition, three writing workshops were delivered during the Basic Skills training which spanned over the scholastic year 2010/2011;
 - held an end of school educators’ convention on 28 June where the participants shared ideas and resources linked with the teaching of writing.
- *MWP Training Programme on Differentiation 2011/2012*: This year’s training programme was open to teachers teaching Years 4, 5 and 6 and Forms 1 and 2 and was followed by 33 participants. These educators had to look at different ways of differentiated teaching and learning within the primary and secondary classrooms situations. Noteworthy is the way the participants grew as reflective teachers, as they observed and analysed the various strategies used by teachers and students who have internalised the Writing Process. The MWP held eight training days in different primary and secondary host schools, and mentored 11 host teachers, who delivered creative writing demo sessions. The participating teachers observed a total number of 22 sessions. In December, the participants met for a whole day follow-up group session to further discuss and review implementation of ways of making the teaching of writing a more meaningful experience for their learners.
 - *MWP 10th Invitational Writing Institute*: The MWP 10th IWI was held between 21 March and 15 April 2011, and its focus was: ‘Developing a Successful Differentiated Learning Classroom Environment’. The 19 participants had the opportunity to research and reflect upon different areas of curriculum development, namely learner autonomy, differentiated teaching, language development, teacher research and formative assessment. The participants also observed writing process methodology in two real classroom settings at different levels in different schools, namely at St Thomas More College, Żejtun Primary B and at St Ignatius College, Luqa Primary School. An anthology of the participating teachers’ writings was published.
 - *MWP 10th Anniversary Celebrations*: 2011 was the year that marked the 10th Anniversary of the inception of the MWP. For this occasion, Prof Dobie, a National Writing Project consultant, was invited to Malta to conduct a review of the MWP and to provide high-level training. The following seminars and training opportunities were held focusing on all areas of the programme namely, teacher training, school and teacher support, classroom implementation and family writing initiatives organised by FES:
 - a Teachers’ Convention held on 7 April 2011 on the theme ‘Developing Writing Skills across the Curriculum’. Participating educators explored how one views writing, what it means to use writing in different subjects and how one can tap this vital component of learning in the current national educational developments;
 - two high-level seminars for Heads of School and College Principals were held at St Ignatius College Luqa Primary School and at Victoria Boys Secondary respectively on the theme ‘Writing to Learn, Writing to Succeed’. During the seminars, Prof Dobie discussed issues of writing across the curriculum and writing under exam conditions. Participants had the opportunity to work through activities where they used writing to gain knowledge, think through ideas and apply learning strategies;
 - a seminar for teachers in Gozo on 13 April. Educators from both state and non-state schools participated in several hands-on writing activities and discussed with Prof Dobie issues concerning writing and literacy which they come across in class;

- a public seminar entitled: *Niktbu biex nirnexxu fl-eżami tal-benchmark tas-sitt sena* was held on 11 April at the Catholic Institute in Floriana. The aim of the seminar was to explore how one views writing and how one can prepare for the writing component of the exam. Parents' participation was very encouraging both through the numbers present as well as through the comments and questions asked.
- *Support to schools with regard to the Benchmark exams:*
 - in preparation for the introduction of the Year 6 Benchmark exams, a technical seminar was held on 22 March 2011 at the Catholic Institute Floriana for teachers of both state and non-state schools.;
 - a number of teacher support sessions regarding the benchmark exams were also held in all the state colleges and non-state schools by MWP teacher leaders where Year 6 teachers and members of the SMT had the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the written component of the Maltese and English Year 6 Benchmark exams.
- *Media Coverage:* Prof Dobie was interviewed by *The Times of Malta*. The article entitled 'On the future of writing' was published on 1 May 2011. Furthermore, MWP personnel participated in the television programme *Perspettiva* presented by Joyce Grech on Education 22 to promote the MWP 10th celebration activities.
- *Publications:*
 - In March, the MWP published a six page informative leaflet about Successful Differentiated Instruction which also included a number of reflections compiled by some of the participants of the previous November-December training who were eager to share their new reflections about teaching after implementing with their own classes what they experienced during the training.
 - Also focusing on Differentiation, was the production of a DVD which showcases different aspects of how differentiation is being implemented within the writing process methodology, especially through the use of the Writing Workshop set up and its positive effect on autonomous learning and teachers' reflective practices.
 - Tied also to the 10th Anniversary Celebrations the MWP published a set of six colourful posters which feature slogans about writing which were penned by teachers who attended training over the years.
- *Other achievements:*
 - Two MWP support teachers embarked on the Let Me Learn Process Training as a way of learning more to evaluate one's classroom practice in responding to learners' needs.
 - Both MWP support teachers participated in the Teacher-Mentor Training Course which consisted of a five-day (27.5 hours) input programme. The practicum will take place in second term of scholastic year 2011/2012.
 - The MWP submitted its position statement regarding the proposed NCF in view of its experiences in supporting schools.
 - The MWP developed and continually maintained its website: <http://mwp.skola.edu.mt/>. It has also continued to issue the newsletter *E Link* to update past participants of MWP training programmes with the latest events being organised.
 - A one-week Basic Skills Training Programme was organised for 21 teachers and seven Heads of Department in state and non-state secondary schools, and five psychologists from the Psychological Services. This was the fourth time such a course had been organised. Additionally, state secondary schools could apply for the Basic Skills Training Support Scheme, which offered funds for the purchase of resources and upgrading of physical space for the teaching/learning of Basic Skills. €20,000 were disbursed with this scheme.

Basic Skills Support in Secondary Schools

A one-week 25 hour training course was held between 14 and 18 February 2011, for teachers of Maltese, English and Mathematics. A total of 35 teachers attended (14 for Maltese, nine for English and 12 for Maths). The course provided both theoretical and pedagogical instruction and support for the participants. Teachers were also involved in specific practical training for their particular subject, coordinated by the respective Heads of Department. At the end of the course, participants attended a seminar with other

teachers who had followed a similar, longer course and shared experiences and practices by means of presentations and open discussions. All participants were awarded a certificate.

The End of Primary Benchmark results were analysed by the Literacy Strategy Team and the Assistant Director responsible for Student Assessment; guidelines were drawn up as selection criteria of students who performed below Level 4. Heads of Secondary Schools had to use these criteria to form basic skills classes at Form 1 Secondary. A set of interim guidelines were sent to schools. The finalised version is expected to be sent for scholastic year 2012/2013 after the necessary feedback will be received from Heads of School.

A diagnostic tool was developed for the three core subjects by the respective Education Officers. It was administered in the first weeks of scholastic year 2011/2012 by class teachers to students of Form 1 Basic Skills. This was to be an indicator of the linguistic and numeracy skills of the students and was intended to help teachers identify the strengths and weaknesses of the individual student so as to plan the teaching programme accordingly and with respect to the new Form 1 subject curriculum. The diagnostic tool was to assess all language strands and both mental and written calculations. The test was developed in such a way as to be used in other sessions as a progressive and continuous assessment tool to help teachers monitor the progress of their students.

For the teaching of Maltese, the QAD embarked on a pilot project using a set of resources created by the Paolo Freire Institute and several other NGOs. The QAD was granted permission to pilot the use and determine the adequacy of *'Iċ-Ċavetta'* for the teaching of basic skills in Maltese for secondary Form 1. A whole set of resources was distributed to schools who had a basic skills class and the respective teachers were given instructions by the authors on the rationale and multiple use of the said resources. At the end of the academic year teachers who have used the resources are to provide feedback on the appropriateness of this multi-sensorial package and to advise QAD whether it was beneficial in the teaching of basic skills in Maltese.

As from the beginning of the 2011/2012 scholastic year, teachers involved in the Form 1 Maltese basic skills classes have been attending a weekly one and a half hour support meeting with the respective Education Officer. During these meetings the teachers have been given support by the EO and Head of Department on different teaching methodologies that can be used in class and on actual good practices being used as well as on available resources. These meetings proved fruitful since ample time was dedicated to the sharing and discussing of pedagogy that mostly fits the needs of the basic skills student. The EO also visited the teachers in class and discussed with them their good practices and offered suggestions and advice.

During these Thursday meetings, a whole-group approach was adopted for the setting of a common half-yearly exam paper. Since it is a multi-task assessment paper, participants were divided in groups and each produced a section. Each section was thoroughly discussed and amended by the whole group to suit all levels of students. Guidelines on the administration of this particular paper were also discussed within the group and presented for the approval of the Education Assessment Unit and the Literacy group. After these were approved they were disseminated to schools and will be applied both for the half-yearly and annual examinations. Feedback on this exam paper is expected from the teachers in order to ameliorate the annual paper which will be centrally set.

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

The European Schools (ES) Inspectors attended the February Joint Board of Inspectors, Joint teaching Committee and Board of Inspectors' Meetings in Brussels and made confirmation visits to two of our three teachers. Positive evaluation reports were submitted. The number of pupils in ES is: Brussels - 40; Luxembourg - 14; Varese - 2; Helsinki - 1.

Discussions were concluded with the University of Malta to ensure general access to Junior College and the University of Malta courses through the Baccalaureate certification available at ES.

In September 2011, new Inspectors for Primary and Secondary were appointed and the Secondary Inspector was also selected to participate in the Languages Working Group which discusses regulations for the teaching of languages in ES.

In line with developing ES language learning policy, the ES inspectors participated actively in discussions on the status of the teaching of Maltese, specifically that of designating Maltese as Other National Language (ONL) along with Irish and Finnish. This proposal was agreed in principle by the Maltese Government, and the Maltese inspectors worked on the ONL syllabus. This syllabus will be discussed during 2012.

OTHER WORK

During 2011, the QAD was involved in the consultation process of the National Curriculum Framework. This included participation in many meetings with civil society stakeholders, parents and teachers, and the coordination of the National Conference in December 2011 and the development of all related consultation tools and resources.

The QAD also led the implementation of the Grant Scheme for Non-State Schools investing in capital expenditure to improve their education provision.

The QAD contributed to policy and programme development in various aspects of the curriculum, such as the vocational strand in compulsory education, and the training of newly appointed Assistant Heads and Heads of School.

ALEXANDER SPITERI
Director (Quality Assurance)

Research and Development Department

OVERVIEW

The Research and Development Department has six main areas of responsibility, these being:

- Housing the Eurydice National Unit
- Implementing international studies nationally
- Collating education statistics
- Coordinating the feedback to the European Commission on education and training indicators and benchmarks
- Coordinating the Education and Training Expert Groups
- Aiding and regulating research in state schools.

EURYDICE

The Research and Development Department houses the National Unit of the Eurydice Network and coordinates all Maltese activities associated with this European network. The Eurydice Network provides information on and analyses of European education systems and policies. During 2011, the network was composed of 38 national units based in all the 33 countries participating in the EU's Lifelong Learning programme (EU Member States, EFTA countries, Croatia and Turkey). The work of the Eurydice Network includes the formulation and publication of descriptive studies and comparative analysis as well as the collation of indicators and statistical data.

The R&D Department has the responsibility of monitoring, drafting and disseminating accurate and comparable information on the Maltese education system within the wider landscape of European education.

During 2011, the Maltese Eurydice National Unit participated in and completed the following projects:

- Drafted the Maltese contribution to the electronic publication *Organisation of School Year 2011-2012* which is a comparative analysis on how the school year is organised across member states of the Eurydice Network.. The collated information covers both primary and secondary education and includes national facts detailing the length of the school year together with the distribution and length of school holidays. Information is also given about the academic calendar of post-secondary and tertiary level institutions.
- Coordinated and reviewed the studies *Mathematics Education in Europe: Common Challenges and National Policies* and *Science Education in Europe: National Policies, Practices and Research*. The aim of these studies is to give a comparative overview of existing national realities and to identify practices and policies which improve the teaching of both subjects and their take up by students at higher levels of education. Both mathematics and science have been identified by the European Commission as a priority area for the first ET 2020 cycle.
- Coordinated and reviewed the study *Teaching Reading in Europe: Contexts, Policies and Practices*. The aim of this study is to investigate and disseminate existing good practice and research findings on reading performance among students. It covers both primary and secondary education cycles.
- Coordinated the collection and verification of data for the *Thematic Study on Citizenship Education* which is due to be published early in 2012. The study aims to promote civic participation and a stronger sense of citizenship and deals with the provision of citizenship education in schools.

- Provided information for updating three Eurydice databases, these being that on *Recommended annual taught time in full-time compulsory education in Europe, 2009/10*, the database on *Teachers' and School Heads' Salaries and Allowances in Europe, 2009/10*, updated the *Structures of Education and Training Systems in Europe: 2009/10 Edition* and also updated the summary fiche on Maltese education now called *National system overview on education systems in Europe:2011 Edition* following a new format to reflect developments which have taken place during 2011. Section 9 of this overview, entitled *Ongoing Reforms and Policy Initiatives*, has been restructured to reflect the ET 2020 strategic priorities adopted by the EU education ministers in May 2009.
- Finalised the study *Key Data on Learning and Innovation through ICT at school in Europe*. This study presents a comparative analysis based on different sources, combining statistical, descriptive and empirical indicators. The main focus of the study is the use of ICT to promote innovation in educational processes as well as to foster the creative development of students.
- Collated data and information for the forthcoming publication *Key Data on Education in Europe 2011*, which provides a comparative analysis of European education systems by means of qualitative and quantitative performance indicators.
- Updated indicators and provided information for the preparation of the publication of *Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2011* to be published by Eurydice in 2012.
- A major undertaking of the Research and Development Department was the work connected with the drafting, writing and finalising of the fourteen chapters that make up the Eurypedia – a newly launched online encyclopaedia covering 38 European education systems. This encyclopaedia aims to help people understand better the education systems in Europe by providing up-to-date information, including policy measures and recent educational reforms.
- Provided an information service by regularly answering to the many requests for information regarding various aspects of our education system. These requests originate both from local as well as trans-border sources.

This Department also promoted Eurydice work through the participation in conferences and the dissemination of its publications and other material among Maltese stakeholders. Eurydice publications can be accessed at the following address: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

During 2011, another major commitment of the Department was the implementation and management of international studies at national level in both state and non-state schools. International research is one of the tools available within the Education Directorates which plays an active role in helping policy makers and practitioners arrive at informed decisions for school improvement. These studies also provide an evaluative snapshot of the national education system within an international perspective. The Department's staff works closely with schools to organise training sessions for school coordinators and test administrators as well as to ensure the actual administration of the field trials and the studies themselves in the schools. During the implementation of these international studies, the Department is also responsible for the setting up of a help desk to respond to the various queries that arise during the actual studies. The Department acknowledges the cooperation of the College Principals, the Heads of School and their staff in successfully implementing these international studies in our schools.

During 2011, the following international surveys were carried out:

- Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
- European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC)
- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).

PISA

After submitting the Maltese database in 2010, the Department, together with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), went through the data for cleaning and checking purposes. Through May up till the end of August, the Department was involved in reviewing the draft chapters of the international report prior to the final publication. The finalised version of the international report for PISA 2009+ was published in December 2011. This report provides a comparative analysis of the ten PISA 2009+ participant countries as well as with the participant countries in PISA 2009.

ESLC

In 2005, the European Commission presented the Communication ‘The European Indicator on Language Competence’. The communication outlined an approach for the creation of a European survey to collect data necessary to construct a Language Indicator. ESLC is a major initiative of the European Commission to support the development of language learning. The survey covers the first- and second-most taught foreign languages in the countries participating in this survey. Its main aim is to provide a baseline profile of the skills and competences in reading, writing and listening of students in two foreign languages. Maltese students were tested in English and Italian. All students were tested in two of the three language skills of writing, reading and listening.

The study also sought to collect data on contextual factors impinging on the learning/teaching of foreign languages through the administration of a background questionnaire to students. At the same time, the study also offered the possibility of establishing trend indicators in language skills in previous cycles that result from the ongoing design and cyclical nature of the data collectors. The study intends to provide a framework based on current research and theory and important understandings about what is being measured and also understand important links to public policy. Finally, the study provides an information system that can be assessed and used for further dissemination and policy analysis.

The Department was responsible for the routing test carried out in December 2010. The purpose of the routing test was to assign students an appropriate level of the language skill in the main study. The Main Study was carried out in January 2011 in all secondary schools. A sample of 1,500 Form 5 students for each language was eligible to participate. The Department organised training for School Coordinators and Test Administrators. Besides the student questionnaire, the study also included two background questionnaires administered online to Heads of School and language teachers. The Department worked closely with the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department (CMeLD), which sent language Education Officers for training in scoring students’ scripts. The results of this study will be published in 2012.

TIMSS AND PIRLS

Malta participated in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) as these happened to be administered at the same time, thus providing a comprehensive assessment of three essential subjects – mathematics, science and reading at Year 5 level. Both international studies are organised by IEA (the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement). The main studies of both PIRLS and TIMSS were administered in April 2011.

TIMSS 2011

TIMSS aims to measure students’ achievements in Mathematics and Science in over 50 educational systems around the world and reports every four years on the achievement of pupils in Year 5 and students in Form 3. It is designed to measure and interpret differences in national educational systems in order to help improve the teaching and learning of mathematics and science worldwide. Besides the achievement test, students also completed a background questionnaire. Heads of School and class teachers also had to

answer a specific background questionnaire. Information from these questionnaires provided the contextual framework in which the learning/teaching of mathematics and science takes place.

During 2011, the Department administered the main study to Year 5 pupils coming from both state and non-state schools. In preparation for the main study, Assistant Heads of School and teachers from the participating schools were trained as School Coordinators and Test Administrators respectively. Background questionnaires and test items were adapted to avoid cultural bias. In collaboration with the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department, scoring of Main Study items was carried out by peripatetic science teachers after having undertaken the necessary training.

PIRLS 2011

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) investigates student achievement in reading literacy. All Maltese Year 5 pupils took part in the main study. Pupils were assessed in both Maltese as well as in English reading literacy. In view of this the Department coordinated the translation of the international reading passages into Maltese following strict quality assurance procedures. PIRLS also includes a number of instruments to collect contextual data. One of these instruments, the Home Questionnaire, which is answered by parents of participating pupils, included a Maltese and an English version to facilitate completion. PIRLS scripts were scored by Complementary Teachers and Literacy Support Teachers. This exercise also served as a professional enriching experience since it provided these teachers with feedback on the difficulties encountered by students in their reading. Data from the contextual questionnaires and the scoring exercise were then entered into a database and sent to IEA after performing data cleaning routines.

In July 2011, the Department organised a half-day seminar for scorers of international studies, Education Officers, Literacy Support Teachers and Complementary Teachers. During this event, head scorers presented feedback on how Maltese pupils performed in both TIMSS and PIRLS. At the end of the seminar scorers of the international studies were awarded a certificate acknowledging their contribution to the successful implementation of these international studies.

STATISTICS

The compilation and analysis of statistical data is another area that is the responsibility of the Research and Development Department. Data is sourced from the Students/Teachers/Schools (STS) System for state schools and from the Education Regulatory Compliance Section of the Quality Assurance Department for schools from the non-state sector. Data collection focuses mainly on pupils, students and teaching staff. Some data is still being collected through the medium of the quarterly returns as this data is as yet not collated by STS. The analysis of the data provides objective indicators utilised for the planning of educational initiatives and policy formulation by all departments within the Education Directorates. Data is also made available, on request, to researchers, other government departments as well as to national and international agencies.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING INDICATORS AND BENCHMARKS

Staff from the Department was appointed to participate in various EU expert groups in relation to the ET 2020 strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training. Department officials attended the Cross Curricular Competences (Learning to Learn, Creativity and Entrepreneurship) and the Adult Skills expert groups meetings and also participated in the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks (SGIB).

COORDINATING THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING EXPERT GROUPS

The Department is also responsible for coordinating the dossier on the benchmark on learning mobility. This includes the collection of data for the formulation of an indicator on cross-national learning mobility. In fact a preliminary meeting was organised by the department to get feedback from a number of entities and agencies that can contribute to the measuring of this indicator and to streamline measures which may increase the participation rate of Maltese students.

REQUESTS FOR LOCAL RESEARCH

Another important contribution of the Research and Development Department is to encourage, support and monitor research in education locally. Such research, including that carried out by university students, is conducted either in state schools or by examining Education Directorate documents.

During 2011, the Department provided support in various forms to the following entities and academics to conduct research:

- The Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) was assisted in identifying the sample size and the students that made up the sample for its survey which aimed to explore the perception of secondary school students *vis-à-vis* an IT-related career.
- The Quality Assurance Department was provided with a sampling framework and sample for a study conducted amongst Year 3 pupils with the aim of exploring the use of the Core Competences checklist.
- Lecturers from James Madison University in Virginia were supported in conducting a study amongst a sample of secondary school students. The purpose of this study was to empower adolescent students to construct and tailor a physical fitness workout plan to meet their individual health-related needs in an effort to combat obesity and promote long-term healthy lifestyles. 40 students (20 males and 20 females), ranging from 11 to 14 years of age and coming from two state schools, participated in this study.
- Personnel from the Department also participated in various workshops which were set up to give their views on the research areas in connection with the National Sexual Health Policy.
- During 2011, the Department assessed and approved 225 requests for research to be carried out in state schools by university students, researchers and academics.

The university courses that benefited from the Department's support are indicated in the table below:

Requests for research in State Schools - 2011	
Course	No of Requests
Bachelor of Education	90
PGCE/Post-graduate Certificates	36
BA/BSc/BEng/BCom	16
MA/MEd/MSc./MBA	59
PhD	8
Diploma	5
Publications	11
Total	225

On completion of their research programme, researchers submit a copy of their research to the Documentation Centre of the Education Directorates. In order to promote future studies, these documents are available for reference and perusal at the Documentation Centre of the Education Directorates.

The Department also compiled an extensive report on education initiatives with regard to the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Participation in Study Visits and Conferences

The Department was invited to give a presentation to a group of foreign experts who were on a study visit to Malta organised by CEDEFOP, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. The title of this particular visit was 'Bolstering Education in Malta through Restructuring and Empowerment' with a particular focus being placed on reforms in national education and training systems.

The Department was also invited to participate in a conference organised by EuroGuidance entitled Current Challenges facing Career Guidance. During this conference, the Department illustrated its role in educational policy making in Malta and the work of the Eurydice Network and the services it offers. It also took the opportunity to promote Eurypedia among participants.

Contributions to the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) Consultation Process

The Department took part in the National Curriculum Framework consultation process by giving input in the formulation of the questionnaire that was distributed to all teaching staff. The Department's personnel then analysed the 3,692 replies and comments from this questionnaire and presented the findings to the Director General, DQSE.

Coordinating the Ministry's Input to Malta's NRP

Towards the end of the year, the Department was assigned responsibility for coordinating the formulation of the Ministry's initiatives within Malta's National Reform Programme (NRP).

RAYMOND CAMILLERI
Director (Research and Development)

Directorate for Lifelong Learning

The Directorate for Lifelong Learning (DLLL) was set up in June 2009. Its mission is to:

- design a national strategy in lifelong learning;
- bring about coordination in this sector by making optimal use of diverse lifelong learning opportunities;
- lift the barriers for participation in adult learning so that the overall participation is increased;
- adopt the Action Plan on Adult Education as set out by the European Commission;
- address the imbalances in participation in order to achieve a more equitable state of affairs;
- nurture creativity and promote the visual and performing arts;
- provide undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships in order to create more opportunities for further specialisation at higher levels of education, therefore increasing the availability and employment of high-level graduates in the priority sectors of the knowledge-based economy in Malta.

ADULT LEARNING UNIT

The Adult Learning Unit is responsible for Evening Classes, Adult Basic Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Courses, Courses for Non-Maltese Nationals, Courses in Collaboration with NGOs and Local Councils, the Lifelong Learning Centre and the Schools of Visual and Performing Arts.

In October 2011, 13,213 learners registered for courses offered by the Adult Learning Unit, of which 66% are female participants. Overall, there was an increase of 33% in the number of participants over the previous year.

Evening Classes Centres

As one of the leading providers of Adult Learning in Malta and Gozo, the Adult Learning Unit is offering a number of courses in 10 different evening classes centres. There are 95 different subjects in the evening classes centres in Malta and 24 courses in the evening classes centre in Gozo. These courses vary in levels, type and depth and in the comprehensive number of learners attending evening and adult classes amounting to 258 adult classes.

Evening classes are also referred to as second chance opportunities for adult learners. Lessons are normally of duration of three contact hours per week, normally after 17:00. For the 2011/2012 courses, the number of adult learners who registered for the evening classes courses was 4,224. This figure does not include the Literacy and Numeracy courses, the Maltese/English as a foreign language courses as well as other courses leading to the 1st level on the Malta Qualifications Framework which are being hosted in a number of local councils. These statistics are provided separately in this report.

The table below provides statistics on the age and gender of attendees in the evening classes centres:

Evening Classes Courses 2011/2012						
Age Group	11-20yrs	21-30yrs	31-40yrs	41-50yrs	51-60yrs	60+yrs
Male	194	241	256	180	178	287
Female	247	532	486	373	552	698
Total	441	773	742	553	730	985

Coordinators

An Evening Classes Coordinator is assigned to each or more than one evening classes centre, mainly to ensure the smooth running of the courses. A detailed job description on the role of the Evening Classes Coordinator was formulated this year with the objective of amplifying the roles and responsibilities. As from 2011/2012, the coordinators' role included that of ensuring the quality of learning by giving ongoing professional development to the adult educators under his/her care and to perform regular support class visits while helping adult educators develop the adult learners' lifelong learning portfolio. As from 2011, the coordinators attend monthly meetings in order to review, link and bridge the work ethics and ethos of the Directorate for Lifelong Learning. Nineteen out of the 51 educators who applied to take the role of an Evening Classes Centre Coordinator were selected and are linked to the several services offered by the Adult Learning Unit.

Adult Educators

2011 was a record year for the number of individuals who applied under one or more of the 14 public calls to serve as adult educators. 778 individuals applied to give their services as Adult Educators with the Adult Learning Unit and 364 were selected to render their services during 2011-12. Due to the oversubscription in a number of evening courses, the Directorate for Lifelong Learning issued further calls for adult educators for certain specific subjects.

Marketing of the Evening Adult Learning Courses

A prospectus was published for the academic year 2011/2012 and included a brief course description and reference to the levels of the Malta Qualifications Framework in most subjects. The 2011/2012 prospectus included for the first time the time-tables of all the evening classes centres, as well as the time-tables of the morning classes (Lifelong Learning Centre) and the schools of Drama, Art and Music. The prospectus also included for the first time all courses offered in Gozo. The contents of the printed prospectus were available online www.eveningcourses.gov.mt.

Promotion of the evening courses took place through newspaper adverts and posters together with leader boards on 2 online local news media portals. This year, the launch of the Adult Learning Courses took place in Valletta, during a press conference presided by Hon Minister Dolores Cristina.

Validation of learning on the European Qualifications Framework – MQF and VET

The Adult Learning Unit continued its work to produce a number of course descriptions offered at the evening classes centres in line with the requirements of the European Qualifications Framework and the Malta Qualifications Framework. For this purpose, detailed course descriptions of 145 different courses were sent to the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC) for their approval. The course descriptions included the reference to the Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning, the rationale and details on the expected learning outcomes including knowledge and understanding, skills and competencies. These course descriptions refer also to the number of credits, explanation on how the learning outcomes are to be assessed, requirements for the specific course and finally a list of recommended material/books/literature.

As from 2011, the 17 crafts courses related to Fashion, Textiles and Design were designed to reach Level 1 on the Vocational and Educational Training (VET). These included: Bavarian Monastery, Beaded Techniques, Card Making, Cottage Crafts, Creative Knitting, Crochet, Curtain Making, Embroidery, Ganutell, Gold Embroidery, Lace making, Ladies & Gents Garments, Macramé, Monastery Works, Parchment, Patchwork and Ribbon Works.

ADULT BASIC LITERACY & NUMERACY AND BASIC IT SKILLS

It is the aim of the Directorate for Lifelong Learning to decentralise courses leading to MQF Level 1 into the community. These courses include the Adult Basic Literacy (Maltese and English) and Numeracy Skills (Mathematics) course. The basic literacy courses (Maltese and English), as well as Numeracy skills (Maths), are aimed at adults who fell back in the compulsory schooling and ended up with no qualification in any of these basic subjects. These courses aim to reach Level 1 on the Malta Qualifications Framework.

Moreover, the DLLL considers basic computer literacy as another skill to be offered to adult learners, so much so that a number of courses called ‘Computer Awareness’ reaching the Level 1 (basic) on the Malta Qualifications Framework are also on offer. However, due to logistical reasons (computer labs and other equipment), the Computer Awareness courses are offered at some of the evening classes centres. On the other hand, both the Literacy & Numeracy courses and the Computer Awareness courses are also on offer during the morning classes at the Lifelong Learning Centre (Msida).

The figures below indicate the Literacy & Numeracy courses offered at community level (local councils) and at evening classes centres (including the LLLC, Msida):

- 153 adult learners registered for Maltese MQF Level 1 classes hosted at local councils, while 517 registered for Maltese MQF Level 1 at evening classes centres.
- 283 adult learners registered for English MQF Level 1 classes hosted at local councils, while 584 registered for English MQF Level 1 at evening classes centres.
- 33 registered for Maths MQF Level 1 classes hosted at local councils, while 467 registered for Maths MQF Level 1 at evening classes centres.
- 208 adult learners registered for the Computer Awareness Courses.

Hence, the total number of adult learners registered to attend for the Numeracy, Literacy and Basic IT courses amount to 2,245 adult learners.

The Malta Qualifications Council deems this General Education Award (15 credits) in either Maltese, English, Maths and Computer Awareness to be at Level 1 of the Malta Qualifications Framework and of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. This award gives access to the certificate holder to progress to the next level of education and training. The certificate holder can progress to a General Education Award at MQF Level 2 which is equivalent to SEC Grade 6-7.

An award-giving ceremony presided by the Minister of Education and the Parliamentary Secretary for Public Dialogue and Local Councils was held at Pembroke on 14 December 2011. Adult learners were given a formal award, with the qualification on the European Qualification Framework (MQF Level 1), for a number of subjects. During this event a mayor, an adult educator and three adult learners shared their experiences with the audience.

Networking and Collaboration with Local Government

During 2011, the DLLL and the Department for Local Government continued collaborating together on the scheme called ‘Lifelong Learning’ which was launched in 2010. Besides the Adult Literacy (Maltese & English) and Numeracy (Maths) courses hosted by local councils, the DLLL offered other courses amongst which: Energy Saving Initiatives at Home, Spanish, Italian, French, German and Maltese as a Foreign Language.

Thirty-eight local councils entered this scheme; however services were delivered according to the number of registered adult residents. In those localities where the number of learners was relatively low, the DLLL encouraged the residents to take up the course of their choice in a nearby locality.

The table below shows the subjects offered in 24 local councils which were hosting such courses. It is important to highlight that there are 19 classes for English, 13 classes for Maltese and three classes for Maths. 1,063 adult residents registered for one or more of the courses offered at local councils under this Lifelong Learning Scheme.

Adult Courses in collaboration with Local Councils 2011-12		
<i>Subject/s offered</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Locality of Local Councils where course is being offered</i>
Maltese	MQF Level 1	B'Kara, Bormla, Fgura, Gzira, Kalkara, Naxxar, Pieta', Qormi, Rabat, Siggiewi, Tarxien, Żabbar, Żejtun
English		B'Kara, Bormla, Dingli, Fgura, Gudja, Gzira, Hamrun, Kalkara, Nadur, Naxxar, Paola, Pembroke, Qormi, Siggiewi, Żabbar, Żejtun, Żurrieq
Mathematics	MQF Level 1	Fgura, Rabat
French	MQF Level 1	B'Kara, Sliema, Tarxien
German	MQF Level 1	Gudja, Iklin, Sliema
Spanish	MQF Level 1	Dingli, Fgura, Iklin, St. Paul's Bay, Siggiewi, Sliema
Italian	MQF Level 1	B'Kara, Gudja, Naxxar, Siggiewi, Sliema, Tarxien
Energy Saving Initiatives at Home	Certificate of Attendance	Balzan, Gudja

Courses for Non-Maltese Nationals

Non-Maltese adults residing in Malta continued to show interest in learning English and/or Maltese as a Foreign Language. As at December 2011, 44 males and 101 females were attending the course Maltese as a Foreign Language while 28 males and 52 females were attending the English as a Foreign Language course.

A coordinator was assigned to develop the EFL and MFL programme. In fact a scheme of work and a standardised syllabus was developed towards the end of the 4th Quarter of 2011, as well as a standardised lifelong learning portfolio for all adult learners including assessment tools – thus qualifying these courses to be level rated by the Malta Qualifications Council.

Courses in collaboration with other government entities and NGOs

A number of protocol/agreements between a number of entities and the DLLL were established. During 2011, the DLLL offered a service to nine different organisations.

Adult Special Classes		
<i>NGO/Entity</i>	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Learners</i>
<i>FSWS</i>		
<i>- Dar iż-Żernieq</i>	<i>Basic Maltese & English</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>- Aġenzja Sapport</i>	<i>Lifeskills</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Caritas</i>	<i>Maltese MQF 1</i>	<i>6</i>
	<i>English MQF 1</i>	<i>6</i>
	<i>Computer Awareness MQF 1</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>FITA</i>	<i>Computer Awareness MQF 1</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>ECDL Core</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>National Council of Women</i>	<i>Computer Awareness MQF 1</i>	<i>8</i>
	<i>ECDL Core</i>	<i>24</i>
	<i>English MQF Level 1</i>	<i>25</i>
	<i>Maltese MQF Level 1</i>	<i>9</i>
	<i>Mathematics MQF Level 1</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>FES (Youth.Link)</i>	<i>Various subjects</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Downs Syndrome Association</i>	<i>Basic ICT skills</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Paolo Freire Institute</i>	<i>Maltese MQF 1</i>	<i>9</i>
	<i>English MQF 1</i>	<i>13</i>

<i>Adult Special Classes</i>		
<i>NGO/Entity</i>	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Learners</i>
<i>AFM</i>	<i>Basic Maths</i>	<i>55</i>
	<i>Maths MQF 1</i>	<i>381</i>
	<i>Basic Maltese</i>	<i>51</i>
	<i>Maltese MQF 1</i>	<i>375</i>
	<i>Basic English</i>	<i>52</i>
	<i>English MQF 1</i>	<i>384</i>

Teaching of ECDL

During 2011, the Adult Learning Unit ran courses in ECDL Core, Advanced and Web Editing. These courses were attended by hundreds of students, many of whom sat for ECDL tests in our ECDL Approved Test Centre. The Centre organised test sessions on three various occasions during the year, namely April, June and December. Learners normally sit for different modules ranging from one to seven tests. The following are tests statistics:

ECDL Core						
<i>Session</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Tests</i>	<i>Passes</i>	<i>Failures</i>	<i>Tests not attended for</i>	<i>% Pass</i>
April	238	519	435	62	22	83.82
June	104	129	116	7	6	89.92
December	162	404	334	43	27	82.67

The Unit also catered for adult learners with different abilities, ranging from visually impaired to wheelchair users. These adult learners are referred to from the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA). These tests were conducted on a one to one basis during the year. These learners apply for special needs accommodation such as, extra time, reader, special equipment, separate testing room and such other facilities. These facilities were granted by ECDL Malta. The centre was equipped with special software and other facilities to cater for such candidates. The results obtained by these learners were 100% passes.

For ECDL Advanced, four independent tests were held, covering Database, Presentation, Spreadsheets and Word Processing. During 2011, several courses were held and at the end of each course tests were organised with the following statistics:

ECDL Advanced								
<i>Session</i>	<i>Candidates/Tests</i>	<i>Database</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Spreadsheet</i>	<i>Word processing</i>	<i>Pass</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Absent</i>
February	33	0	8	21	4	27	6	0
April	63	38	25	0	0	56	7	0
June	70	7	26	21	16	57	7	0
December	79	14	13	24	28	65	11	3

The above also includes a number of learners attending the courses offered at the Lifelong Learning Centre, Msida and subsequently sitting for tests. Ten adult learners sat for the ECDL Web Editing test, six of who obtained a pass.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

In order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching personnel within the DLLL, during 2011 a number of in-service training and staff development sessions were conducted. The training for adult educators focused on the NQF and its impact on the adult learning sector; developing course descriptions and learning outcomes for new subjects (MQF and VET); assessment of learning outcomes and how to provide evidence that the learning outcomes are achieved by adult learners; and sharing of good practice.

As from 2011, CPD for coordinators is taking place on a monthly basis. The focus is on the adaptation of the new roles as Centre/Subject Coordinators and different assessments to ensure quality in adult learning.

LEARNING CENTRES

Lifelong Learning Centre

For the adult morning courses starting in October 2011, 933 adult learners registered to attend learning sessions at the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLLC) Msida.

Lifelong Learning Centre						
	12-16 yrs	17-24 yrs	25-40 yrs	41-50 yrs	51-65 yrs	65+ yrs
Male	2	16	22	14	67	65
Female	5	26	151	124	311	130
Total	7	42	173	138	378	195

During the scholastic year 2011-2012, 38 courses were offered at the Lifelong Learning Centre which has the aim to reach a particular level on the European Qualifications Framework:

- Computer Awareness MQF Level 1, ECDL Core MQF Levels 2-3, English MQF Levels 1, 2 and 3, English as a Foreign Language MQF Level 1, French MQF Level 1 & 2, German MQF Levels 1, 2 & 4, Health & Safety MQF Level 1, Health, Well-Being & Successful Ageing MQF Level 1, History & Appreciation of Art MQF Level 1, Italian MQF Levels 1, 2 & 3, Maltese MQF Levels 1, 2 & 3, Maltese as a Foreign Language MQF Level 1, Mathematics MQF Levels 1 & 2, Philosophy MQF Levels 1 & 4, and Spanish MQF Level 1, 2 & 3.
- Bavarian Monastery VET Level 1, Creative Knitting VET Level 1, Embroidery VET Level 1, Ganutell VET Level 1, Lace Making VET Level 1, and Monastery Work VET Level 1.
- Flower Arranging Certificate of Attendance, Keep Fit Certificate of Attendance, Yoga Certificate of Attendance, and Photoshop Certificate of Attendance.

English as a Foreign Language MQF Level 1, Maltese as a Foreign Language Level 1, Philosophy MQF Level 4, all the Craft VET Level courses as well as Yoga and Keep Fit courses were offered for the first time for academic year 2011/2012.

On 2 March 2011, a Resource Room for Adult Learners was officially inaugurated within the Lifelong Learning Centre by the Minister of Education, Employment and the Family. A set of books was donated for the Resource Room by the Minister on the occasion. Throughout the last months, various adult educators teaching at the Lifelong Learning Centre and Evening Classes Centres have made use of such resources. The resources were distributed among adult learners by the adult educators who borrowed and returned them regularly on a rotation system.

The School Hall was refurbished with the aim of serving also as a Conference Room. Different entities, organisations as well as personnel from the Directorate for Lifelong Learning have utilised it for staff training purposes, meetings and conferences.

The milestones in terms of Adult Education within the Lifelong Learning Centre towards the last quarter of 2011 included: offering courses at MQF and VET levels, thus presenting adult learners with the opportunity of progressing from one level to another in their lifelong learning journey; and working on a plan to introduce a set-up and framework with regard to Lifelong Guidance.

Schools of Visual and Performing Arts

The Directorate for Lifelong Learning is responsible for the School of Art in Valletta, the Mikelang Borg Drama Centre in Blata l-Bajda, and the Johann Strauss School of Music in Valletta. There are three schools in Gozo: Wistin Camilleri School of Art and Crafts in Ghajnsielem, School of Music in Sannat and the Drama Centre in Nadur.

In October 2011, 4,463 were registered and attending any of the six schools of visual and performing arts. This shows an increase of 54% on the attendance in 2008 in the same schools.

Apart from the vast range of courses in expressive and creative subjects, these schools organise various cultural initiatives and take part in several national events.

On the setting up of the Directorate, initiative was taken to network these schools and work on projects collaboratively. Two meetings for the officers in charge of these schools were held during 2011. All schools are working to bring their courses in line with the European Qualifications Framework.

School of Art, Valletta

As from October 2011, the School of Art this year is offering 18 courses and 667 individuals are registered. The creative process in Fine Arts is the prerogative of the courses offered. For the first time, courses are offered throughout the whole week, as on Wednesday the school of art is offering three new courses in Junior Art for students from 7-11 years of age; Creative Techniques in life Drawing & Painting; and a Free Art course, besides the Gold & Silver Smithing and History and Appreciation of Art Courses.

Learners are also provided with the opportunity of studying and working from the life model, under the tutorship and supervision of their respective tutors. All art courses aim to reach a particular level on the Malta Qualifications Framework.

School of Art, Malta - 2011/2012						
	10-16 yrs	17-24 yrs	25-40 yrs	41-50 yrs	51-65 yrs	65+ yrs
Male	29	33	53	50	116	63
Female	28	55	54	53	95	38
Total	57	88	107	103	211	101

The School of Art is very active all year round. During the summer months, an Art Enrichment Activity is open, for which learners from the age of seven are allowed to participate. 87 persons took part in 2011. To commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, on the initiative of the Adenau German-Maltese Association, 40 German and Maltese students from the school put up an exhibition of their work at the German Maltese Circle in Valletta. Students also participated in a national stamp design competition by MaltaPost, commemorating the International Year of Forests. Ms Nicole Sciberras's stamp design was awarded first prize. The stamp also participated in the Best EUROPA stamp contest amongst all official EUROPA stamps.

Participation in the *Notte Bianca* is a fixed appointment on the school calendar. An exhibition of works of art by the school's learners was inaugurated by the Hon Minister at the Ministry at Palazzo Ferreria.

The School of Art was also very active in other national events, such as the ETC Employment Enrichment Fair, the Careers and Conventions Fair, World Children's Day at the Palace, and Europe Day at Ta' Qali National Park.

On the initiative of the Malta Cultural Institute, learners from the School of Art participated hands-on during the National Marian Concert held at the Balluta Carmelite Church in St Julians.

During the Easter recess, as part of the History and Appreciation of Art programme, a number of adult learners, under the tutorship of Mr Chris Attard, went on a study tour to Florence, where they visited important art galleries like the *Uffizzi Pitti*, *l'Accademia*, *Santa Maria Novella*, *Santo Spirito*, *San Marco*, *Santa Croce*, *Il Carmine*, *Santa Maria del Fiore*, *il Battistero*, *Museo del Opera del Duomo*, and an important exhibition to Pablo Picasso and Salvatore Dali.

The Graduation and Prize Giving ceremony was held on 3 June 2011. Special prizes for outstanding achievement, progress and participation were awarded.

An Open Day was held on Sunday 4 July. The public was able to visit the studios where various evening courses are held. Four well-attended public lectures were organised during 2011, topics being: ‘San Carlo Borromeo- His Iconography and Cult in Malta’; ‘Hospitaller Armour Representations in Art and The Grotesque Manerist Decorations at the Palace Armoury’; ‘Intaglio – Artistic Printmaking’ and ‘Maltese Sculpture in the 20th Century-With emphasis on Maltese Scholarship Holders in Sculpture since 1925’.

To commemorate the European Year for Voluntary Work, the School Council at the Malta School of Art took the initiative to organise an art exhibition entitled ‘Heritage in Stone’ with the support of the Housing Authority. The aim of this exhibition was to stimulate and motivate art students to enhance their creative competences and give them the opportunity to exhibit work collectively. Two exhibitions were held - one at the Ministry for Gozo in Victoria, and the other at the Carmelite Priory at Mdina. These exhibitions were inaugurated by the Minister for Gozo and the Minister for Education, respectively.

Throughout the year the school opened its doors and offered its facilities to post-secondary students from the Junior College, Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary, and St Aloysius’ College, so that they complete their Aesthetic and Technology projects related to the Systems of Knowledge. Students from the University of Malta and the National Restoration Unit at Bighi conducted research work at the School’s archives. Students specialising in art as part of their BEd (Hons) course attended hands-on sessions at the School of Art. The School continued to invest in its specialised library service. The school’s Library now has well over 1,000 lending Art books. The School of Art also loaned paintings, sculptures and etchings to be exhibited in national exhibitions.

Wistin Camilleri School of Art and Crafts, Ghajnsielem, Gozo

The Centre has been growing steadily in the recent years, with the 2011 population reaching 1,530 participants in one or more of the 59 art and/or craft-related courses offered .

School of Art and Crafts, Gozo, 2011-12							
	Under 10 yrs	11-20 yrs	21-30 yrs	31-40 yrs	41-50 yrs	51-60 yrs	60+ yrs
Male	56	151	67	42	40	44	94
Female	75	116	95	121	164	199	266
Total	131	267	162	163	204	243	360

The Centre allows its premises and equipment to be used for the running of courses provided by corporations and other government entities, including:

- a project by Heritage Malta which are giving lectures at EQF Level 1 in respect of ESF Project 1.31 Wood CPR: Education and Training in Wood Conservation-Restoration;
- a project which the Centre is developing with Agius De Soldanis Girls Junior Lyceum, whereby students attend for sessions in Design and Craft techniques;
- Students who are assisted by the Learning Support Zone programme at the Ninu Cremona Boys Secondary School attend this Centre for a tailor-made and flexible programme of sessions in crafts. This programme is aimed to meet the needs of students, while being supported to remain engaged within the educational structure;
- A social worker in Psychiatric Social Work Services from Tal-Ibraġġ Hospital, in collaboration with the Centre, organises classes in clay and papier-mâché for service users at ta’ l-Ibraġġ Hospital Community as part of a rehabilitation programme.

The Centre is in a continuous process to improve the quality of learning. New courses, such as Artistic Print Making, Lathe techniques in Wood and Book Binding are introduced. Additional equipment was acquired for the course in Metal Works as well as in Lathe and Milling Techniques in Metal. Both the milling machine and lathe, give an added value to the process implemented in the execution of metal works ranging from welding process to plasma cutting, *ferro battuto*, etc. In May 2011 the Centre purchased *torchio* machinery which enables incisions.

With the introduction of the new course in Book Making, new equipment was required such as the hot foil printing machine. The Art Room was further upgraded to meet the needs of the learners.

The Centre participates in various exhibitions so as the learners have more opportunities where to show their talent. During the year the Centre participated in several events, among which were Grune Woche Berlin 2011, the Gozo Regional Carnival 2011; a Europe Day activity, Notte Gozitana, Malta Trade Fair and other events.

Mikielang Borg Drama Centre, Blata l-Bajda

In 2011, the Malta Drama Centre registered a record intake of 541 learners.

Mikielang Borg Drama Centre, 2011-12							
Age Group	0-10yrs	11-20yrs	21-30yrs	31-40yrs	41-50yrs	51-60yrs	61+yrs
Male	54	30	4	2	3	2	1
Female	203	131	41	35	20	14	1
Total	257	161	45	37	23	16	2

There was a complement of 26 adult educators and the courses on offer included: Acting & Drama, Arabic Classical Dance, Classical Ballet, Community Theatre, Costume Design, Drama for Personality Development, Flamenco, Flamenco Choreography, Freestyle Dance, History and Appreciation of the Theatre, Musical Theatre, Stage Makeup, Voice Technique for Acting and Drama, and Zumba Dance.

Senior students also entered the London Academy (LAMDA) Performing Arts Higher Certificate and Performing Arts Diploma - 127 students sat for LAMDA examinations at Grades 3 – 8, with a 100% success rate. These are the results obtained by students attending Mikielang Borg Drama Centre during 2010/2011:

Success in Exams				
	LAMDA	RAD	TC (UK)	FLAMENCO
Distinction	78%	4%	100%	100%
Merit	19%	92%		
Pass	3%	4%		

The Malta Drama Centre is committed to promote and give exposure to the learner acquisition of the knowledge, skills and competencies learned. In this regard, several performances and initiatives took place throughout the year, including regional public performances, outreach programme, a concert, open days for parents, filming amongst others.

In January, one of the adult educators who coordinates the Community Programme at the Drama Centre attended a Grundtvig Lifelong Learning Active Laboratory and Empowerment workshop in Krakow, Poland.

In September, the Flamenco adult educator represented the Malta Drama Centre in Seville, Spain and negotiated two exchange programmes with the Manuel Betanzos Dance School of Seville.

Opportunities for graduates of the Malta Drama Centre are opening up, particularly in the field of television drama. An increasing number of certified students are also being recruited by local stage companies, while others are pursuing further theatre studies at upper secondary and tertiary level.

School of Drama, Gozo

During 2011, the Gozo School of Drama organised three courses at various levels including: Acting and Drama, Ballroom and Latin American Dance and Classical Ballet. Besides, the school offers a course in Aerobics. 320 learners registered for these courses by October 2011.

Gozo School of Drama, 2011-12							
Age Group	Under 11	12-16	17-24	25-40	41-50	51-65	65+
Male	17	3	2	0	0	1	1
Female	175	82	14	10	12	2	1
Total	192	85	16	10	12	3	2

During the year, the school successfully prepared students for the London Academy of Music and Drama (LAMDA) Certificate in Solo Acting in various grades. It was also successful in preparing its Ballet students for the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) graded examinations. School of Drama students were successful in both International examination sessions as shown below:

Success in Exams		
	LAMDA	RAD
Distinction	62%	9%
Merit	38%	74%
Pass		17%

During 2011, the School of Drama held its End of Year Celebration Concert in May apart from putting up two concerts for the festive season. The learners performed in various activities organised by other organisations.

Johann Strauss School of Music, Valletta

The Johann Strauss School of Music offers tuition to 964 learners who registered in October 2011. 300 of these students also attend theory and harmony classes.

The 28 courses of offer are: a two-year introductory course for children aged six and seven, theory and harmony, jazz theory, composition, flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, bassoon, French Horn, trumpet, althorn, tuba, trombone, euphonium, violin, viola, violoncello, classical, bass and acoustic guitar, jazz improvisation, percussion, piano, harp, classical and pop voice training. Students also have the opportunity to play in duos, trios, quartets or in a number of ensembles - the junior violin ensemble, the wind band, the clarinet choir, the cello quartet, the flute ensemble.

The Music Outreach Programme which was introduced by the DLLL is now in its second year. This programme caters mainly for instrumental tuition at MQF levels one and two. Theory classes were also introduced this year at the Sta Lucia centre.

Tuition takes place at six different centres namely: St Benedict College Girls' Secondary, Sta Lucia; St Benedict College Boys' Secondary, Kirkop, St Clare Primary School, Pembroke; St Nicholas Primary School, Attard; Maria Regina Girls' Secondary, Mosta; St Ignatius Boys' Secondary, Qormi.

Johann Strauss School of Music, 2011-12						
Ages	0 to 10	11 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 39	40 to 59	60+
Females	160	95	132	55	18	9
Males	172	102	132	50	23	20
Total	332	197	260	105	41	29

During 2011, students were given the opportunity to participate in a number of concerts in all its outreach centres. These were open to students and to the general public. There were also a number of out-of-school activities such as *Il-Festa taċ-Ċitru*, European Week, lunchtime concerts and formal events such as the signing of a protocol with the Vincenzo Bellini Conservatory, Italian National Day and the National Book Award Ceremony.

School of Music, Gozo

During the year, 441 learners registered to one or more of the 11 music-related courses on offer at the Gozo School of Music. Learners attended courses in theory and harmony, pianoforte, violin, modern and bass guitar, flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, drum kit and voice. Students between the age of five and eight started a two year 'Introduction to Music' course, the focus of which is on aural training and music making in an atmosphere of play and enjoyment.

Gozo School of Music, 2011-12							
Age Group	5-10yrs	11-20 yrs	21-30 yrs	31-40 yrs	41-50 yrs	51-60 yrs	60+ yrs
Male	140	76	4	3	1	1	6
Female	119	73	4	6	3	2	3
Total	259	149	8	9	4	3	9

Various activities were organised by the Gozo School of Music:

- in March 2011, a Parents' Week was held during which parents could attend their children's lessons and discuss their progress with their respective teachers;
- in April and July, violin students participated in workshops with French music students organised by a French organisation *L'Invitation*. At the end of these workshops they took part in the concluding concert;
- during the 2nd term, different instrumental recitals were held at the Exhibition Hall in Victoria. An informative session entitled *Introduction to the Instruments* was held for 7 – 8 year olds and their parents during which the various instruments available at the school were presented. Young students learning these instruments then gave a short recital;
- during September, Pianoforte, Violin, Clarinet, Brass and Voice students participated in Master Classes organised by the Victoria International Arts Festival. Two Christmas Concerts were also organised. The School String Ensemble, String Quartet and Brass Quintet took part together with a good number of students attending the school.

The School's publication *The Buzz* was distributed regularly each term to all students, as well as the general public.

Green Paper on Lifelong Learning Strategy

A Green Paper that proposes a Lifelong Learning Strategy was presented to the Minister of Education, Employment and the Family in May. Several meetings with various stakeholders took place. In November, a presentation was made at a special meeting of the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development which was held at Hotel Phoenicia, Floriana.

Participation in European Fora

During 2011, the Directorate for Lifelong Learning was very active in the European fora. The Director of Lifelong Learning continued to attend the Thematic Working Groups meetings on 'Languages for Jobs'. A policy document was published in May.

The Service Manager (Lifelong Learning) was active on the Thematic Working Group on 'Adult Learning' which ended with a European Conference which announced the 'Action Plan on Adult Learning' in Budapest in March.

In October, the Service Manager (Lifelong Learning) was nominated to represent Malta on the Thematic Working Group on 'Quality in Adult Learning' and member of the Core Group of such. The newly appointed Education Officer (Lifelong Learning) is representing Malta on another Thematic Working Group 'Financing Adult Learning'.

The Service Manager was nominated as the National Coordinator for the implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning.

SCHOLARSHIPS UNIT

Strategic Educational Pathways Scholarships (STEPS)

The STEPS scheme was launched in January 2009. The scheme offers bursaries to address areas of national priority as identified within the Operational Programme II – *Empowering People for more Jobs and a Better Quality of Life* – for the implementation of Cohesion Policy in Malta for the period 2007-2013. STEPS is co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

STEPS supports an increase in the number of students following post-graduate courses, increasing the availability and employment of high-level graduates in the priority sectors of the knowledge-based economy in Malta.

The Scheme provides scholarships which address four focus areas under the first priority axis of this programme. The four focus areas are: Capacity building in the education system; Addressing skills mismatches; Research and Innovation in Science and Technology; and Information and Communication Technology.

Seven calls have been issued so far, since 2009, three of them during 2011, as follows: Fifth Call: 1 November 2010 – 17 January 2011; Sixth Call: 1 May 2011 – 15 June 2011; and Seventh Call: 1 October 2011 – 30 November 2011.

For the Fifth Call, a total of 159 applications were received, of which 20 were for doctoral programme of studies. 17 withdrew their application. Of the remaining applications, 41 were deemed ineligible. Of the 101 applicants interviewed, two failed to obtain a pass mark. 83 applicants were awarded a scholarship. The following table shows the distribution of scholarships per priority area.

STEPS – Fifth Call		
	Doctoral	Masters
Capacity Building in Education	3	13
Addressing Skills Mismatches	1	26
Research and Innovation in Science and Technology	5	17
Information and Communications Technology	N/A	18

For the Sixth Call, a total of 292 applications were received, 27 withdrew their application. 215 applicants were found eligible and 213 of these obtained a pass mark. 150 were awarded a scholarship. The following table shows the distribution of scholarships per priority area. As from this Call onwards, no applications were accepted for doctoral degrees because scholars need to obtain their final results by end of 2013.

STEPS – Sixth Call		
	Doctoral	Masters
Capacity Building in Education	N/A	32
Addressing Skills Mismatches	N/A	68
Research and Innovation in Science and Technology	N/A	39
Information and Communications Technology	N/A	11

For the Seventh Call there was a total of 143. At the time of compiling this document, the process of eligibility and interviewing was at evaluation stage.

Malta Government Scholarship Schemes (MGSS)

The scheme offers two categories of scholarships: Postgraduate and Undergraduate.

The Postgraduate scheme was introduced in 2006 and is issued in June. Between 2006 and 2011, the following scholarships were awarded under this scheme:

PG Scholarships Awarded 2006 – 2011						
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Doctoral	13	13	13	32	32	14
Masters	20	33	25	15	23	19

The Undergraduate scheme was introduced in 2007 and is issued in August. Between 2007 and 2011, the following scholarships were awarded under this scheme:

UG Scholarships Awarded 2007 – 2011					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Awarded	25	169	122	136	180

Malta Arts Scholarships (MAS)

In 2010, the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family introduced a new scholarship scheme, entitled Malta Arts Scholarships (MAS), with the following objectives:

- to provide more opportunities to promote specialisation in the arts, including performance, music, dance, design, creative writing, film and the visual arts or any combination thereof;
- to support individuals who are exceptionally talented in any field of the arts so that one is able to pursue a programme of studies leading to a specialised level in the arts.

46 applications were submitted in 2011.

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom again invited Malta to nominate a number of candidates who are interested to pursue 12 – 36 months of either a full time taught or a doctoral post graduate qualification or a 12 months' non-degree study in the UK on a split-site basis to aid the completion of a doctoral degree undertaken at a University in the home country.

In October, DLLL issued a call under this Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan. 11 applicants applied and Malta nominated four. They still have to undergo the screening process by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and therefore are not automatically entitled for the scholarship.

MARIO AZZOPARDI
 Director (Lifelong Learning)

Examinations Department

The main objectives of the Department are to:

- organise examinations for the induction and progression within the Public Service;
- process registrations together with the organisation and conduct of examinations on behalf of the MATSEC Examining Board;
- act as agent for overseas Examining Boards and to process and conduct examinations on their behalf;
- offer a differentiated service delivery through the full use of e-government facilities;
- uphold and improve on the quality of the Department's service to ensure equity, impartiality and fairness throughout all its operations.

The main objective of the Department of Examinations is centred on the continuous excellent service this office provides for the organisation of examinations. The Department is commissioned to conduct examinations by various examining bodies, most prominent of which are the University MATSEC Board, University of London, EDEXCEL and all the local public examinations. ECDL tests in government schools are also now an established event in the department's calendar.

The organisation of the SEC and MATSEC examinations draws a substantial portion of the Department's resources year after year. Some 7,138 students applied for the SEC and 3,865 registered for the MATSEC May session, while 2,127 and 1,286 applied for the September re-sits respectively. Comprehensively this works out at over 69,112 individual sittings throughout the year. Initial work consisted in providing accommodation for all the candidates in the 25 exam centres distributed in Malta and Gozo, besides providing examination facilities to inmates at Corradino Correctional Facilities and candidates who may be recovering in hospitals. The appointment and distribution of 500 invigilators and supervisors, the compilation and posting of timetables and provide the necessary arrangements for candidates with special needs. This year the number of candidates who were granted special arrangements amounted to 450. Five briefing sessions were organised for all the supervisors and invigilators outlining their duties and responsibilities to ensure their best contribution during examinations.

Apart from the MATSEC exams, the Department conducts various other examinations on behalf of several other examining bodies, both local and foreign, such as EDEXCEL London, foreign universities diplomas and degrees, local public exams, ECDL in schools, English as a Foreign Language and others.

ANALYSIS OF 2011 EXAMINATIONS

Secondary Education Certificate and Matriculation Examinations

Secondary Education Certificate May 2011

- Candidates who sat for the Secondary Education Certificate examinations May 2011 – 7,138
- Candidates who sat for the September 2011 Re-sits – 2,127
- Candidates who qualified for waiving of fees on social security grounds – 498

Matriculation Certificate Examinations May 2011

- Candidates who sat for the Matriculation Certificate in May 2011 – 2,379
- Subject entries - 4,758 entries at Advanced Level and 9,516 at Intermediate Level
- Candidates who qualified for waiving of fees on social security grounds – 12

Narrowly Failed Candidates May 2011

- Candidates who sat for the Matriculation Certificate – Narrowly Failed Examination in May 2011 – 138
- Subject entries - 85 entries at Advanced Level and 175 at Intermediate Level
- Candidates who qualified for waiving of fees on social security grounds – 1.

Advanced and Intermediate Level Single Subjects Examinations May 2011

- Candidates who sat for the May 2011 session for Advanced and Intermediate Level Single Subjects Examinations – 1,348
- Subject entries - 1,522 entries at Advanced Level and 1,033 at Intermediate Level
- Candidates who qualified for waiving of fees on social security grounds – 17

September Re-Sits 2011

- Candidates who sat for the September 2011 session for Matriculation Certificate, Advanced and Intermediate Single Subject Examinations and for Narrowly Failed Examinations – 1,286
- Subject entries - 816 entries at Advanced Level and 1,047 at Intermediate Level
- Candidates who qualified for waiving of fees on social security grounds – 11

2011	May	Subject Entries		September	Subject Entries	
		Advanced	Intermediate		Advanced	Intermediate
Matsec Certificate	2,379	4,758	9,516	1,286	816	1,047
Narrowly Failed	138	85	175			
Adv & Int Single Subjects	1,348	1,522	1,033			

2011	May	Subject Entries	September	Subject Entries
SEC	7,138	46,730	2,127	3,430

Special needs arrangements

Requests for special arrangements during MATSEC examinations were all referred to the MATSEC Support Unit of the University of Malta. These were considered by the Special Needs Committee.

SEC Special Arrangements	May 2011	409
	September 2011	101
Advanced & Intermediate Special Arrangements	May 2011	35
	September 2011	5

Edexcel International London Examinations – January 2011 and May/June 2011

Edexcel London examinations are held twice a year, in January for the winter session and in May/June for the summer session at Ordinary and Advanced Level. The January session offers a limited number of subjects, while the May/June session subjects are offered on a wider scale. As in previous years, there was a constant decrease in the number of entries.

Session	Applications	Special Cases	Revision of Papers
January 2011	59	0	2
May/June	1,490	21	3

Analysis of Results

Edexcel London 'O' Level – January 2011			
Subject Code	Subject Name	Sat	Pass
7011	Accounting	7	5
7040	Biology	3	0
7042	Human Biology	3	0
7120	Economics	1	0
7161	English Language	34	17
7361	Mathematics (Syllabus B)	3	1
7540	Physics	1	0
Total		52	23

Edexcel London 'A' Level – January 2011			
Subject Code	Subject Name	Sat	Pass
9011	Accounting	3	2
9BI07	Biology	3	3
9CH07	Chemistry	3	3
9PH07	Physics	3	3
Total		12	11

Edexcel London 'O' Level – May/June 2011			
Subject Code	Subject Name	Sat	Pass
4AC0	Accounting	323	197
4BI0	Biology	113	87
4CH0	Chemistry	128	122
4EC0	Economics	101	41
4EB0	English Language	1,123	576
4ET0	English Literature	1	0
4FA0	A&D: Fine Art	40	14
4FR0	French	10	7
4GE0	Geography	1	1
4GN0	German	2	0
4HB0	Human Biology	7	3
4HI0	History	1	1
4MB0	Mathematics	34	15
4PH0	Physics	126	104
4SP0	Spanish	2	2
4TU0	Turkish	1	1
Total		2,013	1,171

Edexcel London 'A' Level – May/June 2011			
Subject Code	Subject Name	Sat	Pass
9011	Accounting	105	89
9BI07	Biology	8	4
9CH07	Chemistry	7	6
9EC01	Economics	4	2
9PH07	Physics	17	12
Total		141	113

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2011 Examinations

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations are held in Series 2 (April), Series 3 (June) and Series 4 (November) of each year. Some subjects are not offered in Series sittings, but On Demand sittings are available to accommodate candidates wishing to sit for these subjects. Entries of subjects that lead to a Diploma are mainly coming from MCAST. The number of requests for Diploma Certificates for the year was three.

The total number of entries were as follows:

Series 2 2011 Examinations	-	12 applications
Series 3 2011 Examinations	-	123 applications
Series 4 2011 Examinations	-	5 applications
On Demand April	-	3 applications
On Demand June	-	44 applications
On Demand November	-	11 applications

Analysis of Results

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Series 4 - 2010						
Level/Subject	Entries	Sat	Pass	Credit	Distinction	Fail
<i>First Level</i>						
Text Production	7	7	2	0	3	2
<i>Second Level</i>						
Text Production	5	5	0	2	3	0
<i>Third Level</i>						
Text Production	6	5	0	4	0	1
Marketing	2	1	1	0	0	0
Advertising	1	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Fourth Level</i>						
English for Business (Reading and Writing)	1	1	0	0	1	0
Total	22	20	3	6	7	4

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Series 2 - 2011						
Level/Subject	Entries	Sat	Pass	Credit	Distinction	Fail
<i>Second Level</i>						
Text Production	3	3	2	0	1	0
Book-keeping and Accounts	1	1	1	0	0	0
<i>Third Level</i>						
Text Production	4	4	2	2	0	0
Marketing	2	2	0	1	0	1
Advertising	1	1	0	0	0	1
Business Practice	3	2	0	2	0	0
English for Business	2	2	2	0	0	0
Business Administration	1	1	0	0	0	1
Total	17	16	7	5	1	3

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Series 3 - 2011						
Level/Subject	Entries	Sat	Pass	Credit	Distinction	Fail
<i>Second Level</i>						
Book-keeping and Accounts	14	12	0	1	0	11
<i>Third Level</i>						
Advertising	15	15	1	6	6	2
Business Administration	21	21	12	1	0	8
Business Practice	21	21	7	7	3	4
English for Business (Reading and Writing)	121	121	9	82	25	5
Public Relations	15	15	7	5	2	1
Marketing	15	15	6	4	2	3
Selling & Sales Management	14	14	4	5	0	5
Total	236	234	46	111	38	39

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Series On Demand - April 2011						
Subject	Entries	Sat	Pass	Credit	Distinction	Fail
<i>First Level</i>						
Text Production	3	3	1	0	2	0
Total	3	3	1	0	2	0

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Series On Demand - June 2011						
Subject	Entries	Sat	Pass	Credit	Distinction	Fail
<i>First Level</i>						
Business Administration	22	21	2	9	10	0
<i>Third Level</i>						
Customer Service	22	20	8	1	0	11
Total	44	41	10	10	10	11

European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) Testing 2011

During 2011, the Examinations Department conducted two ECDL Automated Test sessions which were held in Jan/Feb and July 2011. The Jan/Feb 2011 session was a re-sit session for those candidates who failed exams in July 2010. There were 4,039 applicants from both junior lyceums and secondary schools (Academic Year 2010/2011) who sat for over 10,000 tests in the various modules.

Analysis of Results

Jan/Feb 2011			July 2011		
Module No	Sat	Passed	Module No	Sat	Passed
Module 1	221	157	Module 1	936	750
Module 2	798	672	Module 2	672	502
Module 3	855	476	Module 3	853	367
Module 4	184	112	Module 4	1,103	613
Module 5	149	95	Module 5	815	615
Module 6	127	109	Module 6	880	766
Module 7	287	186	Module 7	1,286	799

AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance) 2011 Examinations

The AQA examinations Board offers subjects at Advanced Level. Examinations are held twice a year.

Total number of entries for January	33
Total number of entries for June	245

Analysis of Results

AQA – January 2011			
Subjects	Entries	Sat	Pass (A-E)
Pure Mathematics	31	31	28
Total	31	31	28

AQA – May/June 2011			
Subjects	Entries	Sat	Pass (A-E)
Business Studies	1	1	0
Further Mathematics	1	1	1
Mathematics	2	2	2
Philosophy	1	0	0
Pure Mathematics	245	241	203
Total	250	245	206

Other Foreign Examinations 2011

University/College	Applied	Sat
Birkbeck College - May/June	1	1
CIMA - May	3	3
CIMA - November	2	2
CIPS - May	4	4
International Federation of Inspection Agencies - June/July	34	33
Loughborough University - February	1	1
Loughborough University - June	1	1
Manchester Business School - June	1	1
NKI Net School - May	1	1
Professional Examination Service - December	11	11
Professional Examination Service - June	11	11
Queen Mary University of London - May	4	4

Scottish Agricultural College - January	1	1
The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants - December	900	838
The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants - June	846	788
The British Computer Society - September	26	23
The British Computer Society -April	33	31
The Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply - November	3	2
The College of Estate Management - August	2	2
The College of Estate Management - December	1	1
The College of Estate Management - January	2	2
The college of Estate Management - June	1	0
The College of Estate Management - September	9	9
University College Cork - April	2	2
University of Aberdeen - January	2	2
University of Leicester - January	1	1
University of Strathclyde - August	2	2
University of Strathclyde - March	2	2
University of Surrey - August	1	1
University of Surrey - January	19	19
University of Surrey - May/June	15	15
University of Warwick - December	4	4
University of Warwick - July	1	1
University of Manchester - March	1	1
Total	1,948	1,820

University of London Degrees	Applied	Sat
BA English	2	2
BA Italian & French	1	1
BA Philosophy	4	3
BA Spanish & Latin American Studies	2	2
BSc Accounting & Finance	1	1
BSc Banking & Finance	3	3
BSc Business	6	6
BSc Business Administration	1	1
BSc Economics	1	1
BSc Economics & Management	12	11
BSc Geography & Environment	1	1
BSc Information Systems & Management	39	39
BSc Management	1	1
BSc Mathematics and Economics	3	3
Computing & Information Systems/Creative Computing Examinations	171	165
Diploma in Economics	17	14
Diploma in English	1	1
Diploma for Graduates in Management	1	1
Diploma in Social Sciences	27	25
LLM	30	28
MBA International Management	4	4
Mres in Educational & Social Research	1	1
MSc Applied Environmental Economics	1	1
MSc Environmental Management	1	1
MSc Epidemiology	1	1
MSc Finance (Economic Policy)	2	2
MSc Finance (Financial Sector Management)	5	5
MSc Finance (Quantitative Finance)	1	1
MSc Finance and Financial Law	3	3
MSc Financial Economics	2	2
MSc Infectious Diseases	3	3
MSc Information Security	17	17

MSc International Business	7	7
MSc Public Policy & Management	1	1
PG Diploma in Banking	1	0
PG Diploma in Public International Law	1	1
Total	375	359

Local Public Examinations and Local Licences

Examination	Result Published	Sat	Passed	Remarks
EFL - Nov 2010	Jan-11	135	65	
Women Soldiers in the Armed Forces of Malta (Regular Force)	Mar-11	20	13	
EFL - Mar 2011	May-11	143	92	
Engine Driver Licence (Land) - May 2011	Jun-11	10	9	
Wireman Licence 'A' - July 2011	Oct-11	281	128	
Wireman Licence 'B' - July 2011	Oct-11	88	32	
Second Secretary in the Diplomatic Service of the Government of Malta	*	46	46	
Court Messenger at the Courts of Justice	* Sept-11	4	4	
Security Guard in the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs	* Sept-11	34	20	
Engine Driver Licence (Land) - Nov 2011	Dec-11	8	5	
EFL - Nov 2011	*	135	73	Still in progress
Soldiers in the Armed Forces of Malta (Regular Force)	x	486	130	Still in progress
Soldier Athletes in the Armed Forces of Malta (Regular Force)	x	10	5	Still in progress
Officer Cadets in the Armed Forces of Malta		44	14	Still in progress

* Written Part ONLY

x Physical Test and Written Part ONLY

ALFRED ZAFFARESE
Director (Examinations)

Libraries Department

OVERVIEW

The year 2011 was a decisive year for the libraries sector in the Maltese Islands. As established by the Malta Libraries Act (Act No VII of 2011), which came into effect in August 2011, a totally new set-up for the libraries sector in Malta was established. The former Department of Libraries was replaced by Malta Libraries, the entity now responsible for the National Library, the Central Public Library, the Gozo Public Library, and the Regional and Branch public libraries. The management of Malta Libraries is made up of the National Librarian and CEO and two Deputy Librarians.

The Act also established the setting up of the Malta Libraries Council, which is primarily an advisory body on any matter arising from the provisions of the Act. The Council began operating in August 2011.

In October 2011, the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family invited applications for the positions of National Librarian, Deputy Librarian for the National Library, and Deputy Librarian for Public Libraries respectively.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

Customer Care

The Customer Care Unit is responsible for the inputting on a database of the details of persons who call at the Library both to conduct research as well as to just visit. The idea is to keep a record for statistical purposes as well as for security reasons. During 2011, the Unit welcomed a total of 6,807 visitors, a 10% decrease from the previous year, with an average of 23 visitors per day of opening. The majority of visitors hailed from Spain, but Germans, French and Italians visited the Library in fairly large numbers too.

Reading Room

A total of 6,086 persons – an average of 20 per day – used the Library for research purposes, a 12% drop from 2010. Reading Room staff fetched an average of one item per researcher. Apart from the delivery of requested material and its re-shelving on a daily basis, the staff in this Section also handled researchers' queries and directed readers to the various sources at the Library. In cases where the requested material was not available, the public was directed to other sources outside the Library. This occurred especially in the case of genealogy-oriented requests. The majority of researchers who patronised the Reading Room in 2011 conducted research in the Library's newspaper collections. Others came to trace their relatives or made specific or general queries usually regarding family surnames, genealogy and sports events. Many consulted documents from the archives of the Order of St John.

Among the researchers, the Library received 11 new foreign scholars who came over personally to conduct research, mainly into the archives of the Order of St John. Nine of them were Italian, one was British and one hailed from Mexico but was studying at the University of Freiburg, Switzerland. Most of them were students.

Most of the material at the Library is in closed access areas and the main task of the Readers' Services Section is to deliver books and manuscripts from these rooms to the researchers. During the year, the Reading Room staff fetched a total of 8,259 items comprising manuscripts, newspapers and printed material, a 4% increase over the previous year. The total consisted of 1,405 Archives manuscript volumes both from the Archives of St John and the *Università*, 352 Library manuscript volumes, 243 volumes from the Adami Collection, 4,374 volumes of newspapers and periodicals, as well as 1,885 printed books, both Melitensia and reference. These items averaged 27 per day of opening.

Items delivered by the Reading Room Staff during 2011						
	<i>AOM/Treas. Mss</i>	<i>Univ. Mss</i>	<i>Library Mss</i>	<i>Adami Collection Mss</i>	<i>Melitensia/Reference</i>	<i>Periodicals/Newspapers</i>
Total	1,365	40	352	243	1,885	4,374
Total				8,259		

Archives, Manuscripts and Rare Books

This section received 238 electronic and postal enquiries, a 12% decrease from the previous year. The queries arrived mostly from Europe and also from the US, Canada and especially Australia. The bulk, i.e. 66% of all the requests, came equally from Malta and Italy. In contrast, 31 requests arrived from France and 13 from the UK. While French researchers sent queries about the Order of Malta, British researchers requested copies from war-time newspapers or made genealogical enquiries.

Electronic and Postal Enquiries			
Australia	9	Japan	1
Canada	3	Malta	78
Cyprus	2	New Zealand	1
Egypt	1	Portugal	1
France	31	Spain	6
Germany	4	The Netherlands	2
Greece	2	UK	13
Italy	78	US	6
Total		238	

Bibliographic Services Unit

The Legal Deposit Act plays an essential role in the preservation of our national memory, since it ensures the continual growth of the Melitensia collection at the National Library. This Act stipulates that authors or publishers are legally bound to deposit at the National Library two copies free of charge, of any work printed and published in the Maltese Islands. Throughout the year, 483 distinct books were deposited in total, together with approximately 523 local periodical titles that include journals, newspapers and magazines.

Supplementing the works received by legal deposit, the Acquisitions Section purchased an extra copy of most titles published locally. With regard to books published abroad, the usual emphasis was made on acquiring works published overseas by Maltese nationals as well as works whose subject was directly related to the Maltese Islands. Several reference works and foreign periodical subscriptions of interest to the general public were also purchased.

In 2011, the sum spent on books published locally amounted to a total of €5,182.35, while a total of €1,592.14 was spent on books published abroad. In all, €3,787.25 was spent on subscriptions and memberships to foreign periodicals. In 2011, 28 new serial titles were entered into the computer database.

In mid-August, the 2007-2008 double edition of the Malta National Bibliography, compiled by the Bibliographic Services Unit, was published. Predominantly based upon the items received at the National Library by way of legal deposit, the Malta National Bibliography lists new works published in the Maltese Islands during a specific period and describes each one in detail. Each item is catalogued according to the

Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules and classified by subject according to the rules of the Dewey Decimal Classification. It is edited, indexed and formatted with the aid of Infor (formerly GEAC) software. By the end of 2011, the cataloguing and classification of bibliographical entries for inclusion in the 2009-2010 edition of the Malta National Bibliography was well underway.

Photocopying and Digital Photography

Photocopying of books is generally discouraged since the process inevitably damages the books and manuscripts. The most prevalent means of reprography nowadays is by digital photography. As of October 2008, the National Library began to provide an in-house photography service. Researchers who require photos from Library material are requested to fill in a form and effect the necessary payment. The images are then taken and sent to the client either via e-mail or by post on a CD. The year registered an intake of €9,581 from both photocopying and photography, a 23% increase over 2010.

Restoration/Bindery

The section collates and binds loose material of any nature, mainly newspapers and journals and also rebinds and restores damaged books or manuscripts which belong to the Library. As usual, the work of bindery staff this year concerned mainly the binding of newspapers and periodicals as well as the restoration of a number of manuscripts and books.

The bindery staff were also actively involved in the preparation and setting up of the exhibitions mounted at the National Library this year. Besides, they helped at the Malta Book Fair by mounting no less than five exhibitions at the Mediterranean Conference Centre.

Bindery/Restoration Section - 2011	
Binding of newspapers	99
Binding of books	185
Binding of Debates and Malta Government Gazettes	172
Repairs and restoration of manuscripts	105
Restoration of books sponsored by private persons	46
Captions for and mounting of exhibition 'Maps of Malta' in October	
Captions for and mounting of exhibition 'Dun Karm' in October	
Exhibitions for Malta Book Fair in November	5
Book cleaning	4,500

Sale of Publications

The sale of National Library publications, including exhibition catalogues, in 2011 yielded an intake of €365, a 7% decrease from the previous year. Other income included €9.32 from the National Library CD-Rom and €5.75 from the sale of postcards. The income generated by the sale of copies of the 'Malta National Bibliography' amounted to €259.

Acquisitions by the National Library

In January 2011, the National Library made an important acquisition of Melitensia items when it purchased three important maps from the Librairie le Bail, Paris. Two maps dated 1629 by Henri Raingnauld depict respectively the city of Valletta and the siege of Malta. The other map which shows the island of Malta was engraved in Leiden by Pieter van der Aa.

Another important acquisition consisted of two early 19th century manuscripts showing the coats of arms of the Grand Masters of the Order of St John and of the Bishops of Malta. The items were bought from a private collection in December 2011.

Exhibitions and Events

During 2011, the National Library organised two major exhibitions, and another two on a smaller scale.

Exhibition – Dun Karm Psaila 1871-1961: Dokumenti u Kotba mill-Bibljoteka Nazzjonali

In October, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the death of Dun Karm Psaila, an exhibition was set up at the National Library, which showed numerous books, photographs and newspapers related to the National Poet. Apart from these, the exhibition included several original letters written by Dun Karm to Karmen Mikalleg Buhagiar and others he wrote to Laurent Ropa. All these letters had been preserved by Karmen Mikalleg Buhagiar. The exhibition also included panels showing poems by Dun Karm and a selection of related photographs.

Exhibition – Maps of Malta at the National Library

In November, an exhibition about Maps of Malta was organised by the National Library of Malta in collaboration with the Malta Map Society on the occasion of the IMCoS Malta International Symposium 22-25 September 2011.

A number of cartographic treasures in the National Library, including several Lafreri atlases, the Arcano del Mare by Robert Dudley, the rare Spanish edition of the Atlas Maior by Bleau, and the Perez d'Aleccio and Lucini siege maps, and several other treasures were exhibited to show the richness of the holdings in the National Library.

Lectures

Two public lectures were held at the National Library: a lecture entitled 'The National Library and the Study of Hospitaller Military Architecture' given by Dr Stephen C Spiteri on 4 March; and a lecture entitled 'Psalm 104 and Akhenaten's Hymn to the Sun' organised on 22 March by the Maltese Oriental Society in collaboration with the National Library on Biblical Archaeology and given by Prof John Day from the University of Oxford.

Both lectures were accompanied by small exhibitions, each showing original works found at the National Library intrinsically related to the topic of each specific lecture. Attendance and participation in these events proved highly satisfactory.

ERDF Project - A Digitisation Strategy and Framework for the National Library of Malta

In 2008, the National Library of Malta succeeded in procuring co-financing from European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) in order to establish a framework to digitise part of its collections, ensuring preservation of the original material. The digitisation process is currently still in the initial stages of data capturing and its benefits cannot yet be gauged since the service is not yet available to users. The projected end date is June 2012. It is envisaged that by that date, important library holdings such as newspapers and manuscripts will be available to one and all through a portal on the National Library website. The e-accessibility of National Library material to all users falls in line with government policy regarding the availability of government documents to the general public. Such a project would also generate innovative activities, thus fitting into the country's policy which aims at improving the quality of life and forming a society capable of making full use of information and communication technology.

Restoration Project

In June, the National Library of Malta was presented with a leaf casting machine by Mr Alfred Micalleg Attard on behalf of Lions Club Sliema who since last year have been helping the library with donations towards the book restoration fund. The leaf casting machine is an indispensable aid to paper restoration

since it fills with paper pulp the holes and grooves made by bookworms in the paper. It offers a quick and viable alternative to traditional repair techniques whereby the holes are filled in manually. It is therefore time-saving and cost-effective for the restoration of priceless books and documents some of which are extremely damaged and in a very poor state of conservation. Meanwhile, repairs of books sponsored by private persons through the initiative of Lions Club Sliema proceeded steadily throughout the year.

Malta Book Fair 2011

In November, the Department of Libraries, together with the National Book Council, organised the 27th edition of the Malta Book Fair. This was held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre between 8 and 13 November 2011. There was an increase in exhibitors participating in this year's Book Fair, with a total of 29 exhibitors including publishing houses, booksellers, government organisations and entities and non-governmental organisations. Public attendance was very encouraging, having thousands of book lovers browsing through all the books on exhibit, which covered a wide variety of subjects especially Melitensia.

Various activities were organised during the five days of the Fair. These included book launches, discussions, reading sessions and an on-stage adaptation of Dun Karm's poem *Il-Jien u lil hinn Minnu*. Three main exhibitions were mounted, namely 'Dun Karm – a commemoration of the 50th anniversary from his death', 'Maltese Ephemera', and 'Libraries in Malta'.

The Department also set up its own stand during the Fair, divided between the National Library and the Central Public Library. The National Library this year focused on the theme 'We Restore, We Digitise, We Preserve', whereby through digital images, visitors were given the opportunity to learn more about the restoration and digitisation projects which are being carried out at the National Library. The Central Public Library used its stand as a showcase of new publications bought during the past year by the lending libraries, thanks to the budgetary allocation of €100,000 for the purchase of books.

All logistical organisation was made by personnel from the Malta Libraries and National Book Council.

Participation in Conferences Abroad

- London Bookfair 11 – 13 April: Ms Joanne Sciberras, Senior Principal and Chairperson of the Organising Committee of the Malta Bookfair, attended for the first time the London Bookfair (LBF), a three-day large book-publishing fair held annually. Around 23,000 publishers, booksellers, literary agents, librarians, media and industry suppliers from over 100 countries attended the fair. Attendance to this fair is considered as a great opportunity for the Malta Libraries to learn more on digital libraries, school libraries and the role of public libraries through the participation in various seminars which were held during the days of the LBF.
- 25th Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Foundation CENL, Copenhagen, 26-27 September: Ms Sciberras also attended a two-day conference organised by CENL – Confederation of European National Libraries at the Black Diamond Royal Library in Copenhagen. This annual event brought together representatives from 28 national libraries across Europe and representatives from The EUROPEAN LIBRARY (TEL) to discuss the way forward for national libraries in Europe. One of the main topics discussed during the meeting focused on the identity of national libraries in Europe and how budget cuts affect their strategies and priorities. The meeting also discussed the important task of legal deposit and the various methods adopted by different countries for collection development through e-legal deposit. Members of CENL attended a 'Linked Worlds' Conference to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of CENL. Various papers were presented during the conference, the main theme being the challenges faced by publishers and readers in the digital age, the importance of digitisation and the importance of self-expression in the new age.
- 3rd LIBER-EBLIDA Workshop on the Digitisation of Library Material in Europe, The Hague, 5 -7 October: Ms Maroma Camilleri, Senior Assistant Librarian, attended a three-day conference organised by LIBER-EBLIDA. The event brought together representatives from national and university libraries and commercial entities across and outside Europe to discuss the way forward for the digitisation of library material in Europe. The conference focused on the post-digitisation phase and sought to explore the

potential that the libraries now have for developing the digital data itself. The workshop proved to be an interesting eye-opener in view of future developments in Malta, since the ultimate aim of the NLM's digitisation project is to participate in the Europeana Libraries project which brings together the digital collections of Europe's leading research libraries, thus creating a valuable resource for scholars and building a robust network of national, university and research libraries, supported by Europe's major library organisations.

- Conference - Photo Archives IV: The Photographic Archive and the Idea of Nation, Florence, Italy 27 – 29 October: Ms C Michelle Buhagiar, Assistant Curator, attended a three-day conference organised by the *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* and the *Università degli Studi di Firenze*. The Conference formed part of a series of international meetings dedicated to the photographic archives sector and the interaction between photography and the academic and scientific disciplines. The Conference brought together a number of international specialists in the field of photographic archives. The Conference particularly aimed at studying the relationship between photography, or photographic archives, and the idea of 'nation', through the sharing of experiences of different countries on an international level. The 19th Century saw the rise of several nation states, the invention and diffusion of photography, and also the birth of modern archival science. In this context, the Conference discussed the roles that photography and photographic archives had in the establishment of nation states, as well as on the management, conservation and presentation of photographic archives, especially in view of the 'Florence Declaration – Recommendations for the Preservation of Analogue Photo Archives' drawn up by the *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut* as a result of earlier meetings in the series.

The Curatorial Unit

Established in February 2010, the Curatorial Unit primarily aims at addressing issues regarding restoration, conservation, and presentation of the Library building itself, as well as its archives and historical collections. In 2011, the Unit worked on and participated in several initiatives linked to its aim, including:

- providing assistance in the Digitisation Project at the National Library;
- carrying out secretarial work and involvement in the Malta Libraries Council;
- setting up of major exhibitions;
- organisation of lectures and setting up of accompanying exhibitions;
- drafting of guidelines for the setting up of exhibitions and for lending items from the National Library for exhibition purposes;
- management of an inventory of Heritage Assets at the National Library;
- involvement in restoration and conservation issues at the National Library;
- management of the new website of the National Library on the Ministry's portal;
- administration of the National Library's Facebook Accounts;
- representing the National Library on the Malta Map Society;
- membership on a sub committee of the National Book Council dedicated to schools.

Repairs and Maintenance

The work at the maintenance workshop included the day-to-day maintenance and carpentry works of the Department, both at the National Library and also at the Central Public Library, where repair of the roof membrane was also carried out. Day-to-day maintenance of the electric and water supply systems was also carried out at both Libraries.

The servicing of the Fire Detection and Suppression System at the National Library was also carried out.

The manufacture of new shelving units at Regional and Branch Libraries included eight units at Marsascala Library and 16 at Gżira Library.

Restoration Works at the National Library

In 2011, employees from the Restoration Unit completed the restoration works at one end of the Main Hall of the Library, which mainly had structural problems in the ceiling and various deteriorated areas. Then, cleaning work on the soffit of the Main Hall started. The Restoration Unit also took care of stabilising a dangerous structure above the Digitisation Studio, including the repair of roofs to avoid water leakage in the adjacent Archive Rooms.

Central Public Library

Public Libraries Network

The Public Library System is made up of seven Regional Libraries and 38 Branch Libraries, two of which namely those of Marsa and Sta Venera are till the end of this year not operational due to premises constraints. The Regional Libraries are those of Birkirkara, Luqa, Mosta, Paola, Qormi, Rabat and Vittoriosa while Branch Libraries are located at Attard, Birżebbuġa, Cospicua, Dingli, Fgura, Gharghur, Ghaxaq, Gudja, Gżira, Hamrun, Kalkara, Kirkop, Lija, Marsascalea, Marsaxlokk, Mellieħa, Mġarr, Mqabba, Msida, Naxxar, Pembroke, Qormi (St George), Qrendi, Safi, St Julians, St Paul's Bay, San Ġwann, Senglea, Siggiewi, Sliema, Tarxien, Valletta, Żabbar, Żebbuġ, Żejtun and Żurrieq. Besides the Gozo Public Library and the Gozo Lending Library, there are also ten branch libraries in Gozo namely those at Ghajnsielem, Għarb, Għasri, Kerċem, Nadur, Qala, San Lawrenz, Sannat, Xaghra, Xewkija and Żebbuġ. The Gozo General Hospital Library which was functioning at the beginning of the year ceased its operations in June with the departure of its Officer i/c. The library will start functioning again when a new recruit is found.

The service points at the Central Public Library are the Adult, Junior, Reference, Melitensia, Audio visual library and People with Special Needs while back office work is carried out at the Acquisition, Cataloguing and Bindery Sections. With these can be added the Area Libraries Support Unit, which caters for all the Regional and Branch Libraries.

Customer Care Unit

As part of its most important role, the Customer Care Unit was responsible for the coordination of the Quality Service Charter, taking care to log any complaints that might crop up, solving any issues within its capacity and escalating those that required attention by officers above their grade. It also supplied the required feedback with regard to books requested by the public and channeled requests to the Acquisition Section for necessary action. All types of information required by the public was directly put forward to the officers at the Customer Care Unit.

The Customer Care Unit also served the purpose of an information bureau answering any queries that were forwarded by the public taking note of every suggestion put forward and transmitting it to the relevant sections for action to be taken. This fulfills another part of the obligations laid out in the Quality Service Charter administered by the Central Public Library apart from other commitments that have to be adhered to. The Unit also took an active part in the Central Public Library's participation in this year's Malta National Book fair organised by the National Book Council.

During the year, the Unit was responsible for the setting up of an exhibition portraying Anton Grasso's literary works. This exhibition was officially opened by the Hon Dr Stephen Spiteri, Parliamentary Assistant. The exhibition which was open for the public for a period of one month was interesting to see and the public went around the showcases and boards that unfolded the information about the unique prolific author of the occult genre.

In December, a number of DLIS students from the University of Malta paid an orientation visit to the Central Public Library as part of their course work. They were shown around with a detailed explanation

by one of the Customer Care Unit officers who gave a thorough briefing on every section and the procedures followed to achieve the objectives of the library in a holistic manner. In the end, the students and lecturer who accompanied them expressed their appreciation and endorsed the sound output that was being given by the library staff to render customer satisfaction.

As in previous years, a number of orientation visits by various schools to the Central Public Library were organised. During these visits students were shown around the sections of the library especially where services are being rendered to the public followed by a detailed explanation by the officer concerned. A good number of students while visiting the library opted to become members.

Personnel also participated in various radio and TV slots promoting library services and delivered talks in schools and local councils on the importance of library usage and reading.

One of the basic tasks the Unit has is that of enrolling new members in the library. The number of new members enrolled in 2011 was 4,697, an increase of 448 over the previous year.

Locality	Juniors	Adults	Totals
Attard	92	65	157
Balzan/Lija	37	36	73
Birkirkara/Mriehel	139	156	295
Birżebbuġa	70	33	103
Cospicua	61	68	129
Dingli	25	11	36
Fgura	71	53	124
Floriana	10	11	21
Għargħur	18	17	35
Għaxaq	43	18	61
Gudja	40	43	83
Gżira	38	41	79
Hamrun	41	47	88
Kalkara	30	27	57
Kirkop	45	36	81
Luqa	6	15	21
Marsa	18	19	37
Marsascala	153	63	216
Marsaxlokk	23	23	46
Mellieħa	80	55	135
Mġarr/Mtaħleb	6	9	15
Mosta	140	134	274
Mqabba	58	29	87
Msida/Pieta/Ta' Xbiex	35	57	92
Naxxar	87	59	146
Paola	50	45	95
Qormi	110	49	159
Qrendi	43	24	67
Rabat/Mdina	89	53	142
Safi	48	9	57
St Julians/Kappara/St Andrews/Swieqi	45	80	125
St Paul's Bay/Burmarrad/Buġibba	121	97	218
St Venera/Fleur De Lys	45	26	71
San Ġwann/Ta' Ġorni	76	64	140
Senglea	2	8	10
Siġġiewi	59	35	94
Sliema	44	100	144
Tarxien/Sta Luċija	66	61	127
Valletta	28	23	51
Vittoriosa	25	23	48

Żabbar	128	95	223
Żebbuġ	79	58	137
Żejtun	109	54	163
Żurrieq	78	57	135
Total	2,611	2,086	4,697

Services to People with Special Needs

During the year, 23,314 tape cassettes comprising 3,808 titles were issued out on loan to people with special needs among them persons with a visual impairment, persons who have a difficulty to read, old age people, people with a disability and children with a dyslexic condition. This means that there was an increase of 2,011 tape-cassettes issued out on loan when compared with the previous year. The Section as of today has about 35,572 tape cassettes and there are approximately 432 members making use of this service. The following list shows the subjects available in the Library for People with Special Needs

Subject	No of Titles
Biographies	220
Maltese Drama	278
Maltese Romance & Short Stories	608
Short Stories in English	2,401
English Drama	381
Non-fiction (various)	688
Music	1555
Religion	806
Stories in Maltese for children	96
Stories in English for children	260
Junior non-fiction	14
Children's music	23
Total	7,330

The number of volunteers offering to read books in the Sound and Vision Studio run by the Section now has come up to seven. 143 hours of recording were carried out by these people reading between them 12 books on 409 tape-cassettes.

For persons who have a hearing impairment, the Section has 130 sub-titled videos for lending and 65 DVDs to be watched on site and there are 69 CD-Rom for children who have a difficulty in reading English. It is being explored how to finance the process of turning the collection into MP3s and do away with the now obsolete tape-cassettes. The Section is also contemplating of starting again recruiting drives for new members who are not aware of the service and to launch the service of Assistive Technology.

Audio-visual Library

The material found in this section is complementary to the books as information not found in a printed version can be retrieved by exploring sites on the internet and is widely used by students. Internet users have increased over last year while DVDs are very popular with our clientele. CDs and magnetic tapes, especially those dealing with the learning of languages, are in constant consultation. In the section there is also installation of WIFI and therefore this facilitates the use of lap tops by clients.

Reference and the Melitensia Libraries

The two libraries where material is not for lending have been very busy during the year, especially the Melitensia Library where students come to the library to search for information that they require to compile their projects. The number of people making use of this service have increased when compared with the previous year.

Personnel at the Reference Section assisted a good number of students who came to the section in search of clues to solve questions posed to them with the aim of introducing them to methods of research. This proved to be a very interesting exercise especially when information varied from one subject to another.

Work is in hand to index all the periodicals and newspapers in the section and input the data on the Library's electronic catalogue (OPAC), which would facilitate retrieval of information.

Area Libraries Support Unit

As programmed at the end of the previous year, the Branch Libraries of St Julians and Valletta were computerised by the first quarter of 2011, which meant that all the Area Libraries in Malta are now online. During the second quarter of the year, discussions with the IMU Gozo were initiated to computerise in one bulk the Gozitan Branch Libraries of: Ghajnsielem, Għarb, Għasri, Kerċem, Qala, San Lawrenz, Sannat, Xagħra, Xewkija and Żebbuġ. During the meetings, the way forward was discussed where the collections in these libraries had to be converted into data pertaining to the fields of the catalogue and inputted on the LIS electronic catalogue. It was agreed that the retrospective conversion of the catalogue cards would be borne mainly by the personnel at the Central Public Library. The work started in June and was completed by mid November inputting a good number of catalogue cards totalling 23,000 entries.

Monitoring of the task was performed by the employees from the Gozo Lending Library while the training of the Branch Librarians was carried out by the Information Management Unit and the Libraries Support Unit. There were three courses for each group divided as follows: the first course focused on the Online Public Catalogue (OPAC), enrolment of new members and the Internet, the second course covered the circulation module and the third course tackled reservation of books and other relative issues.

Although Sannat was not computerised as planned with these Branch Libraries due to a sudden change of premises, the catalogue cards were inputted altogether with the others of other Gozitan Branches. It is planned that when the move in premises will be settled, Sannat will immediately be computerised and become operative.

The staff of the Area Libraries Support Unit has joined forces with the Cataloguing Unit to catalogue and classify new and donated books that are delivered to the Central Public Library. Such books are normally purchased by the local councils or given as a donation by the public.

The Unit was involved in discussions with the Sta Lucija Local Council for the setting up of a library in the locality. Plans are moving ahead according to schedule and hopefully early in 2012, the Sta Lucija Branch Library will be established and functioning.

After a meeting held with the Education Division authorities with the cooperation of the Żejtun Local Council, a direct public access was identified for the Żejtun Branch which is located within the Primary School and therefore the library can now open for the public on a Saturday without any difficulty.

Library Sub-Committee meetings with representatives of the Mosta Local Council were continued during the year and various topics were discussed involving activities and purchase of new books. Other local councils having a cooperation agreement were consulted and contact is being kept with the Lija Local Council to finish the refurbishment of the Lija Branch Library which had to close down in May due to extensive redecoration of the room.

In March, local councils with a library cooperation agreement received their yearly allocation for the purchase of new books from the Department for Local Government. This, when added to the allocation of money provided by the Libraries Department, will enable libraries to have a wider chance of purchasing more new and attractive books to suit the tastes of library users.

To enable more books to be catalogued and made shelf ready in the least possible time, four members of staff stationed in the Regional Libraries were given training on how to enter data in MARC. This was done in order to meet the demands of those libraries that had loads of books to be catalogued. The backlog has now been reduced considerably.

The total book stock in the Regional and Branch Libraries at the end of the year was 453,620 books, divided as follows: 6,788 new books; 27,460 donated books and 6,029 withdrawn books.

Book stock, Book Donations and Loans

For the second year running, Government allocated a record sum of money for the purchase of books, i.e. €100,000. 13,100 new publications were purchased for the sections of the Central Public Library and the Regional and Branch Libraries. The number of books donated by the public and other bodies to be used in the Central Public Library, the Regional and Branch Libraries was 28,537: 1,077 for the sections of the Central Public Library and 27,460 for the Regional and Branch Libraries. The Central Public Library has got standing orders for for a number of local and foreign publications.

The total number of book loans issued by the Central Public Library, including the Regional and Branch Libraries, and adding those of the Gozo Lending Library and the Gozo Branch Libraries, totals 826,112, an increase of 46,637 book loans over last year.

Number of Books on loan issued by the Central Public Library and Regional/Branch Libraries- 2011			
Central Public Library		No of loans	
Adult Library		154,933	
Junior Library		97,880	
Total Central Public Library		252,813	
Regional Libraries		No of loans	
Birkirkara		63,211	
Qormi (St Sebastian)		32,858	
Paola		32,416	
Luqa		31,848	
Mosta		27,790	
Rabat		11,096	
Vittoriosa		4,848	
Total Regional Libraries		204,067	
Branch Libraries (Malta)		No of loans	
Marsaxlokk		18,758	
Żabbar		15,819	
Żejtun		14,781	
Fgura		14,565	
Marsascala		14,522	
Attard		13,297	
Naxxar		10,689	
Gudja		10,650	
Żurrieq		9,449	
Sliema		9,195	
Siggiewi		9,141	
San Ġwann		8,695	
St Paul's Bay		8,204	
Kirkop		8,066	
Mellieha		7,864	
Hamrun		7,028	
Msida		6,927	
Qrendi		6,755	
Mqabba		6,465	
Żebbuġ		6,425	
Branch Libraries (Malta)(cont)		No of loans	
Ghaxaq		6,322	
Gżira		5,690	
Gharghur		5,159	
Mgarr		5,067	
Safi		4,553	
Birżebbuġa		4,531	
Kalkara		4,513	
Cospicua		3,961	
Qormi (St George)		3,877	
Dingli		3,595	
Pembroke		3,007	
Tarxien		2,038	
Senglea		1,395	
Valletta		1,174	
Lija		684	
St Julians		410	
Total Branch Libraries (Malta)		263,271	
Gozo Lending Library		41,460	
Branch Libraries (Gozo)		No of loans	
Nadur		24,161	
Xaghra		9,725	
Qala		7,967	
Sannat		4,077	
Żebbuġ		4,030	
Għajnsielem		3,436	
Għarb		3,395	
San Lawrenz		3,391	
Xewkija		2,208	
Għasri		1,283	
Kerċem		770	
Gozo General Hospital		58	
Total Branch Libraries (Gozo)		64,501	
Grand Total		826,112	

Other Initiatives

Foreign students visited the library again this year through the Erasmus Programme facilitated by the European Union to gain knowledge of the library tasks performed in our libraries and the procedures involved. There were students from Germany, Italy and France.

During the year, the library were presented with books by the Malta Library and Association (MALIA) which visited the library on the occasion of World Book Day and other publications were presented to the Central Public Library by the Representation of the European Commission in Malta.

Considering that other libraries receive cooperation from local councils in the place where these are located, the Central Public Library made contacts with the Floriana Local Council and a meeting took place whereby issues concerning parking, library extra-curricular activities and other valid points were discussed. The Floriana Local Council through its Secretary keeps close contact with the Central Public Library and is always ready to offer assistance.

The year 2011 can really be looked upon as one of activity and progress for the Central Public Library, Regional and Branch Libraries. This can be shown through the amount of new books purchased and received as donations and the increase in book loans.

JOANNE SCIBERRAS
Senior Principal Officer

**Ministry of Finance, the
Economy & Investment**

Corporate Services Directorate

The role of the Corporate Services Directorate (CSD) is that of providing essential support services to the Ministry and to its departments, entities and divisions.

The core functions are:

- Finance (accounts, procurement and asset management);
- Office Management;
- Human Resources;
- Registry;
- Parliamentary Questions.

FINANCE

During 2011, the Finance Section continued to provide operational support to Director Corporate Services on all matters related to finance administration concerning the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment (MFEI).

The Finance section was responsible for the administration of funds provided under Recurrent Vote 26–MFEI, which included the cost centre of the Parliamentary Secretariat. This section was also responsible for the management of funding for capital projects and collection of revenue included under the Financial Estimates of MFEI.

The Section was involved in the procurement of goods and services, from the initial stage of the raising of commitments up to the settlement of invoices within a reasonable period of time through the Departmental Accounting System. During 2011, the total number of transactions effected on the DAS was 9,890.

During last year, the Finance Section also managed requests submitted by public entities for the release of approved Capital and Recurrent budgetary subventions and other allocations. These entities included FinanceMalta Foundation, Privatisation Unit, Malta Statistics Authority, Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit, Malta National Laboratory, Financial Services Tribunal, Malta Enterprise, Collective Bargaining Unit, Malta Film Commission, Malta Air Traffic Services, MGI/MIMCOL, Malta Industrial Parks, Water Services Corporation, Public Contracts Review Board, Enemalta Corporation and the Cooperatives Board.

The Section was also involved in:

- providing assistance in the preparation of travel documents required by Ministry officials when travelling abroad on official business, including the issuing of 290 travel advances to said officials;
- submission of financial statements, including monthly Re-assessment of Budgetary Estimates, monthly cash flow projections and quarterly financial statements on accruals basis;
- compilation of financial information related to the drafting of replies to parliamentary questions;
- coordination of replies by the Ministry and its departments to several requests and queries by the National Audit Office and the Treasury Department;
- submission of quarterly statements to VAT Department with list of suppliers who failed to submit fiscal receipts for goods and services procured by the Ministry;

- assisting the National Lotteries Good Causes Advisory Board in the financial administration and operations of the Good Causes Fund including issuing of cheques to beneficiaries of the said fund. During the year, 318 cheques were issued to various beneficiaries;
- supporting Director General (Budget Affairs) in the issuing of new Government Guarantees/Letters of Comfort on domestic/foreign loans and other banking facilities granted to public entities, the renewal of old ones and the compilation of a quarterly report. During 2011, 10 new guarantees/letters of comfort were issued, whereas 12 existing ones were extended for a further period of one year;
- assisting Director General (Budget Affairs), in the verification of requests by government ministries to open bank and below-the-line accounts. During 2011, the Ministry received 43 requests for the opening of a bank account that were considered positively. During the same year, the Ministry authorised the opening of 13 below-the-line accounts, the maintenance and updating of a database on government direct shareholding, and finally participated in a number of Ministerial Steering Committee meetings to monitor project progress under the Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 Programme.

HUMAN RESOURCES

This Section processed the recruitment, appointment, progression and promotion of staff in various grades throughout the whole Ministry. Four HR circulars were issued to fill nine positions of Assistant Director in departments across the Ministry. Public calls for applications filled various posts and contractual positions at middle and senior management level to enhance the Ministry's needs and operations. Contracts of engagement and renewals of contracts continued to be drawn up as necessary for Private Secretariat staff of the Minister of Finance, the Economy and Investment and the Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Land.

During 2011, the HR Section continued with the preparation and payment of the four-weekly salaries of staff at the Ministry, including the two Private Secretariats, as well as the Economic Policy Department and Lotto staff. Constant monitoring of the personal emoluments, particularly the allowances and overtime items, was maintained throughout the year.

REGISTRY

The Registry continued to provide the core service of recording and tracking all incoming correspondence with the following statistics:

Correspondence registered on DOCREG system	4,330
New MF files	759
New EU	1,010
Parliamentary Questions	1,854
Publication of MF/HR circulars	11/4

Registry staff was also entrusted with the administration of the Ministry's inventory.

ANTHONY SAVONA

Director (Corporate Services)

EU Affairs Directorate

BACKGROUND

The EU Affairs Directorate is responsible for the coordination of all EU-related issues falling within the remit of the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment. One of its main tasks is to coordinate the drawing up of a national position in preparation to meetings taking place within the EU institutions (the European Commission, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament, but also European Committees such as the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions). The Directorate's responsibilities include the dissemination of meeting agendas and documentation, coordination of attendance of officials at EU-related meetings, and the drawing up and clearance of instruction notes used by the technical officials and attaches participating in the same meetings. Malta's position is drawn up in consultation with the technical experts from both the public and the private sector. The Directorate provides support to the Ministry's line departments in areas relating to the European Union. The EU Directorate is also responsible for the drafting of letters in reply to requests from the EU Commission and infringements cases opened by the EU Commission against Malta and is also the contact point within the Ministry for the notification of Maltese legislation to the EU Commission.

Progress Achieved in 2011

The economic crisis that hit the European Union continued to persist throughout 2011. Action taken at EU level to stem the financial crisis had a ripple effect on the operations of the EU Directorate in terms of workload. In fact, throughout the crisis, the EU Directorate continued to provide support to the high-level officials attending the meetings taking place at the European level. The Directorate was also responsible for the preparation of briefing material for the ministerial delegations attending the Eurogroup, ECOFIN, Competitiveness and Trade Council meetings. Apart from preparing the Council meeting files for the Maltese delegation, the EU Directorate organised pre-ECOFIN and pre-Competitiveness briefings for resident EU representations in order to brief them on the position that Malta intended to take during the Council meetings. These briefings form part of the negotiation process and help Member States discuss common positions with a view to reaching agreement on EU proposals.

One of the main responsibilities of the Directorate was to coordinate the consultation process on proposals submitted by the Commission. Malta's position is drawn up in consultation with both internal and external entities. The Directorate was also responsible for presenting the proposals at the Inter-Ministerial Committee (a Committee composed of high-level officials from all Government ministries and headed by the Permanent Representative of Malta to the EU). In 2011, the EU Directorate presented 160 explanatory memoranda. The Directorate also assisted MEUSAC in setting up consultation meetings with the MEUSAC Core Group and its sub-committees. One of the dossiers discussed during the MEUSAC sectoral and core group meetings were the EU2020, the European Semester and the Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2013-2020. Apart from preparing for Council meetings, the EU Affairs Directorate was also involved in the preparations leading to visits by foreign dignitaries. The Directorate was also responsible for the drawing up of briefing notes for the President's and the Prime Minister's meetings held in Malta and abroad.

DIANE SAMMUT
Director (EU Affairs)

Programme Implementation Directorate

BACKGROUND

The Programme Implementation Directorate is responsible for the management of the Ministry's Change Management Programme, including facilitating the implementation of the Ministry's endorsed policies, strategies and change management programmes and monitoring the implementation of the required programs and activities that include EU funded projects implemented by the Ministry's entities. The Directorate is also entrusted with the coordination of the appointments on Boards and Committees that fall under the Ministry's remit, Customer Care and Green Initiatives. The Conference Incentive Fund is also coordinated from within the Directorate.

EU Funded Projects

During 2011, in line with its core responsibilities, the Directorate undertook the following key tasks in relation to the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the EU funded projects:

- oversaw the implementation of EU co-financed projects;
- verified the eligibility of payment claims pertaining to EU co-financed projects and monitored the disbursement of such funds;
- supported and promoted liaison between project leaders and the relevant authorities.

The Programme Implementation Directorate acts as a liaison between project leaders, the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division within the Office of the Prime Minister and other stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of EU funded projects. It also assists other divisions and departments in exploring EU funding options for their projects and liaises between the Department of Contracts and other ministries to ensure the timely processing of EU-funded tenders.

During the year under review, the Directorate continued to monitor several projects funded under the 2007-2013 programming period that included the setting up of a life sciences centre, a project being implemented by Malta Enterprise, and the upgrading and embellishment of industrial estates, a project being implemented by the Malta Industrial Parks. Assistance was also afforded in the implementation of the aid schemes for industries managed by Malta Enterprise. During the period under review, the Programme Implementation Directorate also coordinated the implementation of the JEREMIE financing package in Malta.

Projects' progress was monitored via regular meetings with relative project leaders and coordinators together with participation in on-the-spot checks and site visits, where applicable. The Directorate also convened the Ministerial Project Steering Committee and the Investment Board in the case of the JEREMIE initiative and actively participated in the monthly bilateral meetings chaired by the Principal Permanent Secretary as well as in various Monitoring Committees called by the Managing Authority.

ERDF 001 – Upgrading and Embellishment of Industrial Parks

This project is being implemented by Malta Industrial Parks, an entity that has been incorporated with Malta Enterprise. This project aims at upgrading and embellishing various industrial parks in Malta and Gozo. Three child care centres will also be funded under this project. Interventions will be made in Bulebel, Hal Far, Mosta Technopark, Kordin and Xewkija. Child care centres will be built in Kordin,

Xewkija and Mosta Technopark. The project value is of €16,592,450 and the disbursement up to end December 2011 amounted to €7,550,429.87. The number of Invoice Status Certificates (ISCs) raised in connection with this project during 2011 was 66.

ERDF 199 – Setting up of a Life Sciences Centre

This project is being implemented by Malta Enterprise and consists of the building of a life sciences centre. This centre, which will be located close to the hospital and university, will focus on life sciences and associated technologies and will incorporate laboratories and research facilities aimed at supporting knowledge-based companies. The centre will increase skills in the sector, generate indigenous investment and drive new FDI and RTD activity and will incubate new enterprises. A new electricity substation will also be set up on site. The project value is of €36,486,655.51 and the eligible amount for EU funding amounts to €19,827,676.50. The disbursement up to the end of December 2011 amounted to €1,248,243.45, of which €953,043.45 were disbursed during the course of 2011. The number of ISCs raised in connection with this project during 2011 was 18.

Malta Enterprise Aid Schemes

Seven aid schemes are being implemented by Malta Enterprise. The total allocation for these aid schemes adds up to €42m and is split up as follows:

- ERDF 127 Small Start Ups €2.5m
- ERDF 128 Innovation €7m
- ERDF 128 Environment €3m
- ERDF 129 E-Business €3.5m
- ERDF 130 Research & Development €4.5m
- ERDF 133 Energy €15m
- ERDF 134 International Competitiveness €6.5m

Up till the end of the year under review, three calls had been issued under these schemes with a total allocation of €33.5m. The disbursement up to the end of December 2011 amounted to €8,072,214.30, of which €5,096,344.55 were disbursed in 2011. The number of ISCs raised in connection with this project during 2011 was 87 split up as follows:

Payment made during 2011 - Malta Enterprise Aid Schemes		
<i>Project Code ERDF</i>	<i>Total Amounts paid 2011 €</i>	<i>No of Invoice Status Certificates</i>
127	103,628.98	3
128	1,415,829.93	23
129	328,441.66	10
130	224,403.68	4
133	3,010,539.76	46
134	13,500.54	1
Total	5,096,344.55	87

CF 116 – Malta South Sewage Treatment Infrastructure

The year under review marked the commissioning of the Malta South Sewage Treatment Infrastructure, a project implemented by the Water Services Corporation. This project had a project value of €69,000,000 and was funded under the Cohesion Fund. The disbursement up to end of December 2011 was of €66,240,667.69, of which €3,921,238.24 were disbursed during the course of 2011. The number of ISCs raised in connection with this project during 2011 was 61.

JEREMIE Financing Package for SMEs including Micro-Enterprises

The aim of the JEREMIE financing package is to support Micro Enterprises and the self employed to reduce their difficulties in accessing finance through the provision of credit risk protection. This is a loan for capital expenditure purposes (investments which enhance the company's value). The loan amount for Micro Businesses can range between €25,000 and €500,000. This scheme kicked off in May 2011 and will run for 36 months until May 2014. The total funds allocated for the implementation of this instrument amounted to €10m that translate into €51.04m worth of loans due to the multiplier effect that is generated by the design of this instrument. The funds were allocated from the Structural Funds.

As at end December 2011, SME transactions sanctioned under the JEREMIE instrument were as follows:

- Number of loans sanctioned: 181
- Number of SMEs involved: 167
- Loans amount in euro: 15.61m
- Total investment amount: 24m
(including customer contribution)

European Energy Programme for Recovery (EEPR)

- Electricity interconnection Malta-Italy

The electricity interconnector between Malta and Sicily is being implemented by Enemalta and is part funded under the European Energy Programme for Recovery (EEPR). The estimated project value is of €200,000,000 and the allocated amount under the EEPR adds up to €20,000,000. The payments claimed up to end of December 2011 amounted to €11,341,727.

- Small isolated islands initiative (Kappara substation)

This project is also being implemented by Enemalta and will link the St Andrews Distribution Centre to the Kappara substation that will subsequently service the interconnector between Malta and Sicily. This project is also part funded under EEPR and has an estimated project value of €10,200,000 with an allocated amount under EEPR of €5,000,000. The payments claimed up to end of December 2011 amounted to €2,456,565.

Freedom of Information

The Programme Implementation Director was entrusted with the implementation of the provisions emanating from the Freedom of Information Act and therefore there was a continuation in the preparation for such implementation for when these provisions enter into force. Members from the Directorate attended and participated in a series of meetings convened by the MJHA in order to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the FOI Act, and its implementation.

Customer Care

The Directorate receives customer care queries through the Ministry's website, the Clearance House at the Office of the Prime Minister, telephone calls, letters and personal calls. Furthermore this Directorate also receives SOLVIT queries through the Department of Trade. No complaints were received from the Ombudsman's office during the period under review. Every effort is made to answer all customer care queries in a quick and efficient manner and during 2011, the Directorate dealt with and satisfactorily resolved a number of complaints with the close collaboration of the various other contact points within the entities, departments and divisions falling under the Ministry's portfolio.

Boards and Committees

The Programme Implementation Directorate coordinates the appointments of boards and committees that fall under this Ministry's portfolio. This work is carried out in coordination with the Minister's Private Secretariat, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Department of Information. Records are kept of all members on these boards and committees and a database has been designed to keep records current and updated at all times. During the year under review, the Programme Implementation Directorate coordinated the appointments on 39 boards or committees that fall under the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment's remit.

Green Initiatives

During the year under review, the Ministry received the results of the walk-through energy audits and the relative analysis was carried out and various recommended measures were implemented. Measures to safeguard the environment, such as waste management and reduction of consumption of water and electricity, continued to be implemented. Constant contact was kept with the departments, divisions and entities falling under the Ministry's remit, through the network of focal points on green issues.

Gender Issues

Throughout 2011, this Office attended meetings organised by the NCPE and also collaborated and participated in studies commissioned by the said entity.

Conference Incentive Fund

The Conference Incentive Fund was launched in mid-2009 and this initiative was coordinated and implemented by the Programme Implementation Directorate. This initiative assisted departments, ministries, entities and NGOs in the bidding, organising and hosting of international conferences in Malta. In the period under review, 21 conferences were partially funded and €233,519 was disbursed from this fund. These conferences brought over around 4,800 delegates for a total of around 69 conference days. Commitments were also made to sponsor several conferences that will take place in 2012.

Representation on Boards

The Programme Implementation Directorate, through its Director, participated in a number of boards during the year under review. These included the board of the Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation, the Malta Trade Fairs Corporation Board, the Board of Standards, the Sanctions Monitoring Board and the Inter-Ministerial Commission for the European Capital of Culture in Malta - 2018.

Implementation of Sanctions

The Director, Programme Implementation is a member of the Sanctions Monitoring Board that is set up under the Sanctions (Monitoring Board) Regulations (LN327/06). The year under review marked an increase in the activity of this board that was mainly due to the conflicts in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, with the latter conflict leading to the setting up of the Asset Freezing Unit, an ad hoc unit between the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment and MFSA. This unit was set up following the conflict in Libya and its main task was to trace all the assets belonging to Libyan individuals or entities who were listed by the United Nations and/or by the European Union. Several tracing exercises were carried out and the findings were compiled in reports that were then forwarded to the Sanctions Monitoring Board.

The Director, Programme Implementation was also entrusted with the implementation of the provisions emanating from the United Nations Sanctions (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) Regulations (SL 365.33), that introduced the principle of licensing for companies and/or entities that had a degree of listed Libyan

shareholding. These licences enabled these companies and/or entities to continue their normal operations and this contributed to the retention of jobs within these companies and/or entities. During the conflict in Libya a total of 14 licences were issued and these were issued after consultation with different stakeholders that would include the Sanctions Monitoring Board, MFSA, Central Bank and other entities that might have an interest in the operations of the applying entity or company.

AUDREY-ANNE CALLUS RANDICH
Director (Programme Implementation)

EU Paying Authority

Mission Statement

To perform duties and responsibilities relating to the financial management and certification of expenditure of EU-Funded projects and payment of EU Own Resources with the aim of maximising the benefits to Malta within the obligations and parameters as set out in national and EC legislation.

MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- To act as National Authorising Officer (NAO) in charge of the National Fund dealing with EU Pre-Accession and Transition Facility Funds;
- To act as the EU Paying/Certifying Authority with regard to Structural and Cohesion Funds, SOLID Funds, EEA/Norway Funds, Swiss Funds and EU Travel Vote regarding the certification of expenditure and subsequent drawdown of funds from the European Commission;
- To open and manage accounts in connection with receipts and payments of EU-related funds;
- To disburse funds relating to Own Resources as part of Malta's contribution to the EU Budget.

CORE FUNCTIONS

- To perform the duties of the Paying/Certifying Authority for Structural and Cohesion Funds SOLID Funds, EEA/Norway Funds, Swiss Funds;
- To perform the duties of the National Authorising Officer for Malta and be responsible for the management of the National Fund with regard to Pre-Accession and Transition Facility Programmes for Malta;
- To monitor progress of the projects which are being financed through foreign funds emanating from the EU and the European Economic Area and other non EU Member States, and draw budgets and forecasts for the said fund;
- To control and report on a regular basis the financial position of the funds and relative disbursements;
- To liaise with the DG Budget on the payment and financial management of EU Own Resources;
- To compile and maintain proper records of ex-ante, interim and ex-post inspections by third parties;
- To perform desk-based checks on a sample basis - and on-the-spot checks if deemed necessary - on the expenditure declared by stakeholders involved in the implementation of EU-Funded projects;
- To maintain an ongoing liaison with Government institutions on EU related matters in order to ensure that all commitments emanating from the various funding operations are being met;
- To manage the EU Travel Envelope regarding Malta's participation in EU Council and Commission meetings;
- To manage and process funds related to other EU Initiatives and Programmes.

WORK REPORT FOR 2011

Pre-Accession and Transition Facility Funding

The Director EU Paying Authority is also vested with the responsibility of National Authorising Officer (NAO) which is a function directly delegated by the Minister of Finance, the Economy and Investment. As stated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Financing Memoranda (FM) and EC Financing Decisions for the four Pre-Accession and the three Transition Facility Programmes, the National Authorising Officer is recognised as the overall authority in the Programme implementation process. These

Programmes are regulated by EC Regulation 555/2000 and were managed and implemented under the Extended Decentralised Implementation System (EDIS).

During 2011, the Office of the NAO liaised with the EU Commission in an effort to finalise the closure of the three Transition Facility Programmes, the implementation of which was successfully completed in June 2010 for the TF 2006. It is not excluded that further audits are performed by the Commission particularly on the 2006 Transition Facility Programme.

During 2011, the National Authorising Officer (NAO) was also involved in the following:

- participated and contributed in the reporting by the NAC to the EC via written procedure on the monitoring of sustainability of the Projects implemented under the Pre-accession and Transition Facility Programmes;
- monitored the iPerseus System for the updating of financial data on the Programmes;
- Communicated, particularly with DG ELARG, its position on various issues and problems encountered obtaining good success in its dealing with the EC on cases where the latter proposed recoveries following audits held on its behalf.

Structural and Cohesion Funds

The Directorate also performed the role of Paying Authority (PA) for Structural and Cohesion Funds and during 2011 honoured Malta's commitments and obligations and fulfilled its functions and tasks emanating from EC Regulations 1260/1999 and 438/2001 for the programming period 2004-2006. The Directorate also acted as Certifying Authority for Cohesion Policy Funds for the new programming period 2007-2013 under EC Regulation 1083/2006

During 2011, the Directorate performed a total of 11 certifications of expenditure to the Commission during the year and was directly responsible for overseeing the whole certification process, and drawing up the necessary financial reports and disbursement claims for the drawdown of funds from the EC. All the claims certified were accepted by the Commission and the relative funds received transferred to Government Revenue.

The EU Paying Authority continued to establish and maintain efficient communications and contacts with the relative DGs and Financial Services of the EU Commission in Brussels to ensure a smooth and reliable process. Communication and coordination with the Managing Authority was enhanced in order to facilitate the checking process. Moreover, all efforts were made to redraw and simplify the certification strategy cutting on duplication of controls. The result was a smoother process with more value added to the system of controls thus leading to a more expedited certification and drawdown of funds.

During the year, the PA participated as a permanent member in all the Monitoring Committees for the remaining Cohesion Funds projects of the 2004-2006 programming period and the Cohesion Policy funded Operational Programmes for 2007-2013. Throughout the year, the Directorate was involved in other fora and communicated its position on various issues.

Furthermore, the EU Paying Authority ensured that the funds received from the EC were credited to the correct accounts at the CBM. In this process, sound communication links with the Central Bank of Malta (CBM) were maintained at all times and instructions to the CBM were issued to provide statements of accounts of all transactions, including interest earned on balances and other certifications requested by the EU Commission.

As per table below, for the 2007-2013 Financial Period a total amount of €171,887,964.57 were certified and transferred to Government Revenue under the Cohesion Policy Operational Programmes (OP) I and II. Moreover, the CA transferred to Revenue the sum of €6,116,010.54 from the Cohesion Policy advance payment held at the Central Bank of Malta.

Fund	Allocation	Certified during 2011	Certified and transferred to revenue-aggregate
	€	€	€
OPI - ERDF	443,978,031	62,093,266.37	91,831,223.59
OPI – Cohesion Fund	112,000,000	12,004,660.09	64,409,367.71
OPII - ESF	284,145,020	10,316,696.79	15,647,373.27
Total	840,123,051	84,414,623.25	171,887,964.57

The table below shows the amounts received from the Commission during 2011 regarding the Structural Funds for the 2004-2006 Programme which are now closed.

Fund	Received from EC in 2011 €
ERDF	2,334,881.95
EQUAL	30,488.21
ESF	463,275.64
FIFG	119,535.31
EAGGF (Guidance)	210,000.00
Total	3,158,181.11

Own Resources

The EU Paying Authority Directorate also managed the bank account relating to EU Own Resources. During 2011, close relations were maintained with the relevant services in DG Budget of the EU Commission and also local stakeholders mainly the Customs and VAT Departments and the National Statistics Office, on the payment and financial management of Own Resources, reporting requirements, and the transactions to be made in the accounts and the exchange rate criteria. The Directorate ensured that payments to the European Commission were effected on a regular basis and in the appropriate manner within the stipulated deadlines.

The table below indicates the payments of Own Resources effected by the Directorate for Malta in favour of the Commission during 2011, amounting to €66,980,610.72.

Payments to the EU during 2011	€
TOR	10,140,238.05
VAT-Based	10,921,809.51
GNI-Based	42,586,490.04
UK Correction	2,933,041.08
Reduction in favour of other Member States	399,032.04
Total	66,980,610.72

Travel Vote

The EU Paying Authority Directorate manages the Travel Envelope of EU Funds allocated to Malta in respect of the reimbursement of travel expenses for participation in EU Council Meetings as per EU Decision 190/2003, and also implemented the procedures for reimbursement for participation in EU Commission Meetings.

The Directorate conducted the following related work in this regard:

- coordinated the follow-up of all outstanding travel claims with all government ministries, departments and entities;

- formulated Malta's Travel Declaration in respect of the reimbursement of all travel expenses incurred following the participation in EU Council Meetings;
- gave its contribution towards the issuing of instructions by the MFEI laying out the procedures to be followed by all government ministries, departments and entities for the reimbursement of travel expenses for participation in EU Council and Commission Meetings, apart from also providing information to the various stakeholders involved and also issuing various circulars in this regard;
- assisted the Council of the European Union audit team during their verification mission which took place in April;
- authorised the transfers of the EU Funds from the Central Bank of Malta to Government Revenue and the respective government ministries, departments and entities claiming reimbursement of travel expenses following their participation in the respective meetings.

During 2011, the total of travel funds claimed and transferred to Maltese revenue for participation in EU Council and Commission Meetings during the year in question to date, amounted to €1,514,554.42. This included €1,111,442.59 for Council Meetings and €40,111.83 for Commission Meetings.

SOLID Funds

The EU Paying Authority Directorate performs the role of Certifying Authority for the Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows Programme (SOLID) for seven different Annual Programmes covering 2007-13. This programme is further divided into four funds, namely the External Borders Fund (EBF), European Refugee Fund (ERF), Return Fund (RF) and the European Integration Fund (EIF).

During 2011, the CA certified and transferred to revenue funds in connection with ERF, EBF and Return Fund projects falling under Annual Programmes 2008, 2009 and 2010, and these amounted to €8,406,997.05, as shown in the following table:

Fund	AP 2008	AP 2009	AP 2010	Totals
External Borders Fund (EBF)	33,276.58	5,088,745.20	2,181,645.00	7,303,666.78
European Refugee Fund (ERF)	614,969.33	184,079.85	-	799,049.18
Return Fund (RF)	304,281.09	-	-	304,281.09
Total	952,527.00	5,272,825.05	2,181,645.00	8,406,997.05

Norwegian & EEA Financial Mechanisms (NFM & EEA FM)

Malta is participating in these funds to achieve a social and economic disparities reduction with regard to participation in the Internal Market. The protection of the environment, the promotion of sustainable development, the conservation of European cultural heritage, human resource development, health and childcare, and academic research are the identified priority areas for Malta wherein eight projects (Technical Assistance included) are benefitting from €3,389,957. During the year, the Paying Authority participated in the Monitoring Committee and Annual Meeting for the European Economic Area (EEA) and Norway Financial Mechanisms as well as meetings for the new agreements 2009-2014. During 2011, €873,064 (NFM) and €1,001,876 (EEA FM) were certified and transferred to revenue.

Swiss Fund

The Swiss Government granted a fund amounting to €3581million covering the costs of a PET scanner acquisition and support to the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC), which are the only two projects under this fund. During 2011, the Paying Authority certified and transferred to revenue €331,183.

EFF 2007-2013

The EU Paying Authority Directorate performs the role of Certifying Authority for this Programme. During 2011, the CA performed two certifications amounting to €1,131,003 (EU funds). In view of the fact that the amount certified in 2010 was received in 2011, the amount transferred to revenue is significantly higher than the certified amount. In fact, the amount transferred to revenue totals €1,647,035.66.

Other work

On 26-27 September 2011, the Paying Authority hosted a delegation of 12 officials from the Albanian Ministry of Finance and provided training on Management and Control Systems of Pre-Accession, Transition Facility and Post-accession EU funded Programmes. The Directorate also coordinated with the PPCD to participate in delivering training activities to the Albanian counterparts of the Managing Authority regarding the programming, project selection and management of EU Funded Programmes. The training delivered was a complete success and the Albanian counterparts praised the competence and hospitality of the Maltese authorities.

On 23-24 May 2011, the Directorate in its role as Certifying Authority for Cohesion Policy and SOLID Funds participated with delegates from Certifying Authorities from the other Member States in the third EU Certifying Authorities Network Meeting in Belfast Northern Ireland hosted by the UK authorities. The Certifying Authority (CA) Network is now an established forum which was set up to bring together the Certifying Authorities of the Member States to discuss the various issues related to the CA functions and tasks.

JOSEPH SGHENDO

Director (EU Paying Authority)

Policy Development Directorate

INTRODUCTION

During 2011, the Policy Development Directorate (PDD) continued to focus upon its core areas of responsibility, specifically the development of policies, the coordination of the National Reform Programme (NRP) under the Europe 2020 strategy, coordinating the Euro Plus Pact, coordination of issues pertaining to the Single Market, representing the Ministry on inter-ministerial committees and other bodies, as well as the provision of timely support and advice to the Permanent Secretary on any issue referred to it.

NATIONAL REFORM PROGRAMME UNDER THE EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY AND EURO PLUS PACT

The Directorate's foremost task for the year was the coordination of the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, which succeeded the Lisbon Strategy. The new strategy builds on the Lisbon Strategy's achievements as a partnership for growth and job creation, whilst renewing it to meet new challenges. The Europe 2020 Strategy aims to help the EU come out stronger from the economic crisis by boosting competitiveness, delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. Member States were called to prepare their National Reform Programmes under the new strategy with a view to deliver structural reforms needed to increase the growth potential of their economies.

The Directorate submitted Malta's first NRP under the Europe 2020 strategy in April to the Commission. The NRP presents a number of tangible measures and initiatives aimed at promoting smart and sustainable growth. The NRP aims to raise labour productivity by focusing on education, investment, research and development, and improving market functioning.

Malta worked towards the development of ambitious yet realistic targets taking into consideration Malta's starting point and national specificities so as to promote growth and jobs. These targets are:

- *Employment*: Malta set its employment rate target at 62.9% by 2020;
- *R&D*: Malta set its national R&D target at 0.67% of GDP by 2020;
- *Poverty Reduction*: Malta target is to lift around 6,560 people out of risk of poverty and exclusion by 2020;
- *Energy*: Malta set the following ambitious targets for energy efficiency, renewable energy and greenhouse gas emission reduction:
 - A maximum increase of greenhouse gas emissions not falling within the scope of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme of 5% by 2020 (compared to 2005 levels particularly emissions from transport, mainly road transport, waste, agriculture and fuel combustion in industry and commercial and residential buildings);
 - A commitment to achieve by 2020 a share of energy from renewable sources in gross final energy consumption of 10%;
 - A commitment to achieve by 2020 a target of 10% of energy consumed in all forms of transport from renewable sources;
 - A commitment to achieve a 22% energy or 235,254toe savings target by 2020 with an intermediate target for 2014 of 15% or 144,876toe.
- *Education*: Malta set the following targets:
 - Aiming to reduce school drop-out rates to 29% by 2020;

- Increasing the share of 30-34 years old having completed tertiary or equivalent education to 33% by 2020.

In March 2011, the members of the Euro area, joined by other EU Member States, agreed on the Euro Plus Pact, a plan aimed at improving the competitiveness of participating states. The Pact contains four objectives: to foster competitiveness, foster employment, contribute further to the sustainability of public finances, and reinforce financial stability. As a participating state in the Euro Plus Pact, Malta adopted nine concrete measures which Government is committed to implement within a twelve-month period to contribute to the realisation of the objectives of the Pact. This pact was included in the NRP.

In its Euro Plus Pact, Malta submitted commitments on:

- Strengthening the Fiscal Framework,
- Enactment and Implementation of the Small Business Act,
- Administrative Burden Reduction,
- Start-up Finance and Micro Credit Scheme,
- Cultural and creative industries Strategy,
- Full liberalisation of the postal sector,
- Telecommunications Market,
- Next Generation Networks,
- Telecommunications Regulatory Measures.

Many of the recommendations listed in the Annual Growth Survey were addressed in Malta's National Reform Programme. Smart fiscal consolidation, which is the first of the ten recommendations of the Annual Growth Survey, is described as a priority action for Malta in its National Reform Programme and is listed as one of the measures to address economic imbalances and growth bottlenecks, along with the strengthening of market structures, strengthening financial stability and better regulation.

The Annual Growth Survey's recommendation to make work more attractive has been taken on in the National Reform Programme in the form of such measures as the youth employment programme, financial incentives to attract inactive women to the labour force, encouraging older workers to continue working, and family-friendly measures such as child care centres and afternoon school programmes. The same thing can be said about getting the unemployed back to work, which Malta believes will contribute to its Europe 2020 Strategy employment target. Among the measures in this regard, the National Reform Programme lists an employability programme, a community work scheme and measures to contain informal work and abuse of the unemployment register.

The Annual Growth Survey recommends attracting private capital to finance growth and this was taken on board in the National Reform Programme through the launch of various private investment incentives. Creating cost-effective access to energy is also among the Annual Growth Survey priority actions. Malta's answer to this recommendation is the interconnection to the European Energy Grid, the extension of the Delimara Power Station, schemes to increase energy end-use efficiency, and measures to increase energy efficiency in transport.

Malta is also committed to comply with the Stability and Growth Pact requirements and has ensured that the proposals contained in the National Reform Programme are consistent with the fiscal targets contained in the Stability Programme. In addition, whilst economic activity has regained momentum in Malta, the policies contained in the National Reform Programme should help Malta achieve its fiscal consolidation targets in a sustainable and credible manner.

In its role as NRP coordinator, the Directorate received a European Commission delegation in March which dealt with industrial competitiveness. One of the aims of this technical visit was to prepare the regular update of the Commission annual report on Member States Competitiveness Performance and Policies.

Consultations on the new NRP and the Europe 2020 strategy were held throughout the year. In fact, a public consultation document on the new NRP and its measures was issued in January. A good number of meetings were held with the various ministries, entities and key stakeholders. The Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD) and the Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee (MEUSAC) were given a detailed presentation in order to keep them updated on Malta's new NRP, its targets and objectives. Information on the Europe 2020 Strategy was also disseminated on radio and TV programmes in cooperation with MEUSAC. The Directorate also draws up instruction notes and policy papers on the Europe 2020 strategy and in this connection attends meetings in both local and EU fora.

Throughout the year under review, the Directorate closely monitored the progress achieved on the various NRP and Euro Plus Pact measures with a view to ensure their timely implementation. Subsequently, the Directorate provides the Commission with a detailed progress report on an annual basis.

Better Regulation

The Directorate is the Better Regulation Ministry Coordinator (BRMC) for MFEL. The role entails identifying opportunities for the reduction of administrative burdens, reporting progress on current better regulation initiatives taken in the Ministry, and acting as a contact point on better regulation. The Directorate also fully participated in the BRMC network, which regularly convened at the Better Regulation Unit, MEU. Throughout 2011, members of this Directorate also attended seminars and training programmes organised by MEU.

One of the main tasks undertaken over the past year was that of assisting MEU and PricewaterhouseCoopers in their assignment of compiling a compendium of all primary and secondary legislation falling under this Ministry. It is worth noting that five out of the ten priority areas fall under this Ministry's remit. In addition, this Ministry's departments and entities were also asked to verify the accuracy and completeness of the list of information obligations compiled by PWC and to classify them in three categories, depending on whether such information obligations were of national or EU origin. The next phase of this assignment is currently underway with a view to reduce administrative burden on businesses by 15% by 2012.

Single Market

The Policy Development Directorate is also responsible for the coordination of horizontal issues falling under the Single Market. During the period under review, the main focus of the Directorate was on coordinating Malta's position on the Single Market Act. The EU decided to refocus the Single Market Act on twelve key areas with a priority proposal under each area to be adopted by the end of 2012.

In this connection, the Directorate compiled Malta's position on this document and liaised with various ministries to determine which proposals were most relevant to Malta. Consultation meetings were also held through MEUSAC, where the business community was given the opportunity to express their opinion on the Single Market Act. Based on the consultation process, this Directorate formulated Malta's position on this act and subsequently this position was used by officials from this Directorate who participated in meetings held in Brussels to discuss the Single Market Act and the particular proposals that featured in this act.

This Directorate, together with other departments, represented Malta at the Single Market Forum (SIMFO). This forum brings together officials, citizens and business people from all EU countries. The main focus of the forum was the future of the single market and what needs to be done to bring the citizens closer to the single market. In fact, this forum was the perfect opportunity to listen to the problems encountered by citizens in the Single Market.

Training

This Directorate believes in the continuous development and skill enhancement of its personnel. During the year under review, PDD staff attended various training programmes given by the Centre for Development, Research and Training. PDD staff also attended training given by PricewaterhouseCoopers on the use of the Standard Cost Model and Better Regulation principles. This training was provided under the ESF 4.87 Project Developing the Public Sector's Capacity to Implement Better Regulation. The Standard Cost Model is the tool that is used to measure the administrative burdens resulting from information obligations imposed on businesses and citizens. In fact, this tool that will be used to measure the target set by Malta of reducing administrative burdens on businesses of at least 15% by 2012.

Meetings, Seminars and Conferences

During the year, the Directorate ensured that it was always duly represented by a member of staff in both national and European meetings, seminars and conferences focusing on various policy issues mainly those concerning the Europe 2020 Strategy, the Internal Market and Competitiveness. The Directorate also continued to keep abreast with developments on a national as well as on a European level in the areas falling under its responsibility.

Other Activities

During the period in question, the Directorate also coordinated the Ministry's position on the draft Strategic Plan for Environment and Development and the draft National Environment Policy. The Directorate also represents the Ministry on the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Water Catchment Management Plan.

MARTIN SPITERI

Director (Policy Development)

Enterprise Policy Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the Enterprise Policy Directorate are to build and sustain an administrative and legal framework which focuses on small and micro enterprises and contributes towards creating a positive environment in which entrepreneurs and businesses can flourish, to ensure that enterprise policy complements the country's economic and industrial policies for the benefit of the smaller enterprises in Malta. The Directorate therefore aims to:

- develop an enterprise policy for Malta with a particular focus on small and micro enterprises while ensuring that initiatives in the interest of SMEs link with Government's industrial policy for Malta;
- provide feedback to the EU Affairs Directorate and other directorates of the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment on specific issues relating to enterprise policy.

Small Business Act

In 2011, the Directorate reviewed all the submissions received vis-à-vis the consultation carried out on the legislative proposal on the Small Business Act. Following this evaluation, the Small Business Act (SBA) was enacted through Parliament in June 2011 (<http://doi.gov.mt/EN/bills/2011/BILL%2076.pdf>). On 10 November, circular MF 9/2011 was published explaining the coming into force of parts of the Act through LN 410 and some exemptions from certain provisions in LN 429. In 2011, the Directorate also initiated a call for the recruitment of staff for the Unit within the Directorate which will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the SBA and the implementation of the SME Test.

Through the Small Business Act, Government aims at improving the regulatory environment for SMEs. The implementation of the SME Test will ensure that while legislation will be implemented for the benefit of all, it will not adversely impact on SMEs and will therefore provide for a mechanism which will seek to identify mitigating measures which will alleviate the burden on business.

The setting up of the Enterprise Consultative Council and the College of Regulators will further ensure that SMEs have the opportunity to voice their views, guarantee that SMEs are consulted and that action is taken by the respective government entity, as well as ensuring a more efficient regulatory environment.

Entrepreneurship through Education

The Directorate, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family, launched the Entrepreneurship through Education Scheme. This scheme provided funding for all primary and secondary schools in Malta to submit proposals (up to €5,000) which focused on enhancing and promoting entrepreneurial qualities such as creativity and innovation as well as investment in skills and exposure to the business environment. A total of 19 projects were selected with a budget of around €75,000 being disbursed. The Directorate also continued to follow this topic in European fora and will be organising a conference on the subject on 20 January 2012.

Business Needs Awareness Seminar

The Directorate was responsible for the implementation of budget measures on training to public service and public sector officials on the needs of enterprises and entrepreneurs. The training course, which was attended by around 40 officials from the Public Sector who shape their organisation's service delivery, included sessions with business representatives meant to identify the specific concerns of entrepreneurs. On the other hand, the latter had the opportunity to discuss certain difficulties with public service officials and ways through which certain areas could be improved.

European SME Week 2012

For the third consecutive year, the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment organised events as part of the European SME Week in October 2011. During this week, the European Commission encourages Member States to organise activities which aim at promoting entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, especially amongst youth as well as to serve as a platform for established entrepreneurs who would like to obtain information on the European Commission's and Government's activities in support of entrepreneurship. The activities, which were spread over four weeks, varied from a training course on Intellectual Property Rights (with the participation of the European Union's Intellectual Property Rights Help Desk) to a Business Networking Event organised in collaboration with Junior Chamber International and a conference focusing on Crafts as well as an event targeting would be female entrepreneurs.

The Crafts conference also included workshops on sustainability in crafts, environmental concerns on materials used, packaging and the use of technology while the 'Female Business Café' was organised by the Directorate in collaboration with the Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs. This activity enabled women wanted to set up their own business to discuss their ideas with officials from the Employment and Training Corporation, Malta Enterprise and the Commerce Department.

The week also allowed for students to voice their ideas and participate in a discussion with established entrepreneurs at the Institute of Tourism Studies on the theme of 'Being Entrepreneurial'.

Enterprise Consultative Council

Set up as part of the obligations emanating from the Small Business Act, the Enterprise Consultative Council meets to discuss topics which are directly relevant to SMEs. In 2011, the Council met three times and discussed issues such as the international economic situation and the impact on the various sectors such as manufacturing, financial services, tourism and the construction industry amongst others. Other issues discussed at the Council related to public procurement and e-procurement and Government's micro-credit scheme.

Sub-Committee of the Enterprise Consultative Council on increasing women's participation to the labour market

This sub-committee was set up in July 2011, following a suggestion at the Enterprise Consultative Council. This committee, which met four times, discussed possible initiatives which should encourage women to return to the labour market. These include fiscal incentives, current social security benefits and child care facilities.

Social Entrepreneurship Study

The Social Enterprise sector is an area which has the potential of contributing to the national economy while also ensuring the pursuit of social objectives. The Directorate embarked on a study on this sector so as to analyse the existing scenario and identify the gaps from a legal perspective which currently hinder the setting up of social enterprises. The study also includes a benchmarking exercise with two Member States, as well as a survey with a number of voluntary organisations in Malta.

The Directorate will be disseminating the information of this study in early 2012 as part of a consultation exercise, which should lead to the drafting of legislation meant to improve the legal environment for these organisations.

Malta Innovation Awards

In September, the Directorate launched the 2011 Malta Innovation Awards with a total prize fund of €75,000. There were three categories for this year's awards: Scientific Innovation, Creative Innovation and Technological Innovation. The evaluation process for the awards was concluded and the next awards ceremony will be held in February 2012.

National Enterprise Support Awards

In collaboration with the Small Businesses and Crafts Directorate within the Department of Commerce, the Enterprise Policy Directorate led the National Enterprise Support Awards. These awards are open for local councils, government entities, business stakeholders, national organisations and NGOs who would have undertaken activities to promote and boost entrepreneurship. The winners, which will be announced in January 2012, will participate at the European Commission's European Enterprise Awards. In May 2011, Mellieħa Local Council and Junior Achievement Young Enterprise, winners of the 2010 edition of the Awards, had the opportunity to participate at this European Enterprise Awards Competition in Spain.

ANTON SPITERI

Director (Enterprise Policy)

Information Management Unit

INTRODUCTION

During 2011, the Information Management Unit (IMU) within MFEI consolidated further its position and in tandem with key ICT personnel in the various departments provided the required ICT support in terms of operations, strategy, project management, consultancy, governance and end user support to the Ministry and its departments. The IMU was also instrumental in leading and implementing IT initiatives and ensure that these are in line with the overall Government ICT strategy. The following is an outline of the operations, projects and initiatives in which the IMU was involved during the year under review.

Requests for ICT services

The IMU logged and/or approved requests for ICT services required by users across the Ministry and its departments. All final approvals were granted only through the IMU to ensure more control when accessing systems or services while monitoring costs and increasing security. Typical requests for services included among others the following:

- Rationalisation of generic mailbox quotas and shared drives
- Mailbox or files/folders restores
- Port Unlocking
- Blackberry and mobile email services
- Provision of VPN accounts to teleworkers
- Change in details and e-mail alias of users joining/leaving the Ministry
- Granting of Corp, e-mail and Internet accounts for new users
- Assign/revoke rights to shared folders
- Assign/revoke rights to access corporate information systems
- Passwords notifications
- Alterations in access permissions to generic e-mail accounts
- Deletion of obsolete e-mail accounts
- Provision or deletion of digital secure certificates and/or secure mail tokens
- Provision or deletion of VPN accounts.

User and Departmental Support

The IMU provided general technical support to the Ministry and its users. Though support calls generally declined due to the desktop leasing agreement, whereby the leasing supplier attends to requests related to the workstation, the IMU still received additional requests of a different nature. The support provided consisted mainly in the following:

- Provision of minor IT equipment such as mice, keyboards and other peripherals
- Transfers of data prior to or following laptop/PC repairs
- User support on MS Office applications
- Support for problems related to e-mails such as offline mail, backups, archiving etc
- Provision of video conferencing facilities and related support
- Printer sharing for new users
- Troubleshooting networking problems
- Mapping of shared drives for users

- Transfer of IT equipment, network connectivity and telephony following office moves
- Assist users in handling files in unsupported formats
- Installation of non standard software following an exemption process
- Assist users in upgrading their leased PC/laptop when required
- Troubleshooting of peripheral hardware devices that are not normally covered by the desktop leasing agreement such as external hard disks and other peripherals.

The IMU also offered support to a number of departments within the Ministry related to diverse aspects of ICT ranging from project management, consultancy, advice and technical support. The following entities made use of our services: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Parliamentary Secretariat, Customs Department, Treasury Department, Notary to Government, Commerce Department, Government Property Department, Accountancy Board, and the Contracts Department.

Local Area Networks

During 2011 various network related tasks were carried out in various departments and these included:

- Implementation of a WAN and LAN for the Public Contracts Review Board premises
- New LAN for the Ministry on the 4th floor
- New LAN for the Customs MIA Departures office at Luqa
- Upgrade of WAN for the Quality Assurance Unit in Marsa
- Extending the Fibre back bone connectivity between the Customs Administration Offices at Hal far and the Customs Mobile Office adjacent to the Nuctech mobile scanner.

Other minor network related works included:

- Local Area Network extensions
- Replacement of faulty network switches and/or reconfiguration
- Installation of new network and distribution switches
- New network points or their relocation following office moves
- Upgrading of network cabinets
- Re-patching of telephony and network points in network cabinets
- Redeployment of network equipment from one premises to another
- Installation of uninterruptible power supplies in a number of network cabinets

Procurement, Supplier and Contract Management

All ICT procurement for the Ministry and its departments, except for leased personal computers and laptops, was centralised within the IMU. This mechanism ensured more control on ICT spending and while allowing the IMU to monitor and ensure that suppliers delivered services/products in accordance to specifications, service agreements and/or contractual obligations. The IMU also checked the legitimacy and accuracy of various invoices related to the procurement of ICT equipment prior to authorising payments.

The IMU was also involved in managing suppliers and coordinating repairs on electronic equipment that needed to be carried out by third party suppliers. The IMU prepared the equipment for pick-up by the supplier, kept track of such equipment and ensured that the equipment was properly repaired and returned to its user/s.

The formulation of a number of maintenance and support agreements related to hardware and/or information systems that are implemented within the Ministry or its departments also fall within the remit of the IMU.

Transfer and Storage of ICT Assets

The IMU coordinates the transfer of ICT assets between government entities and departments. This includes transfer of the equipment, transfer of asset forms, update of the inventories and renaming and/or re-installation of the asset. This procedure is ensuring that the use of assets is optimised to the full without having assets lying idle.

Technical Apprenticeship Scheme

For the third year running, a Training Apprenticeship Scheme apprentice was engaged with the IMU through the Employment and Training Corporation. The sponsored apprentice is following a three-year course for a Computer Engineering Technician at MCAST. The apprentice will obtain the necessary hands-on work experience at the IMU by assisting with network related works and the provision of end user support.

ICT Budgeting 2012

In April/May, the budgeting process to submit the Operational (OPEX) and Capital (CAPEX) ICT budgetary requirements for the Ministry and its departments for 2012 was commenced. A number of meetings with all relevant stakeholders were organised in order to assess the ICT requirements for the coming year. The finalised ICT Budgets were forwarded to MITA by end June 2011.

New Websites and Related Support

The IMU was heavily involved in works related to web related support and development. Responsibility for keeping the ministry portal www.finance.gov.mt updated also lies within the IMU. During 2011, the IMU assisted five different departments in launching a new website. These were:

- Treasury - www.treasury.gov.mt - launched February 2011
- National Statistics Office – www.census2011.gov.mt - launched June 2011
- Public Contracts Review Board – www.pcrb.gov.mt - launched December 2011
- Accountancy Board – www.accountancyboard.gov.mt - launched December 2011
- Government Property Rent on-line - <http://www.gpd.gov.mt/> - launched December 2011

The IMU was directly or indirectly involved in the requirements gathering stage, selection of suppliers, project management, quality assurance, domain name registration, hosting arrangements and formulation of maintenance and support agreements among other tasks.

Upgrade of the EPTOS framework at the Commerce Department.

The EPTOS framework of the Commerce Department has now been upgraded to the latest version 9.0 as recommended by the technical team of the European Patent Office (EPO). The upgrade was done in conjunction between the IMU, MITA where the system is hosted, and the Tecno team of the EPO. The Soprano System for Patents in use at the Commerce Department currently runs on the EPTOS framework.

Establishing key ICT positions in Departments

During 2011, the IMU was involved in the establishment of a number of ICT positions within the Ministry's departments. It was felt necessary that apart from having a central IMU, the Ministry's departments required to build their own ICT capacities that were more geared to combine business knowledge with ICT. These decentralised IT units work in tandem with the central IMU to deliver ICT solutions more appropriate to the business of the department but at the same time in line with Government's overall ICT strategy, ICT governance principles and within allocated budgets.

Security and Governance

From time to time MTCERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) at MITA informs the IMU about PCs that are not behaving normally on the Magnet. These include PCs that do not have the proper antivirus installed, PCs that are creating undue traffic on the network, PCs not logging correctly onto the Corp domain or cases where non compliant software has been installed. In all these cases, the IMU through its Governance function investigates these instances and takes the appropriate line of action.

Exemptions and Waivers

The IMU received a number of ICT requests, which due to GM ICT policies required a formal exemption from the MITA ICT Compliance Department, in order to be implemented. The process for coordinating the submission and eventual processing of exemptions by MITA was fully coordinated by the ICT Governance function within the IMU. In all, 34 exemption requests were processed during 2011.

Time Tracking System

In order to raise accountability and better governance of projects within the IMU, a Time-Tracking System has been implemented. The system allows officers to track time spent on the various projects and tasks while allowing management to oversee the tasks each officer is responsible for. The system also facilitates and standardises the way performance reports are issued.

Training

During the year under review, officers from the IMU benefited from the following training programmes:

- Training in Electronic Procurement;
- Training in Risk Management;
- Training workshops organised by the European Patent Office in the Hague, the Netherlands on Information Systems currently in use by the Commerce Department;
- Technical training by the Office of Harmonisation in the Internal Market (OHIM) in Alicante, Spain on behalf of the Commerce Department;
- Training on the V-Smart Library Information System;
- Information Security Awareness;
- IT in Customs and Taxation under the Fiscalis programme of the EU;
- Enhancing your Personal Assistant Skills;
- Training in Management of Value - UK's Office of Government Commerce's (OGC);
- Training in Better Regulation and the Standard Cost Model.

The IMU was also invited and participated through its officers in a number of local conferences and/or seminars dealing with various aspects of ICTs and information management during 2011.

Open Source Web Framework for the Ministry

The IMU has established a standard web framework for the Ministry based on an Open Source Content Management System known as Plone (now in Version 4.0). The framework is located on a segregated hosting environment in MITA's data centre. The framework allows the Ministry to quickly deploy a number of websites, intranets, document management systems and extranets for use by the Ministry and its departments.

Delegated Internal Market Information Coordinator (DIMIC)

During 2011, the IMU as a DIMIC had the responsibility to register Competent Authorities in the IMI system, manage their data, monitor progress of requests and assist in case of problems.

ICT Support for the National Budget 2012

The IMU managed the Ministry's ICT requirements for the preparation of the national Budget 2012. The support commenced weeks prior to the budget as well as during Budget Day itself. The main tasks included the coordination for the provision of dedicated technical support to the Ministry, the allocation of additional and standby hardware, real time updating of the Ministry's web portal with the Budget publications and domain name registration.

Representation on Boards

The IMU, through the CIO, participated in a number of boards and councils during the year. These included among others the National Information Society Advisory Council (NISCO), the INFOSEC Council, ICT Positions Selection Boards, the CIO Council and the CIO Forum. The IMU also participates through a representative in the Malta Open Source End User Group (MOSEUG).

ICT Support to Customs

The IMU works constantly with Malta Customs to assist and eventually finance the ICT systems required by the Customs Department. This particular Department has the highest demand for new information systems due to requirements imposed by the EU. During 2011, the IMU assisted the Customs Department as follows:

- Implementation of TARIC 3;
- Customs Risk Management System redundancy;
- General support to internal users on Customs Information Systems and assistance in the debugging of errors

Business Intelligence Reporting Framework

The IMU has extended the functionality of SAP Business Objects in use at the Customs Department for accessibility by other departments within the same Ministry to create a common platform for generating business reports from information systems.

Enhancements to the Fleet Management System

As part of the commitment of this Ministry to continually improve the Fleet Management System, the Ministry through the IMU and MITA carried out a set of 20 new developments and/or enhancements to render the system more user-friendly and improve monitoring. Further deployments of the FMS were also carried out.

Land and Estate Management Information System

During the last quarter of 2011, the new rents module of the Land and Estate Management Information System (LEMIS) at the Government Property Department (GPD) was launched. The parallel run with the previous Licence Management System (LMS) continued until end 2011. GPD staff are now using LEMIS to issue invoices related to government rents. Towards the end of 2011, there was also the launch of the new online rents payment portal which is accessible on www.gpd.gov.mt. Other LEMIS modules, notably the GIS, will be available towards mid-2012.

ALBERT VELLA
Chief Information Officer

Financial Policy and Management Division

FINANCIAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS DIRECTORATE

The consolidation of policies, laws, regulations and standards continued during the course of 2011. In particular the Vehicle Registration and Licensing Act was amended. During 2011, FPMD also continued to participate in the Malta Government Accounts Standards Committee.

One of the main objectives of the Financial Policy and Management Division is that of modernising financial management across public administration, enabling ministries, departments and extra-budgetary units to manage better their financial resources, become more accountable and to increase efficiency in the use of public assets. This necessitates the continuous liaison with line ministries, departments and extra-budgetary units, together with the National Audit Office (NAO), Treasury Department, Budgetary Affairs Division, the Internal Audit and Investigation Department (IAID) and the National Statistics Office (NSO), among others.

FPMD will be responsible for the organisation of the first course for junior and senior managers involved in the implementation of IPSAS locally. This course will be organised in conjunction with the IPSAS Institute (Switzerland) and is scheduled to take place in April 2012. The course will be held at the Centre for Development, Research and Training (CDRT).

VEHICLE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING

During 2011, the Division led the changes in methodology used in the computation of registration values for the purpose of calculating registration tax. The registration values, upon which the registration tax for used M1 category vehicles (passenger cars) is calculated, are derived combining data held by Transport Malta, consumer prices collected through a continuous consumer survey by the National Statistics Office for used vehicles and information published by CAP Motor Research Ltd. This marked a shift from opinion data collected from authorised dealers of used cars, values provided by importers of new vehicles and information published by CAP Motor Research Ltd that had been used up to now. The registration values will continue to be updated on a monthly basis using the used cars price index published by the NSO and UK market information published by CAP Motor Research Ltd. Registration values are published by Transport Malta through its web portal, this portal features also the calculation of registration tax for N category vehicles (commercial vehicles) and motorcycles.

In the course of the year, the European Commission formally closed the infringement procedure against Malta concerning the calculation of registration tax..

GOVERNMENT TRANSPORT

During 2011, the Government Transport Unit within the Financial Policy and Management Division held various meetings with a number of entities and departments with the aim of reducing the number of hired vehicles in the fleet. Organisations were directed to procure rather than lease and in many cases only the temporary hire of vehicles was approved with the intention that vehicles would be procured when funds became available.

Moreover fuel expenditure, together with other expenditure items, was closely monitored. The objective is to ensure that ministries, departments and extra-budgetary units make better use of their resources in line with Government's over-riding objective to consolidate public finances. Quarterly reports were drawn up and vehicles having a low efficiency were identified. Ministries, departments and extra-budgetary units were asked to assess and justify such instances, corrective action being taken as appropriate. The Fleet Management System (FMS) was successfully installed by the Police Department and NSO. Moreover, in 2011, thirty new developments and/or enhancements were carried out to render the FMS more user-friendly, and to also improve monitoring by MFEI and by ministries, departments and extra-budgetary units

As a Green Initiative, the FMS was modified and paper printouts reduced by two-thirds. A green element was also proposed of thresholds on carbon dioxide for fully-expensed cars. Moreover, data was collected for the last three years in connection with the amount of fuel used by all departments and the carbon dioxide element was calculated.

The Ministry was represented in monthly board meetings held at the National Commission Persons with Disability (KNPD) whose aim is to decide on the outcome of requests relating to the exemption of registration tax. The Board was also tasked with the updating of the current guidelines on exemptions to be presented to the Minister responsible for Finance.

During 2011, calculations were carried out in connection with the reimbursement given to officers for using their private transport for work related purposes. After consultations were carried out with various organisations, a circular was issued updating the allowance to €0.31c/km.

This unit also worked on a fresh circular which aims to update the currently used MF5/98 which regulates fully-expensed vehicles made used by senior management. This update also took into consideration greener procurement. In addition, a cash allowance has been provided for. Currently, the draft is being reviewed.

In the course of 2011, the NAO published a report on fully-expensed vehicles. This report was analysed and followed up with the extra-budgetary units which had been audited. A justification to any shortcomings was requested with a view to rectify any shortcomings or malpractices.

A new policy aimed at streamlining the procedure to be adopted regarding Government Motor Insurance was drafted in view of the agreement between the Ministry and the Protection and Compensation Fund (PCF), which will be regulating for claims arising against Government. Discussions are currently being held with the PCF related to the implementation of such policy.

During 2011, FPMD initiated the process leading to the publishing of a service tender requesting consultancy services related to the management of the Government's fleet of vehicles. It is the Government's aim to have a smaller fleet made up of less polluting vehicles that can better service its needs, including the transportation of officials and the operation of its mail courier service. Cost effectiveness and environmental concerns are two key principles driving the reform in Government transport policy, aiming at enhancing the current system. The service tender was drafted to include requirements specific to government needs with the intention of attracting the suitable expertise in the area that can evaluate the current situation and offer appropriate recommendations to the objectives put forward in the terms of reference. Input on this procurement procedure was received from the Department of Contracts, Director Corporate Services and the Office of the Prime Minister, including the Green Travel Committee under the lead of the Principal Permanent Secretary. This tender will be issued in 2012 and an interim report is expected to be received from the contractor within six months, with the final report and presentation of recommendations to be presented within a year from being awarded.

OBESITY

During 2011, the Division represented the Ministry on the Intersectoral Committee to Counteract Obesity (ICCO). This committee is responsible for:

- translating measures outlined in the European Charter on counteracting Obesity (2006) into a series of specific sectorial and intersectorial objectives and implementation strategies, within an appropriate timescale and priority ranking as defined in a working plan;
- ensuring close collaboration and consistency of action regarding food and nutrition as described in The Malta Food and Nutrition Policy (1988);
- submitting proposals to Government on any matters related to its functions;
- reporting regularly to the authorities on progress achieved.

An obesity strategy aiming to change existing conditions and helping Maltese people make healthier lifestyle choices is nearing finalisation. Moreover, FPMD will represent MFEI on a group responsible for the implementation of such strategy.

LATE PAYMENTS

The European Commission holds that numerous payments in commercial transactions among businesses or between enterprises and public authorities are made after delivery and frequently later than arranged in general commercial conditions. The Commission holds that these habits impact liquid assets and complicate the financial management of businesses. Furthermore, overdue payments by public authorities weaken the credibility of policies and make operating conditions for businesses unstable and unpredictable, thereby hindering growth and employment.

Among other things the recast directive provides that public authorities will have a 30-day payment period to settle invoices for the purchase of goods and services, or 60 days under exceptional circumstances such as with the case of healthcare. Additionally, the rate of interest for late payments will be no less than 8% above the European Central bank's reference rate.

The transposition of this recast Directive into Maltese law will be effected by March 2012. Moreover, this Division will also be participating in an expert group to discuss outstanding issues with respect to this Directive.

UTILITIES

In the 2010 Budget, Government announced that it was to undertake an exercise to calculate the carbon footprint of the departments and government entities and introduce a system of incentives to reduce it.

During 2011, FPMD compiled an update of all property that is used by ministries and departments for administrative purposes, including details on water and electricity accounts. A circular was disseminated by MFEI to each Ministry, through the respective Director Corporate Services. Each Ministry was required to verify the details on both the electricity and water accounts pertaining to administrative buildings, and to correct as necessary. Ministries and Departments forwarded the completed information to FPMD by the end of November 2011. It is envisaged that through such data the carbon footprint of all government departments would be established.

INSURANCE

Government's standing policy is to self-insure, settling claims that arise. To this effect the Ministry had undertaken the initiative to explore the feasibility of insuring against:

- Medical malpractice;
- Government owned vehicles;

- Government property.

Possibly this will extend also to professional indemnity, protecting against potential negligence claims made by individual, businesses or organisations against Government.

Priority has been assigned to medical malpractice. In the course of 2011, professional expertise quotations were sought to assist Government with this feasibility study. The feasibility of insuring against medical malpractice will be consolidated during 2012 in collaboration with the Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care.

CREDIT CARD POLICY

FPMD was tasked with proposing a common-platform policy across all ministries regulating the use of credit cards. To this effect, during 2010 and 2011 an analysis was carried out to identify the use and extent of credit cards by ministries. During 2011, a draft on credit card policy was drafted. This policy area will be further consolidated in 2012 with the assistance of the Central Bank of Malta and Treasury Department.

LOANS AND CLAIMS

Since 2008, the Division was assigned the task of assessing requests by local councils to enter into agreement for loans to fund specific projects. During 2011, FPMD processed three requests for loans amounting in total to €498,600, and one request for a bank overdraft amounting to €150,000. The Division, through liaison with the Department for Local Government (DLG) and Budget Affairs Division, also established policy guidelines which are to be followed by the local councils in their submission to the DLG for a request for a bank loan. FPMD is also responsible for assessing claims against Government which require input by the Ministry, namely relating to collisions and medical malpractice.

GRANTS

A number of grants were implemented in the course of 2011, namely;

- the reintroduction of the bicycle grant;
- the grant related to the assistance to church and independent schools, related to the capital expenditure incurred in their transition from primary to secondary school;
- the reintroduction of the grant related to the purchase of a more environment friendly car, where €5.2 million were allocated by Government over a two-year period;
- the 20/20 Sport Training Leave Scheme for private sector employees; and
- the grant related to expenditure incurred by sport organisations on the purchase of sport equipment.

Other grant schemes which were still being administered by Government include the marriage grant, the funeral grant, the ordination of priesthood grant, the grant on the purchased of musical instruments, a grant related to capital expenditure incurred by sports organisations and the grant related to the purchase of a more environment friendly car. The total recurrent expenditure on such grants for this financial year amounted to around €5.8 million.

SPORTS SCHOLARSHIPS SCHEME

Research was carried out regarding sports scholarships and grants being offered both locally and abroad. The *Kunsill Malti għall-iSport* (KMS) was investing in the provision of a number of support programmes, which offer financial subsidies and/or provision of facilities to KMS registered sports associations, federations and clubs. The Malta Government Scholarships Undergraduate Scheme Awards for 2009 also included a number of sports related degrees. Details on a number of schemes and grants offered by other countries to both athletes and coaches were also noted. A copy of the document was forwarded to the Parliamentary Secretariat for Youth and Sport.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT POLICY

During 2011, the Division undertook an assessment of those sectors that need to be restructured due to their significant environmental impacts. Work on various assessments as a result of commitments in the National Environmental Policy will be consolidated in the coming years according to the timeframes set in this policy.

AUDIT REPORTS

During 2011, FPMD reviewed a number of performance audits carried out by the NAO and IAID. Follow-up checks were made by FPMD to verify whether the recommendations provided in these audits were being implemented.

EU COMMUNICATIONS, DIRECTIVES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

The Division also reviews and provides a Malta position on a number of documents issued by the European Union institutions, mostly related to energy, the environment, resource efficiency and biodiversity. FPMD also submitted feedback on behalf of the Ministry on the proposed National Environment Policy and the Strategic Plan for Environment and Development.

OTHER

Duty Travel Management System (DTMS)

In 2010, the assistance of MITA was sought to identify a suitable solution for managing travel, the aim being to replace the current paper-based system. This activity was consolidated during 2011 to the effect that a comprehensive document was drawn up detailing the processes and supporting policies as regulated by the provisions of Chapter 8 of the Public Service Management Code (PSMC). Such a solution would enable Government to better manage travel abroad, potentially centralising booking, etc. and reducing costs. The document is currently being reviewed.

Departmental Accounting System

The Division requested MITA to generate a new DAS report which would provide information about the income and expenditure of government departments to a lower level of granularity than currently is available. This report was compiled and is now available.

Sick Leave

During 2011, an exercise was undertaken to quantify the financial cost of sick leave that was availed of by Government officials during the year 2010, this broken down by mMinistry. Such an exercise showed that during 2010 sickness related costs amounted to €130 million, average sickness expenditure per government official amounted to €574, whereas average number of sick-leave days per government official amounted to eight days.

The report also highlighted the salient features that may induce workers to take sick-leave and guidelines were put forward in order to mitigate such a problem.

Investment Facility Committee

During 2011, FPMD continued representing Malta as member on the Investment Facility Committee (European Investment Bank). The Investment Facility (IF) is a revolving fund, i.e. loan amortisations will be re-invested in new operations.

The IF provides various forms of risk sharing financing instruments for investment projects in most sectors of the economy. This includes projects in the commercially run public sector and in the infrastructure sector which are key to the development of the private sector, as well as the financial sector. IF support is provided through: debt finance, guarantees, equity-type financing, and acting as an investor in private equity funds.

All projects funded by the IF must be economically, financially, technically and environmentally viable.

TAX, PAY AND SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY DIRECTORATE

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE (COS)

This incorporates matters related to a vast range of allowances, requests for increase in salaries/other payments or the establishment of eligibility criteria for recipients in the Public Service and extra-budgetary units. Requests are always considered in the light of existing policies and regulations, including PSMC and the Manual of Allowances issued by PAHRO. Continuous liaison with PAHRO and Budget Affairs Division forms an integral part of this process. The objective is to evaluate requests related to COS in a just manner, that reflects government policy, and within a reasonable time.

The FPMD is primarily concerned with assessing the financial implications of any award, especially in the case of the establishment of new allowances and benefits.

BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND SIMILAR BODIES

An exercise was undertaken to collect information related to the remuneration of government-appointed boards, committees and other similar bodies falling under all ministries' remit, to promote uniformity and conformity in matters related to members' remuneration. The aim of this exercise is also to ensure that each ministry is held accountable for all boards falling under its remit. Keeping up-to-date records and monitoring any changes establishes a much needed measure of control. FPMD has been considering a number of recommendations to facilitate the ministries' tasks in this regard.

FPMD, in conjunction with PAHRO, considers requests for the set-up of new boards on the basis of number of sittings, duties and responsibilities, and evaluates requests on an ad-hoc basis for revision of remuneration resulting from additional duties or hours worked.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) – MISSIONS ABROAD

Over the past year, members of the division were engaged in an inter-departmental committee related to the revision of Conditions of Service for Locally Engaged Personnel (LEPs) serving in Maltese missions abroad. The Committee, comprising officers from MFEI, MFA and PAHRO, concluded the task of reviewing the existing Conditions of Service, a task that was long overdue. The revised Conditions of Service take into account engagement of LEPs, contracts, remuneration, allowances and other benefits.

Together with MFA, FPMD is in the process of collecting data with respect to all locally engaged personnel in over 30 missions abroad. It is aimed to use this data to ensure that all existing benefits strictly adhere to the revised document that shall be issued shortly.

FPMD is also responsible for assessing requests for increase in salaries and other payments, related to LEPs. The main tasks involve reviewing contracts, setting up eligibility criteria and liaising with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to ensure that up-to-date records are kept. The Section's aim is to promote a measure of uniformity in all missions.

Besides LEPs, FPMD assists MFA in the interpretation and implementation of the Conditions of Service for Malta Based Officers, covering matters related to Global Emoluments, Health, Travel, Education, Benefits etc.

EUROPEAN UNION ACT (AMENDMENT OF PENSIONS ORDINANCE), 2012

FPMD played an active role in bringing about an amendment to the Pensions Ordinance. The amendment was considered following the need for Malta to create a legal and administrative framework to allow for pensions' transferability rights with respect to those persons who join EU institutions.

MOTOR VEHICLES REGISTRATION AND LICENSING ACT

During the course of 2011, discussions were held between the MFEI and Transport Malta to amend Chapter 368, Motor Vehicles Registration and Licensing Act and Subsidiary Legislation 368.02, Exemptions from Motor Vehicles Registration Tax Rules. A number of changes were proposed to the Act and subsidiary legislation in order to simplify the criteria governing the exemptions granted to individuals, who were normal residents outside Malta for a continuous period of at least 24 months and who transferred their normal place of residence to Malta. The recast will also address shortcomings in discrepancies in definitions between Chapter 368 and SL 368.02. The changes enacted to Article 19 of Chapter 368 will come into effect on 1 January 2012, and it is also recommended that the changes to SL 368.02 are also brought into effect on 1 January 2012.

Throughout the year, this Division also led changes in the vehicle registration tax for private motor vehicles. The aim of this reform was to further embrace elements addressing environmental concerns in the calculation of registration tax levied on cars with the objective to incentivise a smaller, younger and cleaner fleet of vehicles. Thus, besides being a factor of vehicle length, CO2 emissions and value, from 1 January 2012 registration tax will also be a function of Euro Standard, as stated by the vehicle's manufacturer and in line with the EU Treaty. Chapter 368, Motor Vehicles Registration and Licensing Act was amended to cater for the inclusion of the Euro Standard element, mainly through the replacement of tables containing taxation rates. Furthermore, there was an amendment of the actual registration tax rates for vehicles having €3 standard or lower; resulting in such vehicles paying a higher tax rate than before, in attempt to encourage newer and cleaner cars. Rates for €4 and €5 standard vehicles remained unchanged. Additional minor amendments were implemented to the legislation in order to modify certain parts of the legal text which became irrelevant or have been updated throughout the years.

FINANCIAL SERVICES POLICY

In the past years, FPMD expanded its activities to incorporate a structured financial services policy formulation capability. Throughout the year, the Division continued on this policy course and enhanced its work in the field of financial services. The financial markets' turbulence, which characterised the past year, has required a major involvement from FPMD especially through participation at various committees organised within the European Council and European Commission, including:

- the Financial Services Committee which assists the European Council to define the medium- and long-term strategy for financial services issues;
- the European Banking Committee which assists the European Commission in providing advice on policy issues related to banking activities. In the past year, the Division was heavily involved in the discussions in relation to the adoption of a Directive proposal, transposing the Basel 3 regulations (as endorsed by the G20) into EU legislation;
- the European Securities Committee which assists the European Commission in providing advice on policy issues in the securities field. Throughout the year, FPMD was involved in periodic discussions prior the Commission proposals on a Regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation (market abuse) and on a Directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation. Other major work was also performed in relation to the revision of the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MIFID);

- The European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Committee assists the European Commission in adopting and implementing measures for EU Directives and to act as an independent advisory group providing advice on legislative proposals and existing legislation governing insurance, reinsurance and occupational pensions. In the course of the year under review, the Division continued to attend several meetings and discussions held in relation to the adoption of Solvency II Directive. Solvency II Framework Directive is scheduled to be transposed by Member States by 1 January 2013, with a transition throughout 2013 towards the full application by 1 January 2014. Other major work was also performed in relation to the revision of the Insurance Mediation Directive (IMD);
- The the European Financial Conglomerate Committee is responsible for reviewing the Financial Conglomerates Directive which aims at the supplementary supervision of regulated entities that form part of a financial conglomerate, i.e. groups with licences in both the banking and the insurance sector. The Division is sometimes requested to attend ad-hoc working groups at the request of one of the above committees. Such sub-committee working groups would generally have limited scope and would need to tackle specific technical issues with a view to identifying key issues and risks.

RECOVERY DIRECTIVE 2010/24/EU

On 20 April 2010, Council Directive 2010/24/EU ‘concerning mutual assistance for the recovery of claims relating to taxes, duties and other measures’, entered into force. ‘Recovery directive’ 2010/24/EU was devised in order to facilitate and improve the mutual assistance that Member States provide to each other to recover claims mainly concerning:

- Taxes, duties, and other administrative penalties/fines that are imposed by authorities that are competent to impose taxes or duties;
- Refunds/interventions that are related to the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD);
- Levies under the common organisation of the market for the sugar sector.

FPMD attended working party meetings at EU Council level in 2009 as part of the process in which member states agree on a common and compromise legislative text. Subsequently during 2011, a consultation process with the line departments which are called into question by this directive, was carried out. The aim of this consultation was the transposition of the ‘recovery directive’ into the Maltese legislation and the improvement of the internal organisation and communication process related to the incoming and outgoing requests as a result of the exercise of this directive.

ENERGY TAX DIRECTIVE

In April 2011, the EU Commission put forward a proposal to revamp Council Directive 2003/96/EC of 27 October 2003 restructuring the Community framework for the taxation of energy products and electricity, also referred as the Energy Tax Directive. The proposed amendment is aimed at restructuring energy taxation such that it is better geared towards helping Member States reach policy objectives in the area of climate change set for 2020. The Division represents Malta at EU Council working party meetings, preparing Malta’s position accordingly. This entails the analysis of various policy documents put forward by the EU Commission and the presidency, as well as holding the necessary consultations.

REDUCED RATE OF TAXATION TO THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

MRRA have requested the Ministry’s assistance in calculating a possible reduced rate of excise duty on diesel to be granted to various types of farmers. Work in this regard consisted of using data supplied by MRRA to calculate the amount of ‘subsidy’ (i.e. the amount granted through a reduced rate of taxation) which various farmers would benefit from under various reduced excise duty rate scenarios. FPMD also worked closely with MRRA in examining the legal and administrative ramifications and constraints of granting such subsidy.

EU DOCUMENTS

FPMD explained Malta's position when giving feedback on EU policy documents related to the field of taxation. It also provided assistance to other departments with various response and guidance, when the latter were forming Malta's position in reaction to policy issues/proposals put forward by the EU.

HERALD BONNICI

A/Director General (Financial Policy & Management)

Strategy and Operations Support Directorate

BACKGROUND

The overall purpose of this Directorate is to support the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment to maintain a dedicated capability for the planning and execution of long-term and strategic programmes, projects and initiatives arising from the business and financial plans of the Ministry and its operations. These programmes and projects generally have a service-wide application but may also include initiatives limited to MFEI.

Government Objectives

Work on various initiatives and projects as directed for the implementation of MFEI reforms within the relevant departments and across the Public Service. This included ongoing work on the amalgamation of the Revenue Departments, Accrual Accounting, the Wind Farm project, the Policy on Government Bank Accounts, the Proposed Fiscal Framework, the Codes of Ethics and practice for Procurement Purposes, the National Savings Policy and Strategy, the Structure Plan of the Maltese Islands, Inter-Ministerial Consultation on National Environment Policy, set off dues between Government and third parties, Pensions Ordinance Government Authorities, Inter-Ministerial Committee on Water Policy, Draft Report on Supported Living Policy, Legal amendments regarding Official Receiver and Court-appointed Liquidators, the Union Training Centre in Malta, the Central Visa Unit, the setting up of the Government Clearing House, the drafting of the Proposed Public Finance Management Act, and the proposal for visits on energy conservation and energy audits in households.

The Directorate followed up and coordinated the work of the two teams set up to ensure the implementation of the budget measures concerning reduction in arrears of revenue by 10% and increase in efficiency gains by 2% across the Public Sector and Service, including all government ministries, departments and entities.

With regard to the implementation of Better Regulation, liaison with the Management Efficiency Unit on the review of work in VAT, public procurement, statistics and financial services.

International Affairs

Prompt action was taken relating to resolutions and other requests from international banks and other financial institutions. Work included the preparation of completed voting forms on various resolutions proposed by the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and other World Bank institutions. Work was carried out on Malta's increase in capital in EBRD and the Council of Europe Development Bank, action was taken relating to EIB loans and contributions by Malta to EIB's various funds, and also on amendments to the articles in the agreement establishing the EBRD. Other work related to the hosting of the EBRD Constituency Meeting in Malta, the IBRD Capital Stock Maintenance value, the European Central Bank, the World Bank's Doing Business Project and also work related to issues concerning the Multilateral Development Banks took place.

General Management

Ongoing support and full collaboration was provided to institutions of oversight such as Parliament, the Attorney General, the Public Accounts Committee, the Ombudsman, the Public Service Commission, the National Audit Office and the Internal Audit and Investigations Department. Support and information were provided to the said institutions on reports, audits and investigations on various matters. Liaison was also carried out with the Attorney General with regard to the financial settlement of European Court of Human Rights and Constitutional cases. Cabinet Office was proactively supported with respect to drafting of Cabinet memos and the follow-up of Cabinet decisions.

Provision of support and advice to the Permanent Secretary on various issues at stake was also given, including extending the use of EHIC facilities in the private sector, Malta's renewable energy contingent liability potential costs to attain EU's mandatory targets, implications on the Surplus Stocks of Sugar, financial opportunities for Government, financial implications on the removal of TV licences, and also the financial implications of the Malta Libraries Act and the Employment and Industrial Relations Act. This support and advice also included the drafting of memos on various subjects, such as the tax treatment of biodiesel. Also, the Director General participated on behalf of the Permanent Secretary/Government in various meetings and fora including the Police Negotiating Board, Air Malta's Extraordinary and General Meetings, NER 300 Committee, the Public Accounts Committee, and a High-level Pan-Commonwealth Preparatory meeting for Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in London during September 2011.

The Directorate planned and oversaw the restructuring programme that needs to be carried out in relation to the financing of various sectors and institutions. Work related to the restructuring of Air Malta, Enemalta and other entities was also performed.

There was coordination with other ministries, departments or public entities on various issues. Relations were maintained and collaboration kept at the highest levels with various stakeholders and institutions on broad business issues related to projects, research policies, legislation and queries. These included the Departments of VAT, Inland Revenue, Customs and Contracts, the National Statistics Office, the Lotteries and Gaming Authority, and various other ministries and entities. Various stakeholders were consulted prior to the introduction of significant policy changes and their feedback was requested before action was taken. Work was carried out on various Legal Notice Checklists and MFEI clearance was provided on regulations related to Waste Management, Marine Policy and GMOs. There is an ongoing follow-up with MFEI entities to ensure their compliance with directives issued under the provisions of the Public Administration Act.

Other Assignments

The Directorate managed work carried out as EU National Fiscalis Coordinator and Representative of Malta for the Fiscalis Programme 2013 within the MFEI. As Account Holder, it managed the Malta Fiscalis Account held at CBM, regarding the transfer of funds from the EU to Government Revenue. Malta's participation in various activities, such as seminars, exchanges, multi-lateral controls, committees and workshops, offered by the Fiscalis Programme was coordinated and managed. For the year, circa €106,000, which covered the reimbursement of travel costs by Malta's participation in Fiscalis activities incurred by various officials across departments, were transferred to government revenue.

Work was effected related to other various ad hoc assignments and tasks. This included reviewing reports of various departments including Customs, VAT, the Government Property Department, the Information Management Unit, EBRD, the Board Minutes of Malta Industrial Parks and the accounts of the Kordin Grain Terminal. Other work was carried out on the conclusions of the European Council, MFEI debtors with MEPA, Malta - Japan Cooperation Agreement, on the Exchange of Financial Information relating to money laundering and terrorist financing, the MARSEC Foundation for the provision of marine engineering software, the Report of the Commission Expert Group on Fisheries Control of Blue fin Tuna,

EUREKA and Eurostars R&D Grants, State Aid Reference Rate for Malta. The Directorate also provided information for PQs on various subjects and queries from aboard on living and working in Malta, from a Libyan NGO for conducting business in Malta, and also on Malta Enterprise funds.

The Directorate participated in local seminars, workshops, CDRT training and conferences on various topics which included Better Regulation, the Employee Support Programme for Public Employees, a presentation by Malta Enterprise on MFEI, and also a conference by the Prime Minister on Malta's successes in EU Funding.

The Director General was appointed as the MFEI representative on the Committee for the Adaption of Laws following introduction of Divorce and in the Committee for the liquidation of the Malta National Laboratory and as a Member of an Evaluation and Adjudicating Committee; also as chairperson of a Wrap-Up Meeting with EU Auditors in November following a control visit in Malta on VAT Own Resources & NSO GNI Own Resources.

CLAUDE G CUSCHIERI

Director General (Strategy and Operations Support)

Department of Contracts

HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION

During 2011, the Department of Contracts (DOC) endeavoured to strengthen its administrative capabilities by completing the procedure for the appointment of a number of Procurement Managers. This resulted in the appointment of six new officials in the posts of Procurement Manager (Contracts) and three Procurement Managers (Electronic).

Training on the human resources of the Department was sustained as in previous years. A number of officials were afforded the opportunity of training abroad in public procurement. Two officials attended training in Maastricht on *Appraising, prioritising, procuring Public Sector Capital Investment Projects*. Another official attended a seminar in Budapest on *Pre-commercial Procurement*. Other officials were constantly afforded local training through courses organised by the Centre for Development, Research and Training.

REFURBISHMENT WORKS

New premises to be used as stores were acquired by the Department. Works carried out on this store consisted of the installation of a new electrical system. This enabled the transfer of more documents and archiving of files to this new building thus relieving valuable office space.

The basement of the Department was converted into offices and boardrooms. During 2011, aluminium partitioning was carried out in order to construct a new board room. This alleviated the constant problem of lack of board room space available for meetings, since the only other board Room is used extensively by the General Contracts Committee.

Structural alterations were also completed on the new premises earmarked for the Public Contracts Review Board. The keys to this building were handed over to the PCRb which now convenes its appeal meetings there, providing for more transparency in the eyes of the public, since the Board is now operating from an independent facility.

TRAINING FOR CONTRACTING AUTHORITIES, BENEFICIARIES AND ECONOMIC OPERATORS

Training, in collaboration with the Centre for Development, Research and Training, on *National Procurement* focusing on local legislation i.e. Legal Notice 296 of 2010 relating to the Public Procurement Regulations as well as EU Directives 17 and 18 of 2004, was carried out by means of intensive six module seminars. During 2011, nine courses were organised. The training consisted of theoretical tutorials on the use of the regulations, the evaluation process, the appeal procedures available to economic operators and the correct use of specifications and terms of reference. Practical interactive sessions were organised during the seminar on the use of the specifically designed DOC tender documentation templates for works, services and supplies.

Procurement by Contracting Authorities is a short half-day course organised for public employees responsible for procurement in their organisations and which is facilitated by the Department under the auspices of the CDRT. During 2011, four courses were organised.

The Department organised an information session on public procurement in December 2011. The session delved into a number of procurement-related topics, such as the modernisation of procedures at an EU level, and the developments in electronic procurement. The floor was also given an overview and some practical insights of green public procurement by the GPP Office within the Office of the Prime Minister. The Management Efficiency Unit also delivered a presentation on how public procurement can be simplified to the benefit of contracting authorities and economic operators alike. The session was open for public procurers and tenderers, and recorded over 400 attendees.

PUBLIC CONTRACTS REGULATIONS

Public procurement policy and practice are continually developing in the national as well as international sphere. In order to keep public procurement progressing on the same lines, the Department actively participate in meetings organised by the Commission of the Advisory Committee on Public Contracts, the Working Group on e-Procurement and the Working Group on Public Procurement Economics and Statistics. In this way, as well as advising Government on proposed new legislation, the Department contributes to the development of public procurement methodologies adopted in the EU.

After consultations with the above-mentioned Advisory Committee, the European Commission started the consultative process for a review of the EU public procurement directives to simplify the rules, increase their efficiency and effectiveness and make them better suited to deal with the evolving political, social and economic context. Streamlined, more efficient procedures will increase flexibility for contracting authorities, benefit all economic operators and facilitate the participation of SMEs and cross-border bidders. Improved public procurement rules will also allow contracting authorities to make better use of public procurement in support of common societal goals, such as the protection of the environment, higher resource and energy efficiency and combating climate change, promoting innovation and social inclusion, and ensuring the best possible conditions for the provision of high quality social services.

The Commission has tabled three new proposals namely:

- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on public procurement;
- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors;
- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the award of the concession contracts.

The Department is heavily involved in the consultative process leading to the final draft proposals of such directives and attends meetings aimed at establishing Malta's position on such important changes to legislation.

EUROPEAN UNION MATTERS

The EU Unit is responsible for the administration of all tenders which are fully or partially funded through EU funds, EEA Funds, EQUAL Community Programmes, EAGGF, External Borders Funds, Norwegian Funds, European Refugee Funds, EAFRD, and other projects that are partly or fully funded through Community Funds. These operations, which include the vetting of tender documentation and publication thereof, are related to the procurement of Supplies, Services or Works. Such tenders owe their origin to the Single Programming Document for the years 2007-2013.

The Structural Funds Programmes for Malta 2007-2013 are currently progressing at a very fast rate with a large amount of tenders relating to projects funded under these funds being processed by the EU Unit. In 2011 the majority of contracts signed were related to works contracts, while the number of works contracts signed was almost double the number of services contracts signed. The value of works contracts signed

was more than double the value of supply and services contracts combined together, with the construction of a car park and three educational institutes, Blocks J, D and F at MCAST, Paola, the Development of a public aquarium and marine attraction in Qawra, the reconstruction and upgrading of Mellieħa Bypass, and the tender for the construction of an underpass from Triq Diċembru 13 to Menqa Roundabout, Marsa being the most significant in value, as they represent almost 38% of the total value of the contracts signed in 2011. The estimated cost of all contracts in 2011 was €80,074,321.17; however the actual cost came to €67,722,050.00, which represents a saving of €12,352,271.17 which is equivalent to circa 15.4%.

The amount of works contracts signed accounts to 44.9% of the total amount of contracts signed, whereas supplies contracts signed amount to 32.1% and the remaining 23% of the contracts signed were service contracts.

The value of tenders issued in 2011 amounted to €173,425,552.19, which amount was issued in 109 different calls for tender mostly under the open procedure. This shows that a lot of projects under the 2007-2013 funds are currently in their contracting/implementation phases with the restoration of historic fortifications and ramparts, and reconstruction and upgrading of roads being the most common tenders in 2011, and they also account for a good amount of the total amount of tenders issued during 2011.

GENERAL CONTRACTS COMMITTEE

The General Contracts Committee held regular sittings during 2011, in which contractual issues were considered. These issues ranged from pre-contractual matters, such as approval of clarifications to prospective bidders, to post-contractual ones involving approval of extra works/variations. Amongst these cases the Committee evaluated reports and recommendations submitted by contracting authorities resulting in 253 awarded contracts, and 93 cancellations.

The General Contracts Committee was also involved in the scheduling of tenders published by the Department of Contracts. In this regard, some 1,074 tender submissions were scheduled in respect of 295 calls that closed during the year. In addition, the Committee scheduled a further 54 offers in respect of 16 tenders issued by Enemalta Corporation, and another 37 offers in respect of eight tenders issued by the Water Services Corporation.

POST-CONTRACTS

Most of the work post-contract is in respect of requests by the contracting authorities (government entities) for variations (financial), extensions to the period of execution or other amendments to the contracts such as changes to the payment terms. Invariably, these changes are referred to the General Contracts Committee for approval. In this regard, during 2011, 212 requests were referred to the General Contracts Committee.

Other work post-contract relates to the ongoing maintenance of bank guarantees, including tender guarantees, performance guarantees and retention guarantees.

Some disputes during contract implementation end up in conflict and one or both parties will refer their case to the Courts of Justice or to the Malta Arbitration Centre. With the ongoing support of the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Contracts is represented during court and/or arbitration sittings.

Electronic Procurement

The Department continued in its transition from conventional to electronic procurement. Information on all 282 calls for tenders issued during 2011 was made available online from the Department's website, www.contracts.gov.mt. As from June 2011, prospective tenderers were only able to obtain tender documents online, with the Sales Office at Notre Dame Ravelin being closed. The transition has proved to

be smooth, with all economic operators having adapted to purchase and download tenders without the need of calling at Floriana.

Parallel to maintaining its website and correlated e-services, the IT Unit within the Department was heavily involved in a new initiative aimed at achieving a full electronic procurement capacity, through the introduction of electronic compilation, submission and evaluation of tenders. Following a call for tenders issued by the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) in 2010, a contract came into force in February 2011 for a 'solution as a service' (SOAS) that provided a full electronic procurement solution. Adaptations, configurations and parameterisations were made in the following months, so that the solution reflected the local requirements and provisions where the Public Procurement Regulations were concerned. The new solution, named Electronic Public Procurement System (EPPS) came online on www.etenders.gov.mt on 24 June 2011. Immediately after, the IT Unit coordinated a number of intensive training sessions on the EPPS to some 80 public officers actively involved in procurement. Other than officials from the Department of Contracts, officers from other contracting authorities and entities were invited to this training. These included MITA, Enemalta Corporation, Water Services Corporation, the newly set-up Central Procurement & Supplies Unit (CPSU) within the Ministry for Health and Elderly Care, the Department of Corporate Services within the Ministry for Education, Employment and the Family, as well as the National Audit Office and the Internal Audit and Investigations Department. The choice of the contracting authorities reflected the intention of expanding the use of the EPPS across the same authorities as part of the initial deployment of EPPS across the Government's departments and organisations during late 2011/early 2012.

As part of the transition process, the IT Unit convened a series of information sessions aimed towards raising awareness amongst economic operators on the new e-tendering procedures. Over 400 economic operators attended 10 sessions, which were held during the period August-December 2011. These sessions also proved important in guiding potential tenderers to start the registration procedure particularly where the organisation e-ID was concerned. A number of sector-specific information sessions were also convened where economic operators heavily involved in the ICT and the pharmaceutical sectors were concerned.

The Department of Contracts was also tasked with the system administration of EPPS. This effectively means that the IT Unit is responsible for the management of user registrations, and for the provision of a helpdesk and first-line of support. To this end, the Unit is compiling an ever-growing list of FAQ files aimed at facilitating economic operators in making an optimal use of the EPPS.

The Department of Contracts issued the first batch of electronic tenders in October 2011. In order to achieve this important milestone, the IT Unit worked towards setting up an electronic tender structure that could serve as a yardstick for other e-tenders. It was also involved in re-designing the tender documents template with a view to simplifying the tendering procedure further. MITA and CPSU also published their first e-tenders before the close of the year. As an added level of assistance, the IT Unit provided for a series of training workshops where prospective tenderers were allowed to simulate the e-tender compilation and submission of real-life tenders on a test environment. This measure proved to be well-accepted by economic operators.

Following the information session on Public Procurement held in December 2011, many contracting authorities expressed their interest in becoming involved in e-procurement. All along, preparations were intensified so that the Department of Contracts issues the first above-threshold e-tenders whilst overlooking the work being done by those contracting authorities that are already involved in the EPPS initiative in order to expand the take-up of electronic procurement further during 2012.

FRANCIS ATTARD

Director General (Contracts)

Value Added Tax Department

The principal aim of the Department is to ensure that the VAT revenue target set out in the annual budget is attained and possibly exceeded, in line with the Government's policy of ensuring sound public finance and with the minimum cost and burden to registered persons.

Revenue and Expenditure

Revenue

During 2011, gross revenue collected under the VAT Act 1998, the CET Act 1997 and the VAT Act 1994 was €630,844,423 compared to €580,697,856 in the previous year. Refund of excess credit paid out of revenue amounted to €106,371,141 resulting in net revenue of €524,473,282 compared to €482,538,295 in the previous year. The relevant information is shown in the following table.

	VAT Act 1998 (€)	CET Act 1997 (€)	VAT Act 1994 (€)	Total (€)
Total Gross	630,795,358	13,753	35,312	630,844,423
Less Refunds	106,370,545	389	207	106,371,141
Total Net	524,424,813	13,364	35,105	524,473,282

ECO Contribution

The VAT Department is the competent authority for the administration and collection of ECO Contribution. During 2011, the amount collected from this contribution was €8,025,478.

Outstanding Credits and Debits

As at the end of 2011, the Department had a net debit book balance on VAT (1998) of €537,412,238 after deducting outstanding taxpayers' credit. The realistic net balance is €56,925,165 after deducting estimated assessments and interest.

	VAT (1998) €	CET (1997) €	VAT (1994) €	Total €
Debit Balance	631,279,364	3,165,770	6,823,753	641,268,887
Outstanding credits	106,370,545	5,938	23,850	106,400,333
Net Balance	537,412,238	3,159,832	6,799,903	534,868,554
Outstanding Accounts				
Accounts with a balance as at end December 2011	27,108	1,065	1,396	29,569
Accounts with a balance as at end December 2010	28,125	1,053	1,405	30,583

Cost-Effectiveness

Total recurrent expenditure during 2011, excluding the Fiscal Receipt Lottery, amounted to €4,863,105. Net revenue from VAT 1994, CET 1997 and VAT 1998 amounted to €534,868,554. Revenue from ECO Contribution was €8,025,478. Net total revenue collected amounted to €542,894,032. The cost effectiveness rate for 2011 remained that of 1c per euro as in 2010.

Analysis and Control

The Analysis and Control Unit set up in 2009 in order to monitor the effectiveness of the operations at the Department has evaluated data submitted by registered persons, analysed credit control claims and results of investigations to upgrade parameters for the risk analysis system. The Unit also assisted in the identification of cases for investigation by the Tax Compliance Unit and the VAT Department and monitored and evaluated work performed. This year, the Unit reviewed 69 investigations carried out during the previous months and referred 30 for further or corrective action.

Collection of Tax Arrears

Civil Procedures

A total of 44 cases were settled through Civil Court action, resulting in the collection of €23,395,681 of tax in arrears, as shown below:

	<i>Demand Notices</i>	<i>Judicial Letters</i>	<i>Garnishee Orders/ Warrants of Seizure</i>	<i>Civil Cases Settled</i>	<i>Tax Collected</i>
Total	14,686	195	34	44	€23,395,681

Operations and Enforcement

Audit Investigations

The number of audit investigations carried out by the Department during 2011 was 78 resulting in 48 provisional assessments of €3,814,348. There were 14 cases referred to the Tax Compliance Unit resulting in provisional assessments amounting to €573,375 and final assessments of €1,953,053. The Department also carried out 46 ECO contribution investigation cases resulting in assessments of €191,467.

Credit Controls

The Department concluded 230 credit controls resulting in assessments of €205,113.

Validation of VAT Returns, Correction and Audit Trail

The VAT returns are regularly validated for erroneous tax declarations. The following is a breakdown of the cases:

Type	Cases Concluded
Validation	526
Correction	498
Audit trail	240

Compliance Rate

VAT returns continued to be issued regularly each month. The following table shows the returns issued and received during 2011. The overall compliance rate as on due date, expressed as the percentage of returns received over the number of returns issued, was 65.02%, increasing to 87.55% by end year.

	<i>Returns Issued</i>	<i>Returns Received as on Due Date</i>	<i>Compliance Rate as on Due Date</i>	<i>Returns Received up to End of Year</i>	<i>Compliance Rate as at End of Year</i>
Total	143,300	93,177	65.02	125,462	87.55

Inspections

During the year, despite a considerable shortage of inspectors, the VAT Department carried out a number of field inspections consisting of spot-check inspections and surveillance visits. A number of cases were referred for court action.

Throughout the same year, the majority of inspectors were assigned work connected with administrative tax enforcement and review of tax assessments. Six inspectors were regularly assigned duties to carry out inspection visits. There are two Revenue Security Corps members carrying out limited inspection duties and delivery of specific mail.

A task force consisting of members from the VAT Department, Customs Department and the Police was set up to curb illicit trading in Malta. Inspections were held twice weekly on transporters and persons have been arraigned in court as a result of this measure.

Objections

During 2011, a total of 1,689 objection letters concerning VAT issues and 182 objection letters concerning ECO Contribution were dealt with completely. The number of outstanding objections at the end of the year was 884 and 61 respectively.

Legal Action

VAT Legislation

During 2011, there were two amending Acts – Act IV and Act V of 2011 – An ACT to implement Budget measures and other administrative measures and the latter amending article 21 and article 42 of the VAT Act. Fifteen legal notices were published under the VAT Act (Cap 406).

Court Cases

Legal action was taken against taxpayers wherever it resulted that the VAT legislation was being abused. As a result, 208 cases involving failure to issue fiscal receipts were brought before the Court, of which 25 were acquitted and 121 of them found guilty. The latter were together fined a total of €181,808.

Another 2,017 new cases involved failure to submit tax returns. As a result, 325 cases were together fined €382,087 whilst 1,506 cases were withdrawn once the returns were duly submitted prior to the Court's hearing. The relevant information is shown below:

	Involving Fiscal Receipts				Involving Tax Returns			
	Appointed	Fined		Acquitted	Appointed	Fined		Withdrawn
		No	€			No	€	
Total	208	121	181,808	25	2,017	325	382,087	1,506

Appeals

During 2011, the number of new appeals lodged with the VAT and CET Appeals Boards was 181. The Boards decided a total of 111 cases.

Taxpayers' Registry

Registration and De-registration

During the year, 4,400 taxpayers were registered with the Department, bringing the total number of registered persons to 105,827. The current active registered taxpayers is 48,531, of which 36,086 are in

Register A, 11,601 are in Register B and 844 are in Register C. The number of outstanding applications for a VAT number as at the end of the year was nil. During the same year, 3,798 new applications were received for de-registration. A total of 3,741 applications were processed completely. The Department also deregistered 8,287 taxpayers whose sales do not exceed €7,000 as a result of LN 524/2010.

Other Matters

Manual Fiscal Receipt Booklets

The number of fiscal receipt booklets distributed during 2011 was 43,236.

Printed Booklets	43,080
Distributed Booklets	43,236
Returned Booklets	54,771

During this year, the Department enhanced controls on the issue of fiscal receipt books by supplying new fiscal receipt books only where old ones are returned. Legislation is also being amended to strengthen the present procedure.

Customer Service

Customer service was also improved. The Department improved communication with registered persons by upgrading the Department's website and publishing information on for registered persons informing them of changes in legislation. Training to staff was enhanced in this respect. The Department is also extending its schedule of opening hours in summer for the benefit of its customers. The ledger statement was completely renewed to a simpler and more informative way. It is intended that such statement would be sent to VAT registered persons together with the VAT return which will become due.

e-Government

During the year, the Department continued to enhance its online services as part of the e-Government project.

Updating of Internet Website

Throughout 2011, the VAT Department continually updated its website at www.vat.gov.mt. The website provides useful information on VAT for the general public, for traders and for tax professionals as well as online application for VAT registration, submission of VAT returns, submission of the recapitulative statement declaration, online requests for receipt books and online payment. The intranet site was also updated for the benefit of the VAT Department officials.

Legal Committee

The Legal Committee set up in 2005 continued to discuss the various changes proposed by the European Commission and the EU Council to the VAT Directive and which should be included in the Maltese VAT legislation. The committee also makes recommendations to the Inter-Ministerial Committee regarding these changes and also deals with certain cases of VAT interpretation. The Legal Committee is presided by the Commissioner of VAT.

Participation in EU Commission and Council Working Party meetings

The VAT Department also participated actively in meetings held in Brussels of the Working Party No 1, VAT Committee, SCAC Committee, Recovery Committee, Fiscalis Committee, Advisory Committee on Own Resources and other meetings.

The VAT Department also participated in the Council Working Party on Tax Questions which discusses the technicalities of the proposed VAT Directives for approval by COREPER and ECOFIN.

Own Resources

As in previous years, the VAT Department collected the necessary data and completed the compilation of the VAT Statement on Own Resources in due time.

EU Related Matters

During 2011, the Department continued to compile questionnaires related to EU matters. Notwithstanding that these commitments are increasing from year to year, the Department complies with such obligations in the prescribed time. The Department also made a number of consultation meetings with stakeholders such as the Malta Financial Services Authority on VAT treatment on financial services and with the Malta Tourism Authority on the tourist profit margin scheme.

Fiscalis Programme

The VAT Department continued to participate in the Fiscalis Programme, which is targeted to update officials from all member states on VAT issues. This year, several officials from the Department participated in seminars, workshops, work visits and multilateral controls.

The Department successfully organised a Fiscalis Seminar for the Commission, Member States and candidate countries in February 2011 in Malta.

The Department also prepared the financial statement for Fiscalis.

Manuals and Procedures

The Department continued to update its manuals and procedure to guide the Department's officials in their work. These are aimed to secure accountability, to create more transparency and to ensure that rules are applied consistently across the whole Department.

IT Security

The recommended measures by MITA to strengthen internal IT security controls were put in place after an exercise was carried out to audit the security features in the VAT system.

Training

Training to staff was held both in-house and outside the Department. Two days per month were identified to be fully dedicated for training.

CHARLES VELLA
Commissioner of VAT

Inland Revenue Department

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE

The projected strategic targets for the Inland Revenue Department for 2011 were attained. Throughout the year, the Department sought to consolidate its function as administrator of the Income Tax Acts and the Capital Transfer Duty Acts, whilst simultaneously ensuring the effective enforcement of collection of social security contributions under the direction of the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

A major initiative for the second year running, which required a significant and sustained input from various sections within the Department, was the Reduction of Interests and Penalties Scheme. Phase Two of the Scheme apart from the sustained collection of personal tax arrears (individuals and companies) also focused on the collection of revenue arrears due by employers in respect of their employees' income tax and social security contributions. During the year, €40.5 million were collected in terms of the scheme, representing taxes (both personal and FSS tax) as well as social security contributions (due by employers).

REVENUE

Net revenue generated through income tax in 2011 amounted to €776.1 million. Furthermore, the Inland Revenue Department also collected €585.5 million in social security contributions. The following table illustrates the Department's revenue from 2009 up to 2011 (figures are in millions):

	2009 (€ million)	2010 (€ million)	2011 (€ million)
Income Tax	739.4	801	850.7
Transfers to Refunds	51.7	56.1	74.6
Income Tax - Net	739.4	801.2	776.1
Social Security Contributions	524.2	552.5	585.5
Total	2,054.7	2,210.8	2,286.9

Throughout 2011, the Department issued a total of 48,418 refunds amounting to €75,521,805.

The total recurrent expenditure for the year, including emoluments and other operating expenses, stood at €7.1 million, an increase of €1 million from the previous year due to the expense of the Tax Compliance Unit being borne by the Department as from 2011. Hence, every €1 of income tax collected came at a cost of €0.00,9. If one were to consider the revenue collected by the Department through social security contributions, then the overall cost per €1 of revenue collected from both sources is revised downwards to €0.00,5.

Income Tax Revenue

A more detailed breakdown of the above stated revenue figures is presented in the ensuing table.

	2009	2010	2011
Final Settlement System	265,789,226	299,492,569	322,394,109
Provisional Tax	264,887,979	278,145,538	252,790,066
International Tax Unit	131,000,000	120,000,000	140,000,000
Settlement Tax	15,340,814	53,322,420	23,782,482

Capital Gains Tax	66,844,460	64,365,750	68,845,421
15% Withholding Tax	47,280,854	42,005,202	42,901,908
Total Gross Revenue	791,143,333	857,331,479	850,713,986

Final Settlement System

During 2011, employers submitted a total of 11,355 Annual Reconciliation Statements (FS7) and 47,337 Payee Statements (FS3) in relation to 1998 to 2010. 9,739 of these FS7 submissions related to 2010. All of the submitted data was subsequently vetted, captured and reconciled by the Final Settlement System (FSS) Section. Moreover, the FSS Section registered 400 resident taxpayers during the finalisation process, whilst a total of 2,798 temporary residents were also registered in the same period.

The section was also involved in an enforcement exercise throughout the year. As at the end of year, the compliance rate stood at 91.4%.

The below table provides an overview of the FSS Section's other key performance indicators over a three-year period.

	Electronic Lodgements	FS7 Web Submissions	Electronic FS3
2011	131	1,232	257,576
2010	196	1,155	235,870
2009	954	1,196	247,796

During the year, 22,493 electronic filing errors were solved and 11,299 adjustment forms were processed.

TAXPAYER INTERFACE

Taxpayer assistance is mainly provided through two sections, depending on the nature of assistance and contact required. The Taxpayer Service Centre handles face-to-face requests whereas the Taxpayer Call Centre manages taxpayer queries through incoming telephone calls or by means of e-mail. The main objective of the IRD Call Centre is that of handling taxpayer queries, be it through incoming telephone calls or by means of e-mail. Queries are raised by all categories of taxpayers, that is, individuals, companies, employers and expatriates.

Taxpayer Service Centre

The following are some key statistics relating to the level of activity registered by the Taxpayer Service Centre:

	Personal Encounters	Registration of New Taxpayers	Issued Income Tax Returns
2011	30,265	1,453	15,188
2010	32,865	1,216	15,967
2009	31,980	1,074	22,595

Taxpayer Call Centre

The following statistics indicate the high level of activity and services rendered by the IRD Call Centre. It is interesting to note how the use of electronic mail as a means of contacting the Department's Call Centre officials continues to steadily rise, perhaps offset against the other more traditional means.

	Telephone Calls	Electronic Mail	Ordinary Mail
2011	61,126	14,742	2,199
2010	92,867	12,880	2,567
2009	114,863	9,779	3,208

Tax Returns and Non-Fileers

In 2011 (basis year 2010), the number of tax statements issued without the need for taxpayers to fill in and submit their annual tax return (non-filers) was 190,192 representing over 70% of taxpayers. On the other hand, the number of tax returns generated was of 80,909.

eBusiness Usage

The Inland Revenue Department continues to consider the gradual shift to eBusiness models of interfacing with taxpayers as a strategically important goal. The results below are testimony to this drive particularly in case of electronic payments which registered a 14% increase in the number of payments received and a 43% increase in the value of transactions over the corresponding period two years earlier.

Corporate Tax Return

	Y/A 2011 (Ratio)	Y/A 2010 (Ratio)	Y/A 2009 (Ratio)
Returns filed Electronically	16,715 (92%)	17,316 (96%)	11,828 (93%)
Returns filed Manually	1,535 (8%)	718 (4%)	805 (7%)

Individual Tax Return

	Y/A 2011 (Ratio)	Y/A 2010 (Ratio)	Y/A 2009 (Ratio)
Returns filed Electronically	706 (1%)	701 (2%)	443 (1%)
Returns filed Manually	59,472 (99%)	56,318 (98%)	60,597 (99%)

Electronic Payments

Year	Government Payment Gateway		Internet Banking		Total Value
	Count	€	Count	€	€
2011	5,590	3,956,688	20,299	113,636,772	117,593,460
2010	5,922	3,896,052	18,726	97,314,301	101,210,353
2009	6,291	2,939,064	16,465	79,068,961	82,008,025

AUDIT AND ENFORCEMENT

Audits and Investigations

Throughout 2011, the tax audits and investigations carried out by the Tax Audit Section and the Tax Compliance Unit resulted in assessments and adjustments that produced an increase in tax (income tax, VAT, duty and eco tax combined) of €16,721,135.

Year	Increase in Tax (€)
2011	16,721,135
2010	20,338,106
2009	13,404,294

Enforcement Initiatives

The following table presents a summary of a number of key enforcement exercises carried out throughout 2011 by the IRD. Of particular note for the second consecutive year is the Reduction in Interest and Penalties Scheme.

	Count
Assessments	1,120
Best of Judgement Notifications	11,287
FSS/SSC Employers Default Notices	2,385
FSS/SSC Notices (Current Year FS5 Defaulters)	1,880
FS7 Defaulters Notice (Current Year)	4,849
Provisional Tax Enforcement	4,124
15-day Notice (Individual/Corporate)	5,563

Reduction in Interest & Penalties Scheme (Defaulters)	870
Reduction in Interest & Penalties Scheme (Phase 2)	5,860
Reduction in Interest & Penalties Scheme (Employers)	2,875
Judicial Letters	889
Garnishee Orders	7

Mutual Recovery of Tax and Clearance Certificates

The IRD continued to take enforcement action and precautionary measures for the recovery of claims from other European Union member states as per directives 76/308EEC and 2001/44/EC. Out of the 54 cases at hand throughout 2011, 15 were new claims, two cases were finalised, whilst another 52 are still pending at year end.

Other Enforcement Exercises

During 2011, the Department was involved in 57 court cases relating to the recovery of taxes and social security dues out of which 12 were new cases. 22 cases were concluded whilst 35 are still pending. In total, 198 court sittings were held.

Also during the year, court action was taken against employers who defaulted in sending their respective end-of-year documents and/or had outstanding FSS/SSC arrears. 32 sittings were held in which 3,680 employers were arraigned before the Criminal Court. Many of these employers regularised their position by availing themselves of the Reduction in Interest & Penalties Scheme (Phase 2).

TECHNICAL MATTERS

Legislation

Amendments to the Income Tax Acts and amendments as well as new enactments of subsidiary legislation under the Acts were made during 2011 mainly:

- An introduction of two schemes to attract and regulate high net-worth individuals who settle in Malta (one for EU citizens and one non-EU citizens);
- Measures to better govern the scheme covering the previous permanent residents settled in Malta;
- A new scheme to encourage highly qualified persons to come to work in Malta for a few years and also train locals in the financial services and gaming sectors;
- New measures to regulate the capital gains on disposal of partnerships and partnership shares and the capital gains rules were also updated with respect to notaries' duties;
- Measures to ensure administrative cooperation with foreign jurisdictions in line with Malta's international obligations;
- New or amended Double Tax Treaties with Italy, Germany and China were issued;
- To encourage green initiatives, a new deduction of 125% in respect of the purchase of electric vehicles was granted to companies;
- The taxation of petroleum profits was overhauled and updated to current requirements;
- The tax returns submitted by companies and individuals were updated;
- New provisions were introduced to cater for securitisation transactions.

Other Technical Matters

The Department's Technical Section delivered support to the other divisions within the Department in the implementation of their processes by giving technical guidance to heads of sections and answering numerous technical queries made by staff. Special mention must be made of the continuous support given to the Call Centre (situated in Gozo), the Taxpayer Service Section and the Capital Gains Section.

Technical queries were received from a variety of sources including the Ministry, tax practitioners, auditors, lawyers and the general public.

A significant contribution was given to staff training and education through representation on the training committee, participation and lecturing in the actual training sessions and the circulation of internal memos on technical developments. The section is also the major contributor to the Department's Legal Committee.

The section carried out the completion of Volume 3 of the Board of Special Commissioners Decisions with a view to publishing it early in 2012. Numerous contributions were made to the Department's website, including those to the guidelines issued by the Department regarding: High net-worth individuals, Highly qualified persons, Residents Scheme & Annual declaration, Authorised Mandatories and Capital Gains rules schedule submission.

Fourteen complaints were received from the Office of the Ombudsman during 2011. 13 cases were concluded, and one has been replied to but further feedback is awaited. Apart from philanthropic organisations mentioned above, five requests for exemption were received and examined.

OTHER DEPARTMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS

The Department's management continued in its endeavour of modernising its offices as a whole. Besides the major refurbishment works at Block 1 which were commenced during 2010, continued and completed during 2011, further refurbishment was carried out within Block 2.

APPEALS

Administrative Review Tribunal

During the year, the tasks and duties of the Board of Special Commissioners were replaced and vested in the newly set-up Administrative Tribunal at the Law Courts. Apart from the 80 cases taken over from the Board of Special Commissioners, the Administrative Review Tribunal took cognisance of 64 new cases. 15 cases were settled during the year, leaving 129 pending cases as at the end of year.

Court of Appeal and Constitutional Court

In addition to the three cases in hand at beginning of year, three new appeals were lodged to the Court of Appeal during 2011. Of these, one case was decided while another one was abandoned by the appellant, leaving four unresolved cases at year end.

INTERNATIONAL TAX UNIT

Double Taxation Agreements

During 2011, the legal notices in connection with the double taxation agreements (DTA) with China (new DTA) and the protocols amending the double taxation agreements with Germany and Italy were published. Furthermore, double taxation agreements with Hong Kong, Israel, Switzerland, Turkey and Uruguay and protocols amending the double taxation agreements with Luxembourg and Poland were concluded and signed. The double taxation agreements with Guernsey, Hong Kong, Mexico, Russia and Ukraine and a protocol amending the DTA with South Africa were negotiated and initialled. Negotiations on a double taxation agreement were held with Azerbaijan.

Tax Information Exchange Agreements

The Tax Information Exchange Agreement with Bermuda was concluded and signed. Furthermore, Tax Exchange Agreements were negotiated and initialled with Bahamas, Bermuda, Gibraltar and Macao.

Revenue Collected through the International Tax Unit

During the year, €140,000,000 were transferred to revenue from tax paid by companies dealt with at ITU.

Other International Tax Unit Affairs

Members of the International Tax Unit attended 19 meetings in connection with the EU, one with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and six in connection with the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information on Tax Matters. Staff members of the ITU took part in work related to new legislation on international taxation. Throughout the year, staff members of the International Tax Unit were involved in further work related to the computerisation of the process of the New Tax Regime, in particular on the registration of shareholders and of the refund claim form.

CAPITAL TRANSFER DUTY DIVISION

Revenue Collected by the Capital Transfer Duty Division

The revenue collected through the Capital Transfer Duty Division in 2011 is shown in the table hereunder:

	2009 (€)	2010 (€)	2011 (€)
Death and Donation Duty	36,266	75,007	15,247
Duty on Documents and Transfers	78,220,861	79,289,491	82,250,750
Fines and Late Fees	16,503	11,404	13,051
Fees on AIP Permits	56,906	47,991	52,742
Total	78,330,536	79,423,893	82,331,790

Duty on Documents

The data below shows the Capital Transfer Duty Division's involvement throughout 2011 as compared to the previous two years:

	Notarial Deeds Examined	Referred to CTD Engineers	Original Assessments Revised	Objections Filed	Revised Claims	Duty on Documents (€)
2011	12,828	5,616	3,552	1,247	575	82,250,750
2010	11,775	5,868	4,549	1,935	662	79,289,491
2009	11,741	4,518	3,853	1,516	387	78,220,861

The total revenue collected from this source amounted to € 82,250,750 (Duty on Documents). Revenue under this source included also the duty collected in respect of share transfers, insurance policies, bank credit cards, other duties payable on various documents, and revenue in respect of *causa mortis* transmissions.

323 refusals were issued in anticipation of appeals for the consideration of the Administrative Review Tribunal.

During the year, 2,897 *causa mortis* declarations were filed, out of which 548 filed by notaries were referred to the Division's technical experts to verify the valuation of immovable properties declared therein. The amount of *causa mortis* declarations processed during 2011 was 3,337. The Division receives and investigates a number of deficient returns. In fact, during the period, 1,479 claims were issued and 60 revised assessments were raised. During this same period, 127 objections were filed by transferees against the said *causa mortis* claims, while 110 objections have been concluded. Appeals against eventual refusals will have to be finally considered by the afore-mentioned tribunal.

Death and Donation Duty

The number of returns of chargeable transmissions filed during the period was 34. All returns were duly processed and hence, no outstanding returns are pending at year end. Revenue collected, including prepayments on account and from arrears, totalled €15,247. This legislation will be repealed in December 2012.

Acquisition of Immovable Property by Non-Residents

In 2011, the Capital Transfer Duty Division received 312 applications and issued 244 permits.

Preliminary Agreements

The Division registered a total of 7,841 Promise of Sale Agreements in 2011. Of these, 536 were registered in Gozo.

Monte di Pietà

The Monte di Pietà, which is responsible for advancing money on pledges of precious metals, registered the following level of activity during 2011:

	2009	2010	2011
Pledges Accepted	1,731	1,462	969
Pledges Redeemed	2,032	2,997	2,393
Amount Loaned Out	€184,417	€158,012	€94,333
Amount Repaid	€216,522	€310,920	€238,181
Interest Received	€21,979	€39,397	€38,410

The number of pledges at hand as at year end 2011 stood at 4,104, against which a total of €398,658 had been advanced.

Assay and Valuations Office

The Assay and Valuations Office is responsible for the administration of the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Act, which effectively regulates the local, single market and third country levels. In addition to the regular publication of gold and silver valuations in the Government Gazette, the Office conducted the following assay of articles and inspections:

	Gold	Silver	Total
Articles Received	7	1,539	1,546
Assays	232	118	350
Articles Weighed and Valued	34	0	34
Articles broken up due to Inferior Standard	0	730	730

MARIO BORG
 Director General (Inland Revenue)

Customs Department

MANAGEMENT

The Customs Department is a relatively small (in EU terms) customs administration which, within the single European customs area, successfully facilitates legal economic flows and prevents illegal imports of products and substances. It oversees imports and exports and the international supply chain, and maintains balance between the safety, protection and financial interests of Malta and the European Union, on the one hand, and the increased competitiveness of the economy, on the other.

The main tasks of Customs Department are:

- customs and excise controls on goods and customs clearance of goods;
- assessment, calculation and collection of import duties, import VAT and excise duties;
- customs and excise inspections and post-clearance audit;
- prevention and detection of customs and excise offenses and other criminal offences;
- control of admission, removal and transit of goods subject to special measures due to interests of the safety and protection of the health and lives of people, animals, plants, environmental protection, as well as protection of the cultural heritage and intellectual property;
- collection of statistical data on the exchange of goods between EU Member States;
- implementation of foreign trade and common agricultural policy measures;
- implementation of EU legislation and international treaties in the field of work of the customs administration.

Like its counterparts in the EU, during 2011 the Maltese customs administration faced new challenges to ensure the smooth flow of trade whilst applying the necessary controls to safeguard the health and safety of citizens and the financial interests of the Community. The achievement of these objectives required the striking of a correct balance between facilitation and enforcement. The main priority thrusts were: to improve delivery of services to clients, particularly the traders and manufacturers; to enhance control on inward and outward movement of goods, people and means of transport; to enforce legislation more effectively; to improve collection of revenue and the prevention of fraud; and to prevent the importation of illicit drugs and other prohibited goods. At the same time, the functions of Malta Customs continued to be streamlined in line with Government's commitment to the revised Lisbon Agenda.

Through its considerable revenue generation capacity, the Malta Customs administration contributed in a significant manner to the national economy and also met its financial obligations to the European Community. This notwithstanding, the financial results of the administration were influenced by the global economic situation during the year under review, which had an effect on the trade and economic activities of our country. International politics also impacted on the administrations operations. For several months the implementation of the sanctions imposed by the UN and EU in view of the situation in Libya, and the facilitation of the transfer of humanitarian aid, absorbed significant resources.

On its part, the Malta Customs administration undertook various initiatives to try to improve its efficiency and effectiveness and in other ways support the local and EU economy in facing up to the challenges of the time. To this effect, a primary challenge for the administration now continues to be the upgrading of existing and introduction of new ICT systems that abet its processing and control functions.

CUSTOMS EU SPECIALIST

Customs EU Specialist supported the Department's senior management in areas of operations where Community legislation or relations with EU institutions are significant. This function has three major aspects: coordination within the Department, liaison with outside entities (besides EU Directorate MFEI, these include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Attorney General's Office, the Economic Policy Department, Commerce Department, the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, Malta Enterprise and others) and the production of substantive EU-related input.

During 2011, issues requiring the intervention of the Customs EU Specialist ranged from the drafting of communications with the EU Commission, to policy-related work (e.g. following Commission proposals relevant to the Department's operations and coordination the Department's reaction to them, etc.) and the coordination of replies to questionnaires about aspects of customs operations. Other work coordinated by the EU Specialist included the drafting of instruction notes (particularly for the Customs Union Working Party on Legislation and Policy but also for other meetings), the monitoring of issues brought before the General Rules Section of the Customs Code Committee, and the processing of ad hoc requests for information received from traders, traders' associations, Malta Enterprise and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

EU Specialist is a member of the committees set up by the Department to administer the issue of AEO certificates and to draft proposals for the revision of national customs legislation. As the Department's representative on the Sanctions Monitoring Board, EU Specialist worked closely with the other entities represented on the Board and with several colleagues in the Department (particularly the Non Proliferation Unit, Assistant Director Landing and Releasing and the Office of the Head of Investigations) on the implementation of UN and EU sanctions in relation to Libya, Syria and Iran. EU Specialist also acts as the Department's Data Protection Officer and Freedom of Information Desk Officer.

ADMINISTRATION

FINANCE BRANCH

The total revenue generated by Customs' activities in 2011 was €209,573,094, which constitutes an increase of €21,281,057 (10.15 %) as compared to the previous year. The figure of €13,205,159 was income from import duties (Traditional Own Resources). According to set obligations, 75% of the latter figure of import duties income were transferred to the EU, and the other 25% retained by Malta as administration fee. At €196,715,477, income from excise registered an increase of just over €21.6 million and constituted 94% of the total departmental income. Other Customs' income such as from licences, fines, fees, rent, service refunds, and sale of items, totalled €1,391,927 million. A further amount of €71,985,219 million was collected by Customs as VAT on behalf of the VAT Department.

ACCOUNTS SECTION

During 2011, resources continued to be focused on improving the methods of revenue collection and addressing revenue arrears aspects and cases. Other primary roles undertaken included the regular financial reporting to MFEI as well as the Treasury; the expenditure control of the budget allocated to the Department; and the routine daily activities associated with money transfers and transactions, and the general accounting function.

CUSTOMS DEBT UNIT AND CASH OFFICE

The Customs Debt Unit continued to chase dues outstanding to Customs and to effect refunds due to traders, besides monitoring the deferred payment facilities granted to certain importing companies and

managing bank guarantees. The main Cashier's Office received payments for taxes (import and excise duties and VAT) as well as fees, fines, store rent, proceeds from sales and other miscellaneous items.

PROCUREMENT AND STORES UNIT

A total of 980 local purchase orders were committed during 2011. Six departmental tenders and numerous calls for quotations were issued, adjudicated and awarded. Several items, including office equipment and furniture, were repaired or replaced as necessary. Uniform items were procured and distributed to entitled staff members including special uniforms and winter jackets for container-scanning and boat-crew personnel. Personal protective equipment and other health-and-safety related items were also procured.

EU PROCEDURES UNIT

The EU Procedures Unit is in charge of processing and approving import declarations intended to benefit from agricultural quotas managed from the EU's DG Agri and first-come-first-served quotas from the EU's DG Taxud. The movement of certain agricultural goods was controlled under the transit procedure upon request of other EU Member States for these to benefit from the export refund system. Unit staff participated in various meetings with other local entities, including the MRRA Paying Agency and the Malta National Laboratory, and in various CAP meetings in Brussels. Regular liaison was kept with customs laboratories of other Member States, especially Italy and Holland, in connection with the analysis of various commodities for their classification and application of the relative taxes. Anti-Dumping and Surveillance reports were regularly sent to the EU Commission.

EU PROGRAMMES UNIT

During 2011, a total of 351 participants attended 245 customs-related events abroad. Joint actions, including seminars and workshops, project groups and steering groups, working visits, training activities etc, were organised under respective programmes Customs C2013 and Fiscalis 2013. Under these programmes, the Customs Department has benefited from the provision of IT systems, including trans-European systems and common customs applications ex. EMCS (Excise Movement and Control System) Phase 3, Future of IT – Cheaper, Faster, Better workshops. Commission and Council partly financed by the departmental travel vote ex. CUG (Customs Union Group), CCWP (Customs Cooperation Working Party), Customs Code Committee (Data Integration and Harmonisation, Counterfeit and Pirated Goods, Valuation, Section for Import and Export formalities, etc). The annual WCO invitation was attended under the Customs Department Travel vote, namely 2011 Heads of Customs Conference of the WCO Region Europe, and also the Customs Cooperation Council 117th and 118th Sessions. The departmental travel budget caters also for Debriefings and Joint Customs Operations (ex. Fireblade, Ulysse, Colosseum etc.), training for example SLD (Second Line of Defence) Stakeholders Familiarisation Training; conferences like UAE event – Malta's experience as a Maritime Hub and Sea Cargo Operations: US Malta (International Exchange Programme).

SECRETARIAT SECTION

The amounts of €242,208 in respect of rent and €13815.22 regarding electricity bills were collected from 31 bond operators using the 23 bond stores at the Customs Groupage Terminal at Hal Far. The sum of €4,658.74 was collected as rent for two temporary bond stores at Luqa. The Section dealt with 611 new cases of incorrect declarations, settled 315 current cases and referred eight to MFEI. This resulted in the collection of the total amount of €175,322 in fines, duties and VAT. Nine applications were received and processed regarding the issue of customs certificates and other misplaced documents. There were also three new post entries of which one was settled, while 32 instances of garnishee orders or information requests by law courts were processed. 19 legal cases regarding arrears of revenue to Customs were in progress, of which two were concluded during the year. The Section's activities contributed to the total collection of €436,003.96 in rents, electricity bills, taxes and fines.

HUMAN RESOURCES UNIT

As from January 2011, payments for salaries to Customs employees started being issued through the Dakar system. More staff followed courses at the University and three received Diplomas in Management and Public Administration. Replies were furnished to 13 parliamentary questions relating to vacancies, recruitments, overtime, family-friendly measures and disabled staff. More employees chose to avail themselves of family-friendly measures and now the Department has 12 employees on telework, 12 on a reduced timetable, one on maternity leave, one on a career break and two on responsibility leave. 12 sections worked flexitime during the summer months and offered their services to traders for longer hours. The appointments of one Director, one Chief Inspector, two Senior Systems Analysts, two Customs Auxiliaries, one Assistant Technical Officer (Transport) were effected throughout the year and the process is underway to fill two vacancies in the post of Chief Inspector. The number of staff continued to decrease and by the end of December stood at 390.

HEALTH AND SAFETY UNIT

Customs implemented several initiatives and measures regarding health and safety during the year. Inspections were made and risk assessments prepared for various sections and their operations. H&S fact-sheets, medical first-aid kits and personal protective equipment were replenished as required. A fire extinguishers and smoke detectors servicing exercise was performed. Several H&S related training courses were organised and delivered to Customs personnel, including on: first-aid, radiation protection, H&S risk assessments, and H&S workers representatives. Various issues were discussed and organised during meetings with the H&S Official and workers' representatives. Testing and engineering certification and servicing of lifts and hoists at Customs premises were performed as required by law. Several inspections by an architect were commissioned and building repairs undertaken. Customs completed the exercise initiated in the previous year for the eye sight tests scheme in terms of LN 43/2002, and 241 staff benefitted from it. As in previous years, immunisation against the common seasonal influenza was made available to all Customs staff. Following the Fukushima Nuclear plant disaster, necessary precautions were taken against the spread of contamination through cargo. Training directed to safeguard personnel on the front line as well as how to approach cargo arriving directly from Japan was given to all personnel involved. Inspections were carried out on vessels carrying second-hand vehicles arriving directly from Japan with one positive result, namely a vehicle contaminated with Cesium 134. Routine inspections and cleaning of various Customs areas and warehouses was also carried out.

GREEN INITIATIVES

Monitoring reports continued to be prepared regarding the performance of the PV system installed on the roof of the Administration Block of the Hal-Far Groupage Terminal. Water meters and plumbing systems of all Customs premises were again during the year under review systematically checked for leaks and if necessary repaired or replaced. Low power consumption lights were procured and installed in some of the premises. A hazardous-waste collection policy in offices regarding batteries, toners and ink-cartridges, as well as the re-use of envelopes and one-side printed paper, continued to be implemented. Replaced batteries and engine oil of Customs cars serviced at the Customs garage were sent for recycling.

TRAINING UNIT

During 2011, a total of 15 in-house courses for staff and economic operators were delivered. A total of 797 participants attended for these courses which included 96 sessions and 334¼ hours of training. The majority of this training consisted in IT Training ex. Entry/Exit Summary Declaration, CES Import, Public Administration Act Briefing Directive 4, Freedom of Information Act.

There were nine training courses organised by other entities for Customs personnel which included 78 sessions, 185¼ hrs of training and which were attended by 78 participants for example NEBOSH – International General Certificate Occupational Health & Safety, Basic First Aid, IPR Product Training.

There were four courses which were organised through CDRT and which were attended by 99 Customs personnel e.g.. Managing with Leadership.

LEGAL OFFICE

This section compiled 26 Letters to prosecute and 109 Seizure Notes all duly signed by the Comptroller. The former were sent to the Commissioner of Police for further necessary action, whilst Seizure Notes were mailed to offenders.

As regards representations in Court, Customs had 825 sittings, which were sub-divided as follows: 338 civil cases and 487 criminal cases (of which 17 sittings dealt with Evasions).

Every Evasion of Duty sitting is being counted as one sitting which comprises 20 separate Court cases on average. Also, personnel from this section were required to testify and/or assist prosecution, etc, in practically all the cases.

Three Civil and 25 Criminal cases were decided where fines inflicted amounted to €17,722.72. Fines collected from out-of-court settlements were € 91,259.81 whilst the amount recouped from the Civil Debt awarded by the Court was € 36,548.29. Thus, the grand total of the revenue collected from the activities of the unit resulted in that of €145,530.82.

EXCISE AND SYSTEM CONTROLS

LOCAL PRODUCERS, TRADERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

This section controls authorised tax warehouse keepers who produce alcohol or tobacco products, excise warehouse keepers who sell duty-free goods to passengers for non-EU countries and traders that are not tax warehouse keepers. The section is also responsible for the issue of excise control stamps to importers and manufacturers as well as for payments of excise duty on mobile telephony services. At present there are six mobile service providers. All excise movements under duty suspension are monitored via the EMCS Electronic Administrative Accompanying Document (EAAD) or the manual Internal Administrative Accompanying Document (IAAD). All tax warehouse keepers are required to submit regular stock reports to Customs. As to breweries, only one company is producing local beer besides importing beer in bulk. During 2011, the section processed 41 applications for the status of Excise Registered Trader (ERT). At present there are eight registered local producers of alcoholic beverages and wine, besides being importers of wines and spirituous beverages. Three of these producers are situated in Gozo. One local producer of wine requested to begin producing fortified wine. Although authorised, the process is still being tested and has not yet been offered for sale. With regard to importation of pure alcohol, a number of tax warehouse keepers are manufacturers of medicines which use a large amount of ethanol for end-products that are not subject to excise duty. Other importers sell the alcohol either to be used in hospitals or for analysis and research. During the year there were three producers of pipe tobacco/cigars. These producers were also importers of roll-your-own tobacco for cigarettes, pipe tobacco and cigars. Another five tax warehouse keepers were dealing with importation and distribution of cigarettes under duty suspension.

TAX WAREHOUSES

This unit monitors tax warehouses at Barriera Tax Warehouse (BTW) and the other private tax warehouse keepers. Controls of stock were performed as necessary during the year and monthly statements were checked regularly.

The number of tax warehouses registered to operate from BTW was 42, and 26 were operating as private tax warehouse keepers from their own private premises, during 2011. Two new tax warehouse keepers initiated their operations from BTW during the year. New applicants for tax warehouse keepers are being encouraged to operate from BTW.

FUEL EXCISE

This section monitors all fuel moved under duty suspension and ensures the proper payment of taxes and duty due on fuel released for consumption. Monitoring involves physical checks, satellite tracking as well as recording of the quantities of fuels imported, blended or moved. Data was submitted to the Malta Resources Authority on all imports and exports and on all the internal transfers and movements carried out between tax warehouses. All importations were physically controlled while internal movements between tax warehouses were controlled via the internal accompanied administrative document (IAAD) and entry into the electronic database. Frequent inspections of tax warehouses and bunkering barges were made and fuel analysed to deter and detect illicit traffic. Liberalisation of the local fuel sector, especially in the LPG area, continued to be implemented during the year, and this section therefore adopted the first changes to be able to manage efficiently this new scenario.

HEATING GAS OIL

The main objective of this unit is to monitor and control issues of heating gas oil with 0.1% sulphur content. This rebated product is distributed solely for heating purposes and is used by an extensive number of users such as hotels, bakeries, farms, garages and several other private and government entities. It is also used for domestic heating in a number of households throughout Malta and Gozo. During 2011 the unit managed to identify abusers and prepared all preliminary compilation work to take all necessary legal action against them.

EXCISE LIAISON OFFICE

This office deals with the maintaining and updating of the Community's System for Exchange of Excise Data (SEED) database, covering all the excise registered traders, tax warehouse keepers and tax warehouses. This office is also responsible for four mail boxes: the Early Warning System for Excise (EWSE), Movement Verification System (MVS), the SEED, as well as ELO (Excise Liaison Office) to ELO mailbox. The Excise Movement Control System (EMCS) was fully monitored and maintained by this office. The Excise Liaison Office liaises with its counterparts in all Member States and takes an active part during the Excise Committee Working Party meetings. It is also responsible for the National Project Plan as well as the monthly development plans.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS

The Computer Section continuously supports both traders and customs personnel in the use of the IT systems. Furthermore, members of the Computer Section keep in line with the discussions, preparations and developments of IT projects forming part of the EU Multi-Annual Strategic Programme (MASP). This requires a lot of time analysing the functional and technical specifications of the systems to be introduced or upgraded. Moreover, the participation of personnel from the Computer Section in seminars, meetings and training courses held by the European Commission is essential for the smooth implementation of upgrades and new IT systems.

User acceptance testing is another area that the section is responsible for. During 2011, before the deployment of upgrades and new systems, intensive tests were carried out to minimise the risk of having problems during the implementation in the live environment. Besides the responsibility of the testing and administration of the Customs Electronic Systems (CES), other specialised IT demands on the Computer Section originated from various EU legislations such as the Modernised Customs Code (Regulation 450/2008) and Decision 70/2008, the main objectives being to make Member States' National Electronic Customs Systems compatible with each other, introduce EU-wide electronic risk analysis, improve information exchange, make electronic declarations the rule, simplification of customs procedures, introduce a centralised customs clearance arrangement, and generate a paperless environment for both customs and trade.

IT CENTRE

The IT Centre Section deals with all IT-related hardware and network issues, software installations and general customs staff support.

The major issues in 2011 were the replacement and installation of various computer hardware, such as printers and scanners, installation and upgrades of various applications used by the Department, such as ECN+ and MCC, and provision of support regarding Local Area Network extensions and connectivity.

TRANSIT AND FREE ZONES

As country of departure, 151 transit movements were opened from Malta, and 141 messages which settled movements initiated from here, were received, 2,048 transit movements were also received, and 1,882 movements were closed with Malta as country of destination. Malta initiated 34 enquiries through the computerised transit system (NCTS), and received 784 incoming enquiries. Thirty-four TC21/21A requests for Post-Clearance Verification of status documents were sent, while five incoming requests were processed. The national transit installation – NCTS-MCC – was further upgraded during 2011 under the collaborative contract comprising the customs administrations of Malta, Ireland, Sweden and The Netherlands, with maintenance and support from foreign software contractor Intrasoft. One member from this Section participated in the testing of the upgrades. System operation and functionality was reviewed during various meetings of the Electronic Customs Group (ECG) of the European Commission, as well as the Change Management Board set up with Intrasoft. System stability and availability remained well within Community targets.

A decrease in staff in the last quarter of 2011 had some impact on the monitoring of transit movements through the computerised transit system. Controls of stocks at the Free Warehouses were carried out on the basis of the documented stock records held by the operators and the Distripark manager.

CUSTOMS WAREHOUSING

This Unit is responsible for monitoring of non EU warehoused goods subject to import duty and/or VAT, and their eventual release/export from approved customs public and private warehouses. 328 containers were warehoused during 2011. Four new customs warehouses were approved. A total of 1,894 new non-EU vehicles were warehoused. All units were released for home use. Revenue from new vehicles amounted to €2,306,749 import duty and €2,121,431 VAT. 18 second-hand vehicles were released for home use on which €21,017 import duty and €24,735 VAT were collected. €609,565 import duty and €189,486 VAT were collected from other goods released from customs warehouses. Regarding the Newport Bonded Stores operating under this Unit, rent collected from goods released from these stores and from transfer in bonds amounted to €4,052 respectively, whilst import duty and VAT were €920 and €6,928 respectively. There was one lot received for safe custody. One auction sale was held in 2011, the total income derived from this sale amounted to €24,294.

COMPLIANCE

This Directorate is responsible for the collection of import duties and VAT and ensures compliance with EU Customs regulations, particularly the Customs Code and its Implementing Provisions. When releasing goods for free circulation, officers in this directorate also ensure that EU import regulations administered by other departments and authorities are adhered to. This entails continuous consultation with Veterinary Services, Environmental Health, Plant Health, CITES, OHSA and Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCAA). Trade facilitation is given top priority and no efforts have been spared to introduce new facilitations to local industry and to economic operators in general.

The overall volume of economic activity in importations from third countries remained relatively the same as in 2010. A slight drop of 2.8% in customs duties was recorded. This may be attributed to a shift in business patterns. A substantial increase in acquisitions from EU countries was noted for the first time since 2008. Statistics for 2011 show an increase of over 1,800 containers more than 2010 from EU countries.

In 2011, steps were taken to reduce physical controls and replace them with documentary checks. Several commodities that offer lower risks are being controlled by a simple documentary check. This initiative translates into less handling costs and reduced loss of time for economic operators.

The Libyan crisis and the radiation fallout in Japan were two major situations which Customs had to deal with this year. In the former situation, one had to make sure that sanctions imposed by the United Nations and the EU were scrupulously observed, while on the other hand it had to be ensured that humanitarian aid was cleared for export in the shortest time possible. This was a collective effort between officers from air and sea customs offices. Special arrangements were also made for the benefit of local exporters who wanted to re import goods which had already been exported to Libya.

As soon as news of the Fukushima nuclear disaster was received, steps were immediately taken to protect citizens from radiation contamination. Meetings were held with OHSA and Environmental Health to coordinate controls on commodities dispatched from Japan after 11 March 2011. OHSA provided training to staff on the use of radiation detecting equipment and Customs provided all the necessary equipment and protective clothing.

Regular meetings were held with regulatory bodies and government agencies to ensure that goods which did not comply with their requirements were not released for free circulation.

The implementation of the AEO (Authorised Economic Operator) programme continued throughout 2011. In February, a joint validation team from the EU Commission (DG TAXUD) and USA Customs (CPB) came to Malta to scrutinise the implementation of the AEO programme. This joint validation visit was held in preparation for the implementation of mutual recognition of certificates issued by EU Member States and the USA, and was one of a series held throughout the EU. The results of the visit were very satisfactory from the point of view of all concerned and Malta Customs was commended for its strict implementation of the safety and security criteria that must be met before issuing an AEO certificate. Later in the year, a member of the AEO Committee took part in a joint validation visit to the USA.

LANDING AND RELEASING BRANCH

The Landing & Releasing branch in the Customs Department comprises the following outstations: Deep Water Quay, Examination Shed, Courier Office, Airfreight Section, Malta Freeport, Hal-Far Groupage Complex, Laboratory Wharf, Parcel Post Office and Weighers Office.

Deep Water Quay

During 2011, a total of 143 authorised regular shipping vessels discharged and/or loaded the under mentioned cargo at the DWQ:

Discharged	Loaded
6,038 containers (5,818 EU, 220 non-EU)	682 containers community status
14,415mt tons conventional cargo (14,033 tons EU, 382 non-EU)	89 containers under T1 procedure
1,450 new vehicles (1,018 EU, 432 non-EU)	

In May 2011, a new ferry service *Enrica M* started operating from Augusta, Sicily. The vessel was represented locally by Triton Logistics; however this service was short-lived and ceased its operation by end of October 2011. The workload at the DWQ has been mainly of goods arriving from the EU. The volume of loose cargo showed a decline when compared to the previous year's, while the release of second-hand vehicles imported from Japan was shifted to Laboratory Wharf. At DWQ an overall increase of 6.6% in container movements was recorded.

Container Examination Shed - Hal Far

During the year under review, 2,360 units from third countries were selected for control, examined and released for free circulation:

- 634 containers/trailers were examined at General Examination Shed
- 803 containers/trailers were examined at importer's premises
- 923 units were 'documentary checked'
- All units were Vacis Scanned
- 112 Post Entries were raised

Various infringements were identified at the time of release, which yielded the amount of €88,391 in Customs Duty, VAT, Anti-dumping Duty and Agricultural Duty. The amount of €39,185 was collected as 'Fines' for non-compliance. During releases for free circulation, regular referrals were made to the Enforcement Section, Weigher's Office, Intellectual Property Rights and Drug Squad. Goods were also referred for clearance by Environmental Health Plant Health, Veterinary Services and MCCA on a regular basis.

Courier Section

The overall workload at this Section continued to increase considerably, mainly due to the increase of popularity of buying over the internet. The past year was the first full year in which courier export operations were conducted directly from the Aerospeed facility of Air Malta. This initiative offered further trade facilitation to courier operators. One of the courier operators situated in the MIA freight village installed a scanning machine to meet security obligations for outbound packages. The total traffic in courier packages amounted to 281,144. Officers in this section scanned over 1,329 bags and 1,657 cartons.

Revenue Collected

	Customs Duty	VAT	Fines	Total
Declarations	414,144	2,676,888	NIL	3,091,032
Post Entries	5,771	13,688	17,937	37,396
Total	€419,915	€2,690,576	€17,937	€3,128,428

Airfreight Section

Revenue collected in this section experienced a slight decrease, which is mainly attributed to a decrease of approximately 7% in air cargo traffic from third countries. However, this section still registered an increase of €178,997 (4.9%) in VAT, a decrease in Import Duty of €188,682 (24%) and Excise Duty of €13,853 (59.5%). The number of Post Entries raised by the Airfreight Section officers amounts to €9,463. A total of 8,044 import declarations were processed, of which 1,644 were selected for control. Throughout the year, the Section continued to liaise with the Customs Intelligence Section and the Enforcement Unit in respect of certain importations targeted for special inspections due to possible infringements in IPR Regulations, false declarations or concealment of goods. Monitoring of cargo manifests continued to be carried out efficiently through telework, while an officer has been detailed to carry out post verification of declarations which are not subject to physical control. Of special mention was the very active role of this section in the Libyan crisis. The Airfreight Section handled huge volumes of humanitarian aid which arrived by air at any time of the day for eventual transshipment to Libya by sea or other air routes. Continuous liaising between this section, the Enforcement Unit, Proliferation Unit and management ascertained that sanctions imposed by the United Nations and the EU on Libya were also kept in check.

Revenue Collected (Customs Area Code 102) – 2011

Duty	VAT	Excise Duty	Other Duties	Fines	Post Entries	Total
€593,064	€3,815,264	€9,439	€793	€5,036	€1,648	€4,424

Malta Freeport

The main responsibility of this Section is to ensure that all units that exit and enter the Free Zone area are accounted for and covered by the relevant customs documentation and authorised gate passes.

Officers in this section carried out 2,637 vessel *pratiques*, of which 1,635 were on vessels coming from third countries. A total of 32,190 containers were despatched for local consumption, of which 11,813 were non Community goods and were released for free circulation. Another 169 units were despatched for transshipment.

Hal Far Groupage Complex

This section is responsible for the warehousing and clearance of groupage cargo arriving from EU and third countries. Revenue generated in this section rose by 24% (duty) and 16% (VAT) compared to 2010. Additional revenue collected during physical controls increased by 16%. Rent charges collected for goods kept in storage beyond the period stipulated in the Customs Regulations amounted to €42,308.

The NUCTECH scanner stationed at Hal-Far was instrumental in facilitating the clearance of containers which were not subject to physical control.

A total of 4,541* containers entered the complex, of which 1,410 were non-EU. Random tallying was carried out on 346 non-EU units and 71 EU. There were also 1,316* spot checks carried out by SIAT at the gate.

*does not include data for 3 months due to industrial action by gatekeepers

Total Revenue (including additional revenue)

Customs Duty	V A T	Fines	Total
€2,870,018	€6,897,296	€11,278	€9,778,592

Laboratory Wharf

This Section is responsible for the supervision of goods landed/loaded at Laboratory Wharf, Coal Wharf and the Grain Silo.

A total of 560 vessels landed goods at this station and the following operations were recorded:

Goods discharged	13,579 containers of which 433 were non –Community status 4,810 new and 3,294 used vehicles, 165 live horses, 26,500 live poultry, 238 pigs, 67 cows and 10 boats
Goods loaded	2,946 containers of which 664 exported to third countries, 532 new vehicles, 1,309 used vehicles, 113 trucks and 236 accompanied vehicles.

In 2011, the amount of €2,579,107 was collected as excise duty.

Discharged	Commodity	Metric tons EU	Metric tons non-EU	Landed in Gozo
	Cereals	106,738.21	26.222.98	5,658
	Bulk Cargo	650,162.5	7,353	0
Loaded	Scrap Metal	2,743	18,256	0

Other Statistics

ECNs Processed	MRNs Processed	Manifests Amendments	Searches at Gate	Containers Transferred from FTM to LW (TMSD/TSB)
1,529	140	27	510	91/25

Parcel Post Office

The main activity at the Parcel Post Office concerns the processing and release of domestic parcels for goods purchased through the internet. In view of the relief of customs duties for packages valued €150 and under, a decrease in revenue was registered. Parcel traffic from third countries has remained the same as the previous year, however there was an increase of parcel traffic from EU countries. Parcel scanning continued to facilitate the workflow in this section especially during the Christmas period. Officers examined over 15,000 parcels sent from third countries and 582 from EU countries. In all, over 6,500 parcels were scanned and a good number of them were delivered to consignees without physical inspection. In their daily work, officers in this section keep continuous contact with other government departments with regard to importations of foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals, endangered species, product safety and plant health.

Revenue Collected

	Duty	VAT	Excise	Fines	Total
Gozo	4,335	31,952	Nil	Nil	36,287
MaltaPost/EMS	73,889	595,448	1,971	2,806	674,114
Total	€78,224	€627,400	€1,971	€2,806	€710,401

Customs Weighing Section

Customs Weighers are responsible for confirming declared weights on products which are subject to a specific duty rate according to the Common Customs Tariff of the EU. Weighing fees collected during 2011 amounted to €1,400.

PROCESSING SERVICES BRANCH

This branch includes the post Verification Unit, Valuation Section, Binding Tariff Information Unit and Customs Laboratory, Customs Economic Procedures Unit, Binding Origin Information Unit, Customer Services and Risk Management Unit

Verification Unit

The Verification Unit's main target remains the verification and post clearance controls of import declarations which were not selected for control. In view of the initiative taken by this directorate to reduce physical controls and increase documentary checks, the role of this section has become more important than ever before. Scrutiny of customs declarations yielded a substantial amount of revenue as shown in the table below. In 2011 the section checked over 16,000 import declarations. Officers in this section are also responsible to verify Intra Community status documents that are presented in respect of containers dispatched from Freeport. In 2011, a total of 12,751 T2L's were checked. During the inspection of these documents, several queries were noted and settled with the respective traders.

Additional Revenue collected	Duty	€40,697
	Anti dumping duty	€6,265
	VAT	€56,955
	Fines	€9,700
	Total	€113,617
Documentary checks on intra Community supplies (T2L)		12,751
Cases referred to Post Clearance Audit for further investigation		27
Documentary checks on declarations not selected for control		16,063
Amendments to cargo manifests		133
Issue of gate passes for containers exiting Freeport		31,573

Valuation Section

In the past year, the valuation office of the Customs Department continued to perform its duties as a reference point on values to the management, other sections of the department, business community and to private individuals.

Officials from this Unit participated on various occasions in the Valuation Customs Code Committee in Brussels. In 2011, the Unit submitted for discussion in the relative Committee an issue regarding auction fees.

At times this office is called to inspect the values of items being released on spot. Most of the time the officers take note of the imported goods, take photos and ask importers to produce more evidence re the value of the goods. When it is not possible to make a final decision on spot, a deposit is raised to cover any additional duties due after the valuation exercise.

The Enforcement Section of this Department refers contraband cigarettes, spirits and fuel for valuation purposes. There was a marked increase in the cases referred to this office. Members of this section represent the Department in court cases regarding the above.

Binding Tariff Information Unit – Laboratory

The principal activity of the Binding Tariff Information Unit (BTIU) is the classification of goods. Information on classification matters is requested by traders, customs clearance agents and even releasing officers at time of release or during document processing. Samples are also often referred to this section for further discussions and guidance. Queries are sometimes received from other Member States

requesting classification opinions of various products. This method of consultation is commonly used by all Member States, so as to try to obtain a 'quick' opinion and avoid having to pursue the matter further with the Commission. This way, certain unnecessary delays in classification decisions are avoided.

During 2011, the Laboratory carried out analyses on 891 gasoil samples, to determine the presence of solvent yellow, national marker or both. BTIU officers and the Senior Customs Analyst participated in meetings in Brussels covering various sectors.

During 2011, the Unit received 40 new BTI applications. All these applications were published in the European Union EBTI-3 database. Nine of these BTIs and six BTI applications from 2010 were processed and the BTIs issued accordingly.

Internal communications were issued to officers concerning uniform application of the Combined Nomenclature and EU classification decisions on various products. These decisions are first discussed and voted on during meetings of the Customs Code Committee in Brussels and then issued in the Official Journal of the European Union as Regulations and Notices.

Customs Economic Procedures Unit

During the year, 2,702 T2L documents were manually processed at the section.

574 Authorisations for various Preferential Customs Procedure Codes were activated in the Business Registry. 437 claims for refund of import duty paid under the Drawback System were processed. The number of Temporary Importation declarations created was 148 while 115 movements were written off and settled. There were 27 newly created TI declarations registered during the year. EUR 1 certificates issued amounted to 531, while the number of ATRs issued totalled 178 and GSP FORM A certificates issued were 57.

Revenue collected from Burdnara licence fees amounted to €1,255.66.

The number of operations registered at CEPU for which customs personnel attendance was requested during the year was 1,833.

Binding Origin Information Unit

During 2011, the Unit forwarded 15 movement certificates to third countries for verification.

Three non-preferential Certificates of Origin were sent to China and the UAE. These non-preferential certificates of origin covered the importation of goods subject to anti-dumping duties. Following a reply received from China, it was established that at time of importation, the invoice presented was undervalued by more than €7,086.

Two other replies were received from China. These were in respect of requests forwarded during the previous year and even in these cases it resulted that though the four Certificates of Origin were correct, the relative invoices were undervalued by €104,335.

A reply received from Norway stated that part of the consignment covered by a EUR 1 included bolts which were of Chinese origin, and therefore subject to anti-dumping duty amounting to €1,454.

During the year, the Unit answered two requests for verification received from Croatia and Israel. In the case of Croatia, the Unit confirmed the authenticity and correctness of the EUR 1, whereas the Invoice Declaration submitted by the Israeli authorities could not be confirmed because it was issued by an approved exporter in Germany.

Customer Services

This office deals with the general public's queries and inputs manual declarations presented by traders in the Customs Electronic System (CES). Officers here also assist clearing agents and private individuals in interpreting customs rules and EU regulations. The Customer Service Unit processes import declarations presented by persons eligible for the suspension of import taxes as provided for by EU Regulation 1186/09 on duty reliefs. Transshipments and shipping bills, as well as requests for refund of duties, are also processed in this section. Containers selected for control are registered for inspection in this office prior to detailing releasing officers for control. Court Garnishee Orders and Counter Warrants are presented at this Unit for updating the Customs Electronic System. The section is also responsible for the data inputting of 'intrastat' forms, registers new importers and administers the user accounts of the CES.

Statistics for 2011

Duty free imports of Personal Effects	187
Manual import declarations inputted by Data Entry Operators	5,634
Export declarations inputted by traders	8,167
Export declarations inputted by Data Entry Operators	1,675
Claims for refunds on preference certificates (ATR - GSP - EUR 1)	113
Claims for refunds of deposits paid on importation of personal effects	103
Inputting of 'Intrastat' Forms for intra community supplies	54,599
Transshipment bills which were registered, checked and authorised	1,269
Vetting of TSB's after export and submitted to Records Office	2,412
Processed applications (Form B) for duty free vehicles imported by persons with a disability and Diplomatic missions	28
Registrations of new economic operators in CES	640
Registration of Court Garnishee Orders and keeping updated records of same	371
Importation of Pleasure Craft by Vat Deferment Procedure	29
Importation of Pleasure Craft by Onward Supply Relief Procedure	18
Importation of Pleasure Craft under Temporary Importation Procedure	1
Direct Importation of Pleasure Craft	2

The Unit dealt with over 2,000 customs files, mostly requests for refund of duties on presentation of preference certificates, overpaid duties due to incorrect classification and refunds of deposits on importation of personal effects. Sale of customs forms amounted to €7,858.

Risk Management Unit

The Risk Management Unit is mainly responsible for the administration of the risk analysis system in creating of specific risk profiles (selection process/knowledge based), setting of the risk parameters (screening process/knowledge based), and adjustment of result tables (Adjusting of the threshold risk values) and setting of the random sampling.

The profiles are compiled on alerts or reports issued by: European Antifraud (OLAF) – Mutual Assistance Alerts (AM), Risk Management (DG TAXUD) – Risk Information Form (RIF), Alerts issued by Central Intelligence Services (CIS). A risk profile is created in the system after the above-mentioned alerts or reports are thoroughly evaluated according to standard risk treatment procedures.

Risk Profiles	
New risk profiles created in the system	180
Risk profiles which were updated or re-activated	176
Drafting of new risk profiles on documentary checks (Other departments' clearances & controls)	32

Risk Evaluation	
Risk Information Forms (RIF)	556
Mutual Assistance Alerts (AM)	67
Intelligence Reports (CIS)	87
Other Alerts (MAB)	90

Surveillance of the Import Module in the Customs Electronic System (CES) is also performed by this Unit which monitors all import declarations in the two hour time-out and checks the documentation of full load

containers that are selected for physical control prior to release of goods. Officers also check the documents of consignments selected for documentary control by the CES. The Export System is monitored by two officers and at present the risk analysis is performed on a manual basis.

There is an effective communication network between the Risk Management Unit and other key sections within the Department, such as Intelligence Unit and Post Clearance Audit. The Risk Management offers a supporting role to the Authorised Economic Operator Unit in audit visits (Security & Compliance) and monitoring inspections on AEO certified traders - 39 AEO audit visits and seven monitoring inspections were undertaken.

The Risk Manager completed successfully an international Training Course on Container Examination organised by the Netherlands Customs Administration in Rotterdam.

ENFORCEMENT

INVESTIGATION AND INTELLIGENCE BRANCH

Head Investigations Office

The head office coordinated the local, EU and international administrative and operational activities concerning anti-fraud matters and illicit drug trafficking. Meetings abroad were regularly attended and contribution made to the EU Customs Cooperation Working Party (CCWP) and Mutual Assistance Committee (MAC). The CCWP is the coordinating group within the European Council's structure tasked with initiatives in the areas of customs cooperation. In this regard, several joint operations were organised involving customs organisations within the member states and in other operations organised by the WCO. Such operations included BARREL, FAIR PLAY, PANGEA IV, GAPIN, COLISEUM and GLOBAL HOAX 2. These operations targeted smuggling of highly taxed goods, counterfeit products, including medicinals, CITES related species, and heritage consignments. Obligations concerning Mutual Administrative Assistance Regulation (EC) 515/97, other EU and international conventions regarding dissemination of information were fulfilled through OLAF and WCO databases and communications networks. The use of these facilities helped to further integrate Malta Customs in the field of information sharing, both within EU and with third countries' customs services. Several operations (searches/inspections) were conducted in collaboration with the Police, AFM, MCCA and the VAT Department. Such joint operations further strengthened the collective effort in the relentless fight against fraud, drug smuggling and illegal trade in general.

Non-Proliferation Unit

The Non Proliferation Unit carried out 269 documentary checks, divided as follows: 93 on maritime consignments for export and in transshipment, 132 on airfreight cargo and 44 on fast parcel consignments prior to shipping for destination. 92 of the maritime consignments were also inspected and 23 of them were withheld, as the items concerned required export clearance prior to shipping to their destination. Besides, 41 airfreight consignments and 19 fast parcel consignments were also inspected for non-proliferation purposes. 23 maritime, one airfreight and three fast parcel consignments were withheld since contents within were found to be subject to provisions of the export control regulations. A total of 60 vessels collectively carrying 16,958 containers and 1,296 vehicles were scrutinised for sanctions prior to being cleared for shipping to Libya. The NPU continued with its Industry Outreach programme with several meetings being held with different stakeholders.

Post Clearance Audit (PCA) and Economic Procedures Enforcement Unit (EPEU)

PCA/EPEU personnel carried out 131 visits to premises of traders. These led to the raising of 37 post-entries and the sum of €14,349 was collected in duties and other taxes.

Container Monitoring Unit (CMU)

A total of 1,658 vessels' manifests, collectively carrying 710,309 transshipment containers which were landed at Malta Freeport, were reviewed leading to the scanning of 8,172 containers. 1,098 of these containers were furthermore physically examined, resulting in the seizure of the contents from 38 of them. 4,007 domestic containers were also scanned. Staff from this unit participated in various meetings abroad, mostly related to risk assessment and security and safety provisions. At the Hal-Far Groupage Complex, the Nuctech mobile container scanner was used for close inspection of 3,158 containers and trailers imported from community states and third countries.

Special Investigation and Action Team (SIAT)

This Unit tallied 64 containers and carried out over 1,063 searches targeting IPR infringements, CE markings and Excise controls, on vehicles leaving the Customs Hal-Far Groupage complex. It also performed daily counter checking and verification of container units dispatched from other stations such as Deep Water Quay, Laboratory Wharf and Malta Freeport Terminal.

Enforcement Unit

The unit targeted 7,505 flights and conducted eight aircraft searches. At the seaport, 338 ferry arrivals/departures were monitored, whereas 144 shipments of humanitarian aid to Libya were supervised. 23,080 cigarettes were seized from various crew and passengers disembarking cruise liners. The Unit effected 11 drug seizures, of which four seizures resulted from luggage searches, six seizures resulted from swallowers/stuffers and one seizure took place at the Parcel Post Office. Drugs seized included: 3.91kgs heroin, 3.973kgs cocaine, 8kgs cannabis resin, 2.96kgs cutting agent and 510gm mephedrone. The unit also accomplished the seizure of 5.78kgs chewing tobacco and 100 suitcases stuffed with the plant khat which contains the alkaloid cathinone (amphetamine-like stimulant). Controls at the airport also resulted in the seizure of 43,390 cigarettes, 5.75kgs hand rolling tobacco, 73.5kgs water pipe tobacco and five bird-skins (under CITES Regs.). 2,193 cash control checks yielded two positive results, and a total of €72445 was withheld. Two cases of black money scam were intercepted. Enforcement staff responded to 93 alerts raised by the radiation portals at the Airfreight sheds. 44 surveillance visits at open-air markets and 734 searches commercial outlets for illegal excise goods gave 47 positive results leading to the seizure of a further 261,461 cigarettes and 1,246 alcohol bottles. One vehicle was withheld pending investigations. 29 searches on vessels and yachts yielded three positive results, involving 555,600 contraband cigarettes which were seized. The fight against the illegal importation of fuel continued, 68 fuel samples were taken from various service stations, tanks or reservoirs in private yards for analysis, whereas 124 field tests were carried out on vehicles or heavy equipment. One road tanker was withheld pending investigations about fuel consisting of 5,050 litres gas oil. Other surprise inspections at private residences, garages and commercial outlets were carried out in connection with the use of light heating oil for heating purposes. In collaboration with the Container Monitoring Unit, various containers in transit were seized as their contents were inconsistent with their manifest declaration. Such seizures included 5,131,670 cigarettes. The unit also supervised the destruction of illegally imported cigarettes, tobacco and duty-free vehicles, seven vehicles were surrendered to Customs and six others transferred to other government departments. €127,213 was collected as dues from various importers, as well as a further €47,905 from duties and VAT. 69 inspections were held jointly with the Veterinary Services/PHO/VAT Department. 916 containers were inspected for IPR infringements, of which 37 transshipment containers loaded with counterfeit goods were withheld by the IPR Unit. 135 IPR cases were registered, with 32 leading to legal action and another 79 cases were settled out of court. 2,191,852 counterfeit items in transit and 3,221 counterfeit items intended for the domestic market were detained. Detained items included mobile phones, sunglasses, deodorants, purses and wrist watches. The unit participated in various Joint Customs Operations (JCOs) organised by the European Council and the World Customs Organisation. The focus of these operations included cultural goods, CITES, hazardous waste, cultural goods and counterfeit or contraband cigarettes.

Customs Intelligence Services (CIS)

During 2011, CIS continued with its task of vetting sea and air manifests for passengers and cargo in connection with the evasion of Customs, Excise and Anti-Dumping duties and VAT. Fraud, contraband in general, illegal export or import of cash, counterfeit and rejected goods and particularly the interdiction of narcotic drugs and fake medicine were also tackled by this section. The section issued a total of 1,766 passenger and cargo alerts. From all alerts issued, 22 'passenger' and 171 'cargo' resulted positive. 556 RIF alerts were received from and/or forwarded to other EU Member States. CIS supported other customs units during several EU wide Joint Customs Operations. CIS staff participated and contributed in various meetings both locally and abroad, particularly in areas related to general customs legislation, cash controls, AEO and Commission Regulation (EC) 1875/2006. Emerging threats and new modus operandi were also continuously monitored to formulate appropriate counter-measures.

FRONTIER CONTROL

The main functions of this branch include the inward and outward clearance of sea vessels, pleasure crafts, aircrafts and passengers, censorship of video tapes, DVDs, and software, watching over and escort of non-customed goods, patrols on land and sea in customs areas, supervising the landing and loading of all cargo imported or exported by air, release of accompanied commercial goods; inspection and export certification of accompanied goods subject to VAT refunds, collection of Import & Excise Duties, and VAT, vigilance over importations of restricted and prohibited goods, including flora and fauna.

Yacht Marinas

In 2011, there were 647 arrivals and 544 departures of pleasure crafts from and to EU Member States, which crafts had requested Customs services. Arrivals and departures from and to non-EU Member States amounted to 165 and 95 respectively. Marsamxetto Harbour was responsible for 37% of the total departures, the Grand Harbour for 56%, and Gozo for 7%.

Customs Baggage Room (Seaport)

This Section operated on a 24x7 basis. During the year, 6,252 commercial vessels arrived in Malta, 3,665 of which from non-EU countries, while 6,304 vessels were cleared outwards. These figures relate to all harbours, that is the Grand Harbour, Marsamxetto, Marsaxlokk and Mġarr, Gozo. 46 rummages were conducted on incoming vessels. There were also 142,634 arriving and 132,632 departing passengers to/from Malta via seaport, apart from 489,511 other passengers from cruise liners. There were 21,539 accompanied vehicles which arrived in Malta, and 19,296 such vehicles which departed. The section processed 1,296 Transshipment Shipping Bills, 2,264 duty-free deliveries and 5,134 fuel stores authorizations. Currency spot-checks on incoming/and outgoing passengers totalled 168, while 902 searches were carried out at the various customs areas entry and exit gates.

Airport

A total of 2,997 aircrafts arriving from non-EU countries landed in Malta in 2011. The total Import & Excise Duties and VAT taxes collected amounted to €39,366, with a further €1,445 collected as fines on dutiable goods undeclared by passengers passing through the Green Channel. Freight landed at the airport amounted to 5,378,141 kgs, whilst 4,172,364 kgs. were exported. Passenger arrivals from non-EU countries amounted to 189,459, of whom 6,678 were in transit, whereas 190,070 passengers of whom 6,957 were in transit departed from Malta. 552 currency control checks were carried out on incoming and outgoing passengers. Five seizures were made of meat or meat products, amounting to just over 32 kgs, which goods were all destroyed by incineration. Other roles undertaken by Customs at the airport related to safety and security of EU citizens and others; protection of the environment and flora/fauna species;

safeguard against restricted or illegal importations, including vigilance over counterfeit goods and anti-dumping restrictions. The section operated on a 24x7 basis.

Prohibitions and Restrictions

854 out of a total of 8,728 items of recorded media submitted to Customs for vetting were viewed, and assessed. From these, two were withheld whereas the rest were released. No cases were referred to the Printed Matter Appeals Board. Taxes collected through this function amounted to €26,928.

Detail Section

This Section operated on a 24x7 basis. It was primarily involved in the deployment of Customs officials, particularly Senior Customs Assistants to the various Customs stations or gates. Weekly rosters of duties of Customs Class personnel were prepared and distributed to all section heads and the customs management team. The section was also involved in receiving requests and replying to queries from traders and/or their representatives in connection with attendances rendered by Customs officials. Other functions included the checking and recording of staff attendances. Vacation and sick leave management was carried out in close liaison with the Customs Personnel Section.

JOSEPH P BRINCAT

Director General (Customs)

Treasury Department

INTRODUCTION

The Treasury Department has the responsibility to maintain an effective accounting methodology and relevant accounting systems across Government; monitor and effect disbursements on behalf of line ministries and departments, oversee Government's cash flow position; and raise the necessary finances to service the Government's obligations and commitments.

In order to fulfil its mission statement, the Department is split into two main directorates, namely the Debt Management and the Government Accounts Directorates.

DEBT MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE

The Debt Management Directorate (DMO) was established within the Treasury in December 2006, with responsibilities for the operational dimensions of debt and cash management for the central government and for providing specified funding requirements as authorised by Parliament.

The principal objective of the Directorate in its debt and cash management activities is to raise funds as well as carry out other financial transactions in such a way as to ensure that:

- the central government borrowing programme (short and long term) is financed prudently and cost effectively consistent with an acceptable level of risk;
- the annual debt servicing costs are met at the lowest possible cost;
- the development of the domestic financial markets is given the necessary support; and
- the liquidity of government funds is adequate to meet government's payment obligations as and when they fall due.

ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES

The DMO is organised along functional lines under three main areas: a Front, Middle and Back Office to ensure a clear division of responsibilities. The Front office executes government debt policy regarding the issuance of government securities, the Middle office undertakes market research and analysis, whilst the Back office is responsible for recording, servicing and settlements of central government debt.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR BORROWING

The statutory basis for central government borrowing is set out under the following primary and subsidiary legislation:

- Malta Treasury Bills Act, Cap.133 (relating to the issue of short-term borrowing up to 12 months maximum maturity. The maximum amount of outstanding Treasury bills is established by Parliamentary Resolution. In 2002, the maximum amount was set at €698.80 million);
- Malta Treasury Bills (Dematerialisation) Regulations, 2007;
- Local Loans (Registered Stock and Securities) Ordinance, Cap.161 (relating to terms and conditions applicable to loans authorised to be raised locally by the issue of stock in Malta);
- Local Loans (Registered Stock) Regulations, S.L.161.01;

- Development Loan Act, Cap.229 (in respect of bilateral loans raised outside Malta);
- Government Borrowing and Granting of Loans to the Hellenic Republic Act, 2010 (Act III of 2010);
- Government Borrowing and Granting of Loans to Air Malta PLC Act, Cap.506;
- An annual budget law that authorises the Minister of Finance to raise loans on behalf of the government for an established amount during the financial year by the issuing of securities and provides also the main purposes for which government can apply such borrowing.

Financing Instruments and Operations used in Debt and Cash management

Until now, in order to meet its financing needs, the Government's policy was that of relying, almost exclusively, on issuing euro-denominated financing instruments in the domestic market rather than raising funds on the international markets.

During 2011, as in previous years, the main financing instruments offered to cover the central government funding requirements were Treasury bills (T-bills), being of maturity of 12 months or less, and Malta Government Stock (MGS) – with a maturity ranging between three-year to over 20-year bucket.

The Treasury carried out its cash management operations by conducting public auctions of Treasury bills on a weekly basis. While T-bills are primarily issued to cover the temporary revenue shortfalls incurred by the Government, at the same time, such issuances maintain liquidity in the domestic Treasury bills market. T-bills issued to investors through such auctions are listed and traded on the Malta Stock Exchange.

The conventional Fixed Rate MGS remains the Treasury's primary financial instrument, by which it funded the long-term borrowing programme for 2011. The Fixed Rate MGS issues were offered in the maturity structure between 6-year and 20-year buckets. As in the past two years, alongside the Fixed Rate MGSs, Treasury continued to offer Floating Rate MGS linked to the six-month Euribor through the auction system primarily intended for the institutional investors. The MGSs are listed and traded on the Malta Stock Exchange.

In November 2011, the Treasury introduced a Malta Government Stock Switch Auctions Programme – to be conducted over a three-year period – as part of its issuance strategy for lengthening and smoothing the interest and redemption profile of the existing MGSs debt portfolio and also, to some extent, to provide an opportunity for institutional investors to diversify the maturity of their bond portfolios.

Prior to the launching of this Switch/Conversion Offer – on a voluntary basis – the Treasury held a consultation exercise with the main market players and stakeholders to discuss and consider their views.

Malta Government Stock Financing Operations in 2011

During 2011, the Debt Management Office managed to achieve its funding programme announced at the beginning of the year even though market volatility was high for most of the year especially towards the second part of the year.

In terms of the Budget Measures Implementation Act (Act No IV of 2011) the total amount of MGS financing for 2011 was set not to exceed €570 million.

The funding programme was mainly applied for the purpose of:

- redeeming MGS issues of €128 million;
- financing the deficit estimated at €196 million;
- financing of four loan tranches to Hellenic Republic totalling €34 million (actual €30.8 m);
- financing a loan of €52 million to the national airline to support its restructuring programme; and
- effecting changes in Central Government's debt portfolio in line with Government's debt management policies by reducing the outstanding amount of T-Bills by €120 million (actual).

Issuance Strategy

In view of the uncertainty prevailing in the international markets at the time, the Directorate adopted a front-loaded issuance programme with the result that by end of May 2011 it successfully financed 70% of the Treasury borrowing programme.

The total sum raised in 2011 through the issuance programme of three MGS, held during the months of February, May, and November, reached €569.6 million as illustrated in the table below.

In line with the Indicative Issuance Calendar issued in January 2011, the issuance strategy focused mainly on the fixed-rate euro denominated stocks with a maturity horizon biased towards the medium and long term. Two new MGSs were launched: a six-year maturity bucket, maturing in 2017, mainly to cater for the banking sector, and a 20-year MGS maturing in 2031, with the aim of satisfying the growing demand for long-term paper by the insurance sector and fund managers.

In conjunction with the fixed-rate stock, the Directorate continued on its policy to promote diversification in the domestic financial market by issuing a number of floating-rate stocks, linked to the six-month Euribor. The ratio of floating rate stock to the total portfolio of MGS increased from 1.9% in 2010 to 3.5% in 2011.

Issuance Strategy (€ million)					
Issuance month	6-Year	20-Year	3-Year FRN	TOTAL	Bid-to-Cover
February	115.06	84.72	-	199.78	2.72
May	89.92	59.91	52.00	201.83	1.98
November	19.07	124.92	24.00	167.99	2.74
Total	224.05	269.55	76.00	569.60	2.44

Source: DMO internal records

Demand for the government paper by institutional investors and members of the public was strong for each of the three MGS issues held during 2011. Altogether, the average bid-to-cover ratio for 2011 was 2.44 compared with a ratio of 2.10 for 2010.

In line with Government's allocation policy, subscriptions by members of the public (offered at a pre-offer price) were given preference over bids tendered at the auction by institutional investors. To a certain extent, this has crowded out allocation for institutional investors with the result that the demand for MGS by institutional investors could not be met in full.

In addition to the above issuances, two MGSs amounting to a total of €3.32 million were issued in June 2011 in partial settlement of ex-church property transfer.

The following table illustrates the ratio allotted by auction to total applications accepted and the ratio of bids accepted against bids received.

Demand vs Allotment of Bids by institutional investors					
Issuance	Security Issued	Total Allotment	Allotted by Auction	% of Total Allotment	% of bids accepted/ all bids received
		€ millions	€ millions		
Feb	4.25% MGS 2017	115.1	62.5	54%	33%
	5.25% MGS 2030	84.7	29.5	35%	97%
	Total	199.8	92.0	46%	42%
May	4.25% MGS 2017	89.9	56.0	62%	71%
	5.25% MGS 2030	59.9	26.0	43%	51%
	FRN MGS 2013	52.0	52.0	100%	51%
	Total	201.8	134.0	66%	58%
Nov	4.25% MGS 2017	19.1	3.0	16%	3%
	5.25% MGS 2030	124.9	6.9	6%	10%
	FRN MGS 2014	24.0	24.0	100%	54%
	Total	168.0	33.9	20%	16%

Source: DMO internal records

Bond Switch Operation

In the early 2000s, the Government adopted a strategy of issuing a series of fungible MGS issues to reduce the fragmentation of its debt portfolio. Also, it was intended to establish a number of benchmark bonds to increase depth and liquidity in the market and at the same time to create the minimum critical mass necessary for a possible international issuance in the future. Following the onset of the international financial crisis of 2008-09, the idea of an international issuance was postponed indefinitely. Such issuance strategy has resulted in the accumulation of MGSs due for redemption during the period 2012 -2014.

In order to address this issue, during the third quarter of 2011, the Treasury held a consultation exercise with the main market players and stakeholders to discuss and consider their views on the introduction of a 3-Year Bond Switch Auction Programme – on a voluntary basis - with a view to lengthen and smoothen the interest and redemption profile of the existing MGSs debt portfolio. At the same time, this issuance strategy, to some extent, provides an opportunity for institutional investors to diversify the maturity of their bond portfolios. In November 2011, the Treasury conducted the bond switch operation and as a result, the level of MGS maturing in 2012 was reduced from €5096 million to €349.7 million, in which €160 million in the 5.7% MGS 2012 (II) (source stock) were exchanged for €158 million in the 4.3% MGS 2016 (IV) (destination stock) by auction on a bid price basis. The exchange had a neutral effect on the Debt/GDP ratio and also avoided any negative effect on the budget deficit.

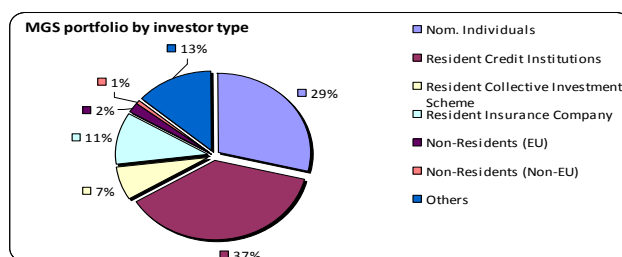
The second and third stage of this exercise will be conducted in 2012 and 2013 with a view to reducing the roll-over levels for the years 2013-2014 by a maximum of €200 million in each year.

Distribution by investor type

Chart 1 below illustrates the sectoral distribution of outstanding MGS as at end of December 2011. Out of the outstanding total, 37% is held by resident commercial banks, 29% is held by domestic retail investors while resident Insurance Companies held 11%. Holdings by non-residents accounted for only 2% of outstanding MGS. The fact that the vast majority of Malta Government debt is held domestically acts as a cushion against external market volatility.

During 2011, it was observed that there was a growing interest by the resident insurance sector as by end of November 2011 it was the third largest holder of Malta Government Stocks (MGS) after the resident credit institutions and resident individuals. In particular, the insurance sector has shown interest in the long term MGSs to obtain a better maturing matching between their long term liabilities and assets.

Chart 1 – MGS Holder Distribution as at 31st December 2011



Source: DMO internal records

Borrowing for on-lending purposes

- Loan Facility Agreement (Hellenic Republic):** After raising €30 million in 2010, under the Government Borrowing and Granting of Loans to the Hellenic Republic, Act 2010, the Treasury issued a second tranche of €24 million in November 2011, via a Floating Rate MGS maturing in 2014, linked to the six-month Euribor plus a spread of 45 basis points (bps). The issuance of this security was intended for financial institutions and was fully subscribed. During 2011, four tranches amounting to €308 million were disbursed to the Hellenic Republic under the Loan Facility Agreement entered into in May 2010.

- *Loan Facility Agreement (Air Malta Plc)*: Following the enactment of Act XVIII of 2010, which authorises the raising of loans for the purposes of entering into re-lending agreement between the Malta Government and AirMalta Plc, the Treasury issued a floating rate note linked to Euribor (plus 45bps) maturing in 2013. Under this issuance, the Treasury raised a nominal value of €52 million, which was loaned to Air Malta in four tranches spread throughout late 2010 and 2011.

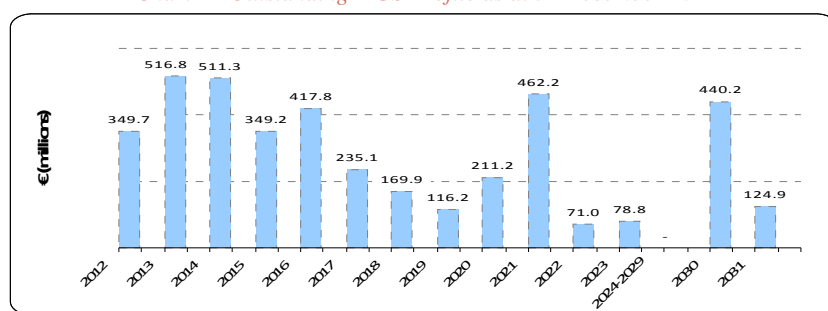
Maturity Profile

The outstanding nominal value of MGS as at 31 December 2011, reached € 4,054.2 million.

Chart 2 illustrates that the distribution of the MGSs maturity profile lies skewed to the left, with 42.6% of total outstanding MGS maturing during the period 2012-2015.

As a result of strategic measures being undertaken by the Directorate, both the skew of the maturity profile and the weighted average maturity (WAM) of MGSs have now improved, notably the WAM which has reached 6.80 years compared to 6.60 years at 2010.

Chart 2 - Outstanding MGS Profile as at 31 December 2011

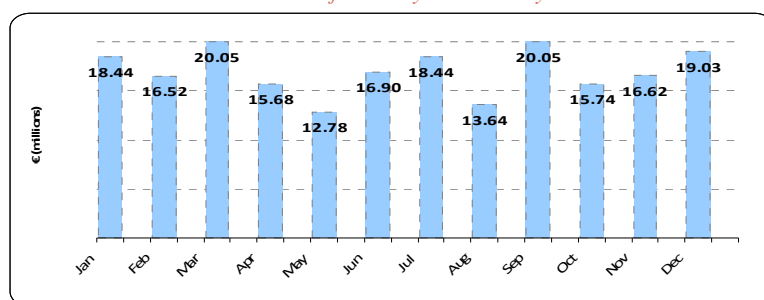


Source: DMO internal records

Cost of Borrowing

During 2011, the total interest payments on MGSs amounted to €203.89 million. Such payments of interest throughout the year were spread as illustrated in Chart 3.

Chart 3 - Distribution of Monthly Interest Payments on MGS



Source: DMO internal records

As interest payments for 2011 have increased by 9.5% year on year while the outstanding MGS balance increased by 12.3%, it resulted that the average amount of interest paid during 2011 on outstanding debt has actually decreased. In fact, the weighted average coupon (WAC) in 2011 has dropped to 5.19% from 5.41% a year earlier.

Treasury Bills

In line with Government's debt management policy in effecting changes in its debt portfolio by placing more emphasis on long-term loans rather than on short-term borrowing, the Treasury managed to reduce the stock of outstanding T-Bills at end of 2011 by €120 million.

Issuance Strategy

Total offers of T-bills accepted and redeemed by the Treasury during 2011 in respect to each tenor are presented in the table below.

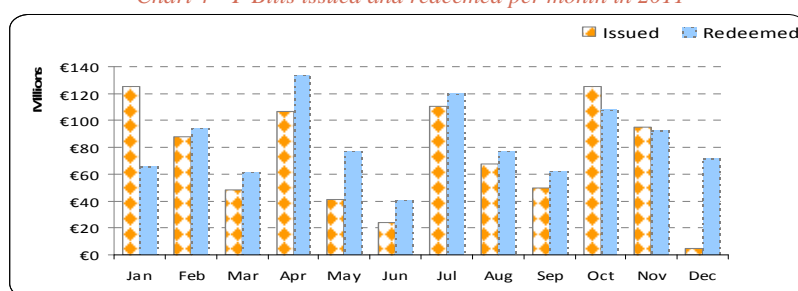
It is remarked that such issuance strategy, which focused mainly on the 91-day and the 182-day tenor (equivalent to 56% and 21% of total issuance respectively), is in line with that for the preceding year. The weighted average maturity (WAM) also remained fairly constant vis-à-vis 2010, with the duration for T-bills issued in 2011 being 132 days, decreasing from 142 days a year earlier.

T-Bills issued by tenor in 2011			
Tenor	Amount issued(€ million)	% of Total	Amount redeemed
28	€72.9€	8%	€72.9€
91	€491.3€	56%	€401.9€
182	€187.8€	21%	€326.8€
273	€132.7€	15%	€203.0€
364	€0	0%	€0
Total Issuance	€884.9	100%	1,004.78

Source: DMO internal records

Chart 4 shows that on a monthly basis the level of T-bills redemptions - except for three months - was higher than the level of issues, thus leading to a reduction in outstanding stock of treasury bills of €119.86 million year-on-year.

Chart 4 - T-Bills issued and redeemed per month in 2011

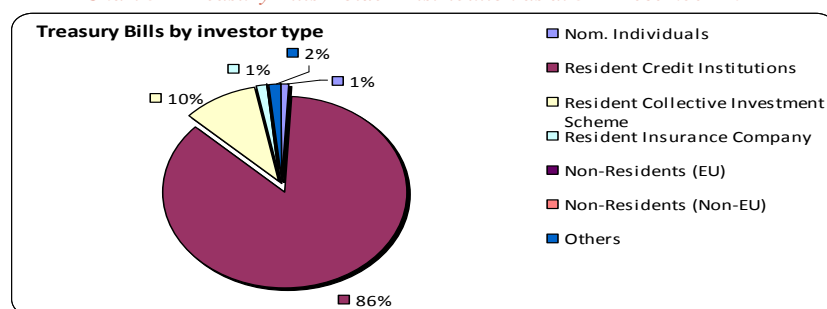


Source: DMO internal records

Distribution by investor type

Chart 5 illustrates the distribution of outstanding T-bills categorised by investor type. Auctions are regularly oversubscribed by the various participants. As at 31 December 2011, 86% of outstanding treasury bills were held by resident credit institutions, followed by collective investment schemes (10%).

Chart 5 – Treasury Bills Holder Distribution as at 31st December 2011

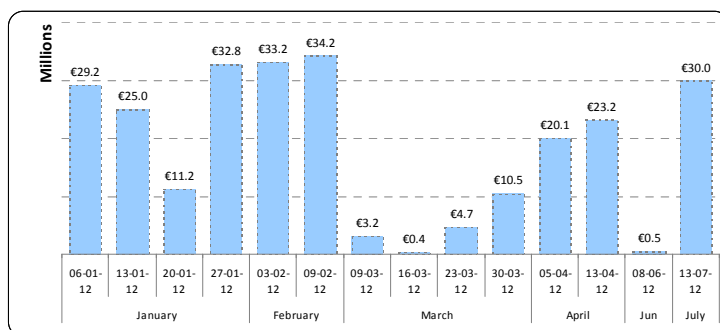


Source: DMO internal records

Redemption Profile

At end December 2011, the nominal value of outstanding T-bills stood at €257.90 million and its redemption profile is presented in Chart 6.

Chart 6 - Outstanding Treasury Bills as at end 2011



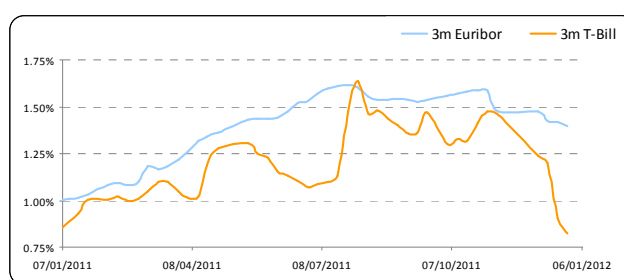
Source: DMO internal records

Yields & Cost of Borrowing

Throughout the year, the weighted average rate of the accepted bids in respect of the 91 and 182-day was lower than the prevailing average Euribor rate on auction date, except for one occasion. However, as a result of higher money market rates, the weighted average yield for the accepted bids at all maturities throughout the year was 1.335%, being an increase of 0.925% over 2010. The primary market yields for the 91-day T-bill fluctuated between a maximum of 1.637% (on 2 August 2011), and a minimum of 0.824% (on 27 December 2011). The primary market yield of the 182-day T-bill peaked at 1.799% (on 9 August 2011) and was lowest at 1.041% (on 14 January 2011). The servicing cost accrued on new T-bills issued in 2011 reached €4.32 million compared to €4.51 million for 2010 (- €0.19 million), whereas the cost incurred on maturing T-bills during 2011 was €4.63 million compared to €6.03 million (- €1.42 million for 2010).

Chart 7 shows that during 2011 the 91-day T-bill yield outperformed the three-month Euribor rates.

Chart 7 - 3m Euribor vs. 3 month T-bill rates



Source: DMO internal records; European Banking Federation (www.euribor-ebf.eu)

Developments in the MGS Primary & Secondary Markets during 2011

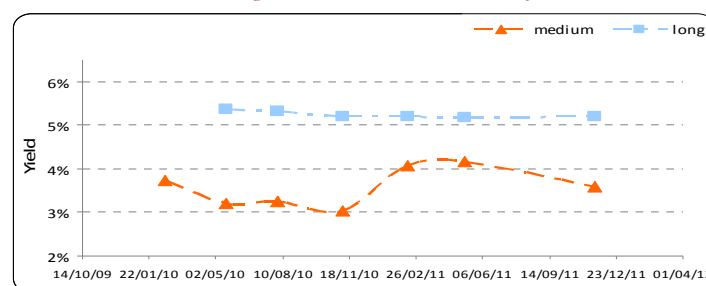
The year 2011 was again characterised by a high volatile market conditions in many sovereign debt markets especially in the Eurozone. While the borrowing cost for peripheral countries in the Eurozone surged on sustainability concerns, the borrowing cost for the Malta Government Stocks was stable throughout 2011 both in the six-year (medium) and the 20-year (long) maturity buckets.

Primary Market

Chart 8 illustrates the comparative accepted ISMA yields in each primary market issue during 2010 and 2011. In 2011, average medium term yields were higher than the equivalent 2010 yields. On the other

hand, the average 20-year yield was lower in 2011 compared to 2010. Yet the average six-year yield accepted in the last issuance of 2011 declined remarkably when compared to previous issuances of similar maturity in 2011.

Chart 8 - Medium & Long Term Yields on the Primary Market 2010-2011



Source: DMO internal records

As can be seen from the table below, the spreads attained during the first half of 2011 were narrower than those attained in the first half of 2010. The positive trend was reversed in the last auction of 2011 (held in November) where the spread against the German Bund widened in comparison to issuances that took places in the first six months of the year.

Spread Over Bund in Primary Market					
Year	Issuance	Medium term		Long term	
		Retail	Auction	Retail	Auction
2010	Feb	+125bps	+98bps	-	-
	May	+123bps	+148bps	+169bps	+199bps
	Aug	+135bps	+133bps	+192bps	+185bps
	Nov	+134bps	-	+220bps	-
2011	Feb	+119bps	+96bps	+134bps	+126bps
	May	+118bps	+119bps	+140bps	+143bps
	Nov	+249bps	+211bps	+269bps	+229bps

Source: DMO internal records; Deutsche Bundesbank (www.bundesbank.de)

This illustrates the contrast between a fairly calm first half of the year, during which market analysts perceived to be in line with what had been seen in 2010, and an extremely volatile second half of 2011, which led many market participants to switch to a risk-off attitude which, among other things, led to the appreciation in the price of the Bund.

Secondary Market

The following table illustrates how the benchmark MGS yields moved throughout 2011 on the secondary market. Figures refer to yields sampled at regular intervals throughout the year representing closing bid prices at which the Central Bank of Malta broker actually traded or would have been prepared to buy on the dealing date.

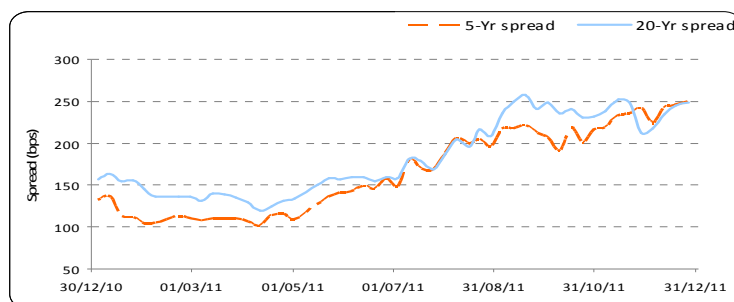
MGS Yields in secondary market			
Term	Lowest	Highest	Average
2-Yr	1.97%	2.86%	2.43%
5-Yr	3.11%	3.81%	3.48%
10-Yr	4.05%	4.74%	4.44%
20-Yr	4.97%	5.23%	5.10%

Source: Central Bank of Malta (www.centralbankmalta.org)

Chart 9 displays the evolution of sampled MGS and German Bund yields for the five and 20-year tenors during 2011. The general pattern is similar for both tenors, with spreads widening consistently as from mid-April onwards as bund yields plunged due to heightened uncertainty caused by the eurozone

sovereign debt crisis. The overall ‘flight to quality’ led Bund yields to reach record lows during 2011, as investors rushed to buy the safest government bonds in the euro zone.

Chart 9 – Spreads MGS vs. Bund (5yr & 20yr)



Source: DMO internal records; Financial Times; Bloomberg

In some instances, the two curves intersect, suggesting that apprehension by market participants in the shorter term was higher than in the long term as pressure on the five-year Bund yield increased the spread whereas the 20-year would move at a slower pace.

Foreign Loans

Bilateral loans with foreign entities are specifically undertaken to finance large capital projects. A total of €13.12 million was repaid throughout 2011, according to the repayment schedule, resulting in an end-of-year balance of €74.58 million. Interest costs incurred in servicing these loans amounted to €3.91 million. The majority of Government’s bilateral agreements are denominated in Euros as shown in the table below:

Foreign debt and distribution by currency (in € equivalent)						
	Euro	GBP	JPY	USD	CAD	Total
Amount (€ equivalent)	€73,330,228	€54,629	€233,609	€726,134	€236,474	€74,071,074
%	98.32%	0.07%	0.31%	0.97%	0.32%	100.00%

Exchange rates as at 30th December 2011.

Source: DMO internal records; Central Bank of Malta (www.centralbankmalta.org)

Relations with other institutions

Credit Rating Agencies

In July 2011, the DMO participated in the annual meeting held at the Ministry of Finance with Standard and Poor’s during which debt management matters were discussed. The Directorate also regularly answers requests for data put forward by other credit rating agencies.

EFC sub-committee on EU Sovereign Debt Markets (ESDM)

The DMO attended meetings of the Economic and Financial Committee (EFC) Sub-committee on EU Government Bills and Bonds Markets in Brussels. The main objectives of the sub-committee are to promote further the integration and achieve a better functioning of the EU government bond markets.

During the course of 2011, the Debt Management Directorate jointly with officials from CBM participated in five meetings during which issues relevant to the functioning of markets and the potential impact of policy decisions on sovereign debt markets were discussed.

In this context the preparation of the Collective Action Clauses (CACs) took prominent place in the discussions. After the Eurogroup statement of 28 November 2010, followed by the signing of the Treaty Establishing the European Stability Mechanism on 11 July 2011, standardised and identical Collective

Action Clauses (CACs) shall be included for all new euro area government securities with maturity above one year with effect from 1 January 2013.

National Audit Office

In July 2011, the National Audit Office (NAO) received a questionnaire about the practices of public debt management in Malta from the Swedish National Audit Office.

For this purpose, two representatives from the NAO called at the Directorate to assist them in completing the detailed questionnaire, which was in turn forwarded by the NAO to the Swedish National Audit Office in September 2011.

Other Institutions

The Directorate participated in the meeting with DG ECFIN held at the Ministry of Finance in October 2011, in connection with the Autumn Forecast Mission. Among other things, the meeting discussed matters relating to debt management issues.

The DMO participated also in meetings with various foreign financial institutions who had shown interest to meet the DMO and Central Bank of Malta to demonstrate their capabilities in terms of sovereign debt market activities and to update on the ongoing developments in the international capital markets, in particular the euro-area sovereign debt markets.

In its capacity as advisor to Malta Government on financial matters, Central Bank of Malta assisted the Directorate in the pricing process of new issuances of Malta Government Stock.

Draft Legislation

Draft legislation was drawn up to regulate the raising of loans by the Government of Malta, to make provisions, in place of the Local Loans (Registered Stock & Securities) Ordinance, for the creation and issue of stock, to provide for the manner in which Loan Guarantees shall be issued, and to provide for the establishment of a Debt Management Directorate and for other matters related thereto.

In November 2011, the draft legislation was forwarded to the other members of the legal team for their consideration and to solicit any proposals or amendments which they wish to submit for further evaluation by the Ministry of Finance.

Staff Training and Development

The Directorate continued to invest in the training of its human resources, both through in-house programmes and through external courses organised by local and foreign institutions. During 2011, a number of initiatives were undertaken and various opportunities were offered to its staff to attend training courses, seminars and annual conferences organised by institutions both locally and abroad. These included: Technical Assistance on Funding Policy & Risk Management, hosted by Dutch State Treasury Agency; and Professional Assertiveness Workshop, hosted by CDRT.

Support Services

The Directorate continued to offer guidance and provide the necessary service to the heirs of deceased stockholders so that inherited stocks can be transferred in their name by a procedure initiated through the heirs' own legal adviser.

The Directorate received 303 new claims from the heirs' legal advisers requesting the transmission of MGS from deceased stockholders to their clients. Settled claims reached 297, out of which 195 were lodged during 2011 and 102 related to claims which were pending from previous years.

Online Services

In February 2011, the Debt Management section within the Treasury website was revamped to include new information in an effort to better meet the needs of the clients in a faster and more efficient manner. Among other things these include:

- the publication of Treasury bills weekly auction results;
- weekly bid analysis of Treasury bills;
- tender forms for Treasury bills;
- Malta Government Stocks auction results;
- monthly issuance calendar for Treasury bills;
- the yearly indicative issuance calendar of Government Securities;
- various reports, both of a technical and an informative nature;
- new guidelines intended for the heirs of deceased stockholders in respect of *causa mortis* claims was launched.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS DIRECTORATE

The main functions of the Government Accounts Directorate of the Treasury are to maintain an effective accounting methodology and accounting systems across Government; exercise a monitoring role on the disbursements of public funds and report fairly and truthfully the financial position of Government.

CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNTS UNIT

During the year 2011, the Consolidated Accounts Unit processed the under-mentioned local payments which included the cheques issued by the Government as Energy Support Measures and refunds which reflected differences between the old and the new registration tax regime.

Batches	Cheques	Value (€)
14,489	144,278	289,146,291
<i>consisting of:</i>		
DAS	141,733	287,953,808
ARMS	1,865	149,203
LICENSING & TESTING	680	1,043,280

REPORTS

Apart from the day-to-day duties, this Unit performed other duties namely: the issue of ad hoc reports for the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, the National Office of Statistics and the Central Bank of Malta. Besides, other reports as required by the law were presented by this Section in due time. These reports included the Annual Report regarding Section 65 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, the Annual Financial Report, the Comparative Report regarding Expenditure and Income, and the publication in connection with the position of the Consolidated Fund which is issued every three months.

CASH OFFICE

As in previous years, the bank reconciliation of the Public Account was undertaken by the Cash Office. Automated and manual reconciliation for 2011 is 69% complete. Liaison and coordination with MITA and departments was maintained to ensure that the process progressed smoothly. Final touches on developments in the new Bank Reconciliation Statement are being carried out, and are expected to be implemented soon.

During the first months of this year, this section continued with the gathering of balances of bank accounts held by ministries/departments at the Central Bank of Malta and local commercial banks.

Every effort is being made to increase SEPA payments. Treasury Pensions payments were paid by SEPA for the first time in January 2011, together with payments in respect of travelling subsistence allowance and other various payments.

A total of 1,116 stop payments and 562 Garnishee Orders were handled during 2011.

BANK TRANSACTIONS UNIT

The Bank Transactions Unit is responsible for effecting overseas and local payments. The following table illustrates the number of transactions by category effected by the Unit during 2011.

Transaction Type	Number	Value €
Credit Advice	3	-523,298
Debit Advice (Local)*	3,115	1,458,847,440
Debit advice (Foreign)	138	11,577,273
Funds transfers	4,627	123,857,164
Draft	520	1,662,579
Letter of Credit	3	226,036
Travel	5,253	3,116,596

() Debit Advices issued by salaries and public debt are not included.*

VERIFICATIONS UNIT

The main objective of this Unit is to carry out the verification of payments being processed and other payments already processed and paid by government departments, as defined in Legal Notice 185 of 2007, amending the General Financial Regulations. Verification officers are responsible to:

- verify that the incidence of charge is correct;
- verify that the payment will not cause an excess on the provision authorised for the service;
- verify that adequate information has been given on the voucher on the nature of the services rendered or the supplies delivered;
- verify that the certificate has been signed by the proper officer.

The aim of this process is to ensure proper spending of public funds and that all payments are effected according to standing financial regulations.

Batches of Payment Vouchers for Verification

During the year under review, authorised officers within this section carried out verifications on batches containing payment vouchers which were processed for payment during 2010 and 2011 as follows:

Total verified Batches for 2010: 73
Total verified Batches for 2011: 191

A report in respect of the verifications carried out is prepared on a quarterly basis.

Identified Weaknesses

A number of weaknesses were identified during verification including: lack of VAT receipts from suppliers; copies of fuel requisition and issue notes provided instead of the originals; incorrect invoice number on payment voucher; payment vouchers/abstract without authorised signature; incorrect incidence of charge; itemised telephone bills not provided; payments under a factoring agreement not always indicated; and backdated invoices, amongst others.

Furthermore, verification officers requested clarifications through the submission of copies of tender documents, contracts, and other approvals from Financial Management and Monitoring Unit and the

Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, as the case may be, in order to confirm adherence to the Financial Regulations.

Whenever a high risk area was encountered, the National Audit Office and the Budget office were informed so that action could be taken.

Travel

Verifications of post travel documentation on visits abroad are undertaken by the Verifications Unit.

During 2010, checking of pre-travel and post travel documentation was carried out and departments instructed, wherever omissions were noted, to abide by established procedures. A system of close coordination between Treasury and the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment was strengthened ensuring that departments strictly followed regulations.

During the year, Treasury continued with the maintenance of the 2005-2010 travel databases and enhanced the 2011 database. Verification of documents was performed on overseas travel effected in 2010 and 2011. Figures show that 4,021 visits abroad were recorded for 2011, divided as follows: training courses 45; official business 3,976.

ACCOUNTING METHODOLOGY AND CONTROL

Accounting Methodology and Compliance Unit

The Accounting Methodology and Compliance Unit is primarily responsible for collecting and checking accrual accounting returns submitted by government departments on a quarterly basis. It continuously monitors the data submitted by the departments so that if any irregularities are noted in the reporting the officers concerned are contacted to clarify the issues in question. Moreover, this Unit provides continuous support both via e-mail and through phone calls when the departments contact this Unit for support while compiling the accrual accounting data.

Furthermore, this Unit issues circulars to departments as guidance on how to compile the templates. In cases where departments encounter difficulties when it comes to applying the procedures outlined in these circulars, the officers concerned are called to the Unit in order to clarify their issues and to give them further guidance.

Thus, the primary objective is to obtain an accurate picture of the financial position and performance as the data collated will be used to prepare the financial statements under the accrual accounting methodology, which at this stage are being produced for internal consumption only.

In 2008 an Accrual Accounting Working Group (AAWG) was formed through the mandate of the Permanent Secretary MFEI. This working group was chaired by Director, Government Accounts, Treasury and other members included representatives from MITA and the Internal Audit and Investigations Department as observers. The ultimate objective of the AAWG was to discuss and scrutinise the accrual based financial statements of ministries/departments and to ensure that they were submitting relevant and reliable accrual accounting information. The WG concluded its remit since by end 2011 it had met with each department and ministry.

Another function of this Unit is the collation of the yearly End of Year Stores Written Off and Cash Losses Return and End of Year Statements of Account Arrears of Revenue Return from ministries and departments. First-level checking on these returns is performed prior to onward transmission to the Auditor General.

This Unit also has a role in the 'Excessive Deficit Procedure' Notification. It ensures that ministries and departments submit the end-of year accruals forecasts on a quarterly basis. First-level verifications on the forecasts submitted are performed after which the data is forwarded to NSO and Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment – EDP Working Group.

This Unit is also responsible for the accounting and monitoring of Direct and Indirect Investments, Loan Receivables and Trust Funds. Following receipt of relevant information from the responsible authorities, Treasury records the relevant transactions in the Government Accounting System (DAS) using the historical cost basis for unquoted investments or fair value for quoted investments. The ultimate aim is to report the financial assets position in the Financial Report (Cash Based) and in the Financial Statements (Accrual-Based).

EU Funds Management

The role of the EU Funds Management Unit is to ensure the efficient management and control of the EU Funds allocations. In 2011, the EU Funds falling under the direct responsibility of the unit comprised of the: Cohesion Funds 2004-2006; ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund falling under Cohesion Policy 2007-2013; SOLID Funds; European Fisheries Fund (EFF); EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism; Swiss Maltese Cooperation Programme 2007-2017.

During the year under review, the EUF MU cooperated with all the stakeholders involved with the above mentioned funds. This cooperation included the participation in numerous meetings held both in a holistic and in bilateral circumstances.

During 2011, the final payments with regard to the Cohesion Funds 2004-2006 Programme were processed. Following reconciliation, said bank account will be closed in 2012 and all the residual balance will be passed to revenue.

NOEL CAMILLERI

Director General (Treasury)

Economic Policy Department

BACKGROUND

The Economic Policy Department (EPD) provides Government with expert advice and assistance in the formulation of economic policy and the management of economic activity, with the aim of attaining the Government's overall objectives of economic growth and development, high employment and low inflation. Attention is devoted towards the achievement of a stable macroeconomic framework, also by attaining an appropriate fiscal policy. Furthermore, the EPD assists in the formulation of policy in areas which are crucial to Malta's economic development including sustainable growth, productivity and competitiveness, financial stability, labour market, investment, tourism, education, creativity, innovation and the environment. Within this context, the EPD provides the Government with the relevant technical input, so that the implementation of policy measures is done within the framework of Malta's economic developmental goals.

The Department also provides technical advice and assistance to the Government on international economic/trade issues. Through its participation in Commission Working Parties and Trade Policy Committee formations, the Department monitors and advises on the economic/financial impact of issues and strategies concerning the EU's Common Commercial Policy. Furthermore, the Department assists Government by providing economic analysis of policy issues emanating from Malta's participation in a host of international, regional, bilateral and multilateral institutions. The EPD also provides support to other government entities whose area of activity may be affected by EU initiatives with third countries in the area of international trade and investment.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY DIRECTORATE

The EPD is responsible for the evaluation of economic policies proposed by Government. The Department is also responsible to give policy advice and come up with recommendations based primarily on technical economic analyses, research, modelling and forecasting. Its main areas of responsibility range from structural policies, fiscal policy, economic and fiscal governance frameworks, forecasting, financial stability and EU economic and budgetary affairs.

Budgetary Process

The Department participates in the budgetary process by providing information on the domestic and international economic situation, the macroeconomic outlook and the EU's fiscal surveillance process. This information acts as an important input in the budgetary process ensuring that the fiscal policy stance is appropriate to the macroeconomic conditions and targets and also in compliance with EU fiscal requirements.

During 2011, the EPD participated in the preparation of the Pre-Budget Document 2012, providing technical input ranging from the analysis of fiscal conditions and macroeconomic imbalances in preparation to the new Excessive Imbalance Procedure to analyses and recommendations on human resource development and economic growth strategy.

Throughout the year, the Department also provided an important input to the analysis of the fiscal situation and projections within the context of the EU's fiscal surveillance mechanism and the obligations of the Stability and Growth Pact.

EU Economic and Fiscal Policy Coordination

The EPD continued to participate actively in the EU's economic policy coordination processes. In particular, the Department participated in the Economic and Financial Committee (Alternates) and the Economic Policy Committee, including the Eurogroup composition of the respective committees. In addition, the Department also provided support for the preparations of the Economic and Financial Committee meetings.

In view of the new European Semester and the EU2020 strategy, the Economic Strategy Directorate was actively involved in joint EFCA/EPC/EMCO discussions and deliberations on the Council Specific Recommendations to Malta, particularly in the area of wage bargaining and wage indexation, on pension reform, on budgetary objectives and the compliance with SGP requirements and the strengthening of budgetary frameworks.

The EPD also participated in a number of working groups attached to the EPC. In particular, the Department is actively involved in the Working Group on Ageing Populations (AWG) which examines the economic and budgetary consequences of ageing. Moreover, it also participates in other working groups of the EPC, namely the Output Gaps Working Group, the Joint EFC-EPC Working Group on the Economic and Financial Aspects of Climate Change and the Lisbon Methodology Working Group (LIME).

During the year, the Department was very active in LIME due to the technical work, which was required in preparation for the completion of the scoreboard of macroeconomic imbalance indicators which will eventually be used as part of the new Excessive Imbalance Procedure. The Department was also assisted by the Central Bank of Malta and the National Statistics Office in order to prepare technical feedback in preparation for the LIME meetings.

The Department also monitors closely developments in the Labour Market Working Group and the Quality of Public Finances Working Group. In addition it gave technical advice on labour market issues, particularly on wage indexation and wage bargaining, to the Maltese representation on the Employment Committee (EMCO).

The EPD is also engaged in the preparation of briefings for the ECOFIN and Eurogroup meetings as well as for meetings of other Council formations and for the European Council meetings. In this context, it is noteworthy that during 2011, the Department provided feedback towards and within various Committee formations contributing towards improving economic governance and tackling the economic and financial crisis, at an EU level, and more importantly, at a euro area level. The Department contributed towards these goals within the tight framework inherent in the European Semester which is a six-month period every year during which the Member States' budgetary and structural policies are reviewed to detect in advance any emerging imbalances which could jeopardise the functioning of the EU and the Euro area in particular. Moreover, the EPD provided feedback during the consultation process regarding the Commission's legislative proposals to strengthen economic governance. This legislative package came into force during the year so as to ensure the effective implementation of the new economic and fiscal surveillance arrangements. Finally, the Department also provided feedback on a number of Reports drawn up by various EU Committees having Maltese representation as well as the EU Parliament, as requested. This Department provides such feedback from an economic perspective in line with Malta's position taken in the various EU Committee meetings and Council formations mentioned earlier.

During 2011, the Economic Policy Department continued to provide information on the domestic economic situation and on the economic policies and measures that are being pursued by Government to

the EU and other relevant parties. In particular, the Department coordinates closely with Commission officials from DG ECFIN and provides the requested information in connection with the EU's fiscal and economic surveillance process. Bilateral meetings were held both in Malta as well as in Brussels with Commission officials from DG ECFIN on the fiscal situation, on economic forecasts and on structural economic issues such as the EU2020 strategy, pension reform and wage indexation and wage bargaining processes.

In 2011, the Department was also actively engaged in the technical economic analysis related to the EU2020 strategy and the National Reform Programme (NRP) co-ordinated by the Planning Priorities Directorate (PPD) with the line ministries. The EPD assisted the PPD to ensure proper coordination between the thematic aspects of the draft NRP and the macroeconomic aspects. This Department also assisted various line ministries, departments and entities in order to formulate structural economic policy recommendations to be included in the NRP and provided technical assistance in order to ensure that the fiscal and economic impact of policy recommendations included in the NRP were quantified. It was also involved in the formulation of the NRP submitted to the European Commission in April 2011.

Due to the unfolding of the most extensive financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression,, financial stability issues have increasingly featured in the EU economic policy coordination framework. This necessitated the strengthening of the required institutional capacity and knowledge of the Department in this area. This helped the EPD to participate effectively in discussions conducted within the EU economic policy coordination processes relating to financial stability. EPD also provided support for the preparations of the Financial Stability Table composition of the Economic and Financial Committee meetings, while also following participating within the EU Financial Services Committee. The Financial Services Committee was set up by the Ecofin Council with a mandate to provide for cross-sectoral strategic reflection, to help to define the medium and long-term strategy for financial services issues, to consider sensitive short-term issues, to assess progress and implementation, and to provide political advice and oversight on both internal issues (e.g. single market) and external issues (e.g. WTO). This Committee is paramount due to the shortcomings found in the regulation and supervision of the banking and financial industry, which was one of the factors that contributed to the crisis.

A Task Force on Coordinated Action was set up in order to draft a euro area crisis management system which would provide the ultimate backstop mechanism for distressed euro area countries that would file a request for financial assistance. This crisis management system would have the objective of fostering financial stability throughout the single currency area by enhancing investor, depositor and consumer confidence.

Representation on the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development

The Economic Policy Department is represented in the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development and during 2011 it continued to participate actively in its proceedings, providing technical analysis and helping Government to adopt positions on issues which are discussed in the Council. Furthermore, as in previous years, the EPD computed and presented the relevant cost-of-living adjustment for 2011 as stipulated in the Incomes Policy Agreement of 1990. In April, the Department presented the members of the MCESD with an update of the Inflation Report. The Department was also tasked with the preparation and the presentation of a study on the impact of inflation on vulnerable households in Malta.

During 2011, the Department also gave presentations to the Malta-EU Steering Action Committee relating to the multi-financial framework for the period 2014-2020, including a brief regarding the Commission proposal with respect to related issues, as well as the latest Malta position regarding each issue.

National Econometric Modelling

The Department has two econometric models of the domestic economy. One model is used to produce short term forecasts for the main macroeconomic indicators. The purpose of the second model is to undertake economic policy simulation exercises and to provide a framework for medium-term forecasts. During 2011, the Department pursued work related to strengthening its econometric modelling capability. The short-term model (STEMM) was used to produce economic forecasts for Spring and Autumn, which were presented during the Economic Forecasts Meetings held between the Commission and the EU Member States. Discussions on these forecasts were held with Malta's desk officer in DG ECFIN. Such forecasts were also used for the preparation of the Budget.

The second disaggregated model (SAMM) is being further fine-tuned in order to reflect better the realities of the Maltese economy and to modify the way in which a number of important relationships within the model are calibrated.

International Institutions

The Economic Policy Department provides information on the performance of the Maltese economy, as well as on Government's economic strategy to representatives of international organisations. As in previous years, the Department contributed in meetings with representatives from credit rating agencies such as Standard and Poor's, Moody's and Fitch. As the credit ratings assigned to Malta bear a direct influence on the interest rate charged on loans raised by Government, the Department assigns significant importance to its interaction with these agencies. During these meetings, the performance of the domestic economy and the policies and measures pursued by Government to address the economic challenges faced by the Maltese economy were discussed.

Financial Stability

The Economic Policy Department continued its work in monitoring and assessing developments in economic and financial conditions. In particular, this included research and regular monitoring with respect to international sovereign debt markets, the EU's and the local legislative frameworks related to financial stability and the financial sector in general, studies and reports conducted by other institutions on financial stability issues, as well as developments in the local financial sector.

Pension Modelling

During 2011, the Economic Policy Department continued to provide technical input to the Pensions Working Group with regards to modelling work on pensions in Malta. Moreover, in 2011, the Economic Policy Department worked actively on the update of the EPC Ageing Working Group long-term budgetary projections exercise. Following the approval of the new demographic projections by Eurostat, a process where the National Statistics Office was actively consulted, the Economic Policy Division embarked upon the process of updating the pension model used in projecting pension expenditure over the long-term. The Department was responsible for running projections for pensions. In addition, the Department, with the help of the Health Authorities, compiled the questionnaire on health and long-term care as requested by Commission Services. This questionnaire, in turn would serve as basis for health and long-term care projections. The process of updating the pension model involved the collation of data on beneficiaries and contributors as well as liaising with the World Bank and the Social Security Department, in order to ensure that the modelling reflected in as far as possible the pension regime in Malta. The Maltese pension system was modelled using the World Bank's model (PROST) and from their part the World Bank assisted in the modelling of the baseline scenario through a mission to Malta in October 2011.

The EPD also provided technical assistance in relation to the estimation of the updates of the Theoretical Pension Replacement Rates 2010-2050 for Malta in an exercise coordinated by the Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee.

Euromod

In 2011, the Economic Policy Department entered into a contract with Essex University in order to assist in the modelling of Malta's tax and benefit system. The key objective of this work was of updating EUROMOD, the tax-benefit microsimulation model, to cover recent policy systems and to upgrade EUROMOD to operate using EU-SILC data as the basis of the input database. Once the model is completed Malta will have at its disposal a very powerful tool for socio-economic policy analysis.

In order to reach this objective, during 2011, the Department fully co-operated with Essex University, the Social Security Department, the National Statistics Office and the Inland Revenue Department. A technical meeting between staff from the Department and the University of Essex was held during the second half of the year, followed by a meeting in Riga in October during which the modellers provided a review on the progress so far and a discussion on the future of EUROMOD as well as the potential for other joint initiatives. The actual building of the model for Malta started in July 2011.

EU Budget

EPD is represented in the Malta Group on Financial Perspectives and provides regular feedback, including briefing notes and technical papers in relation to the EU Budget issues, specifically on its financial aspects. The Department's representatives participated in the meetings of the Core Group on the Review and Modernisation of the EU Budget which was set up with the aim to draw up and continuously update the Malta Position on the new EU Budget framework which will replace the present framework. The representatives drew up and presented policy papers to this Core Group in relation to the EU Budget Reform. Moreover, the Department developed a model forecasting EU Budget receipts and payments for the next financial framework. This will aid Malta in the negotiating process of the EU budget which will start in 2012. EPD representatives also participate in the Friends of Presidency Group meetings and Own Resource Working Party Group meetings at EU level in relation to the EU budget.

Research and Publications

Staff at the Department carries out research work on various economic, fiscal, and financial topics. In April 2011, the Department published an Update of Stability Programme 2011-2014.

In April 2011 the Department published the Inflation Report. This report detailed price developments in Malta, outlining trends in inflation, an analysis of inflation from the macroeconomic perspective as well as providing an outlook for inflation in Malta.

In addition, the Department published the Economic Survey in November 2011. This document, which was presented to the House of Representatives at the beginning of discussions on Government's budgetary estimates, provides a comprehensive analysis of Malta's recent economic performance and emerging economic trends, as well as an overview of international economic developments.

During the second half of 2011, the Department, together with the Central Bank of Malta, was also entrusted to prepare a detailed analysis of the wage bargaining and wage adjustment processes in Malta, with particular reference to the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). This review is also partly compliant with the Council Specific Recommendation to Malta on the same subject.

The Department also participated in discussion with the Central Bank of Malta and the National Statistics Office on the coordination of economic policy with the aim of securing an appropriate environment for economic growth. The Department regularly collaborates with the Central Bank of Malta in areas of mutual interest, as well as to discuss local economic developments and prospects. Furthermore, the Department continued to engage with similar organisations abroad.

Further Developments

Following an internal review of activities within the Economic Policy Department, a new Directorate responsible for Structural Economic Research was set up during November 2011. The functions of the Directorate will mainly involve the development and updating of the economic models within the Economic Policy Department in line with the needs of the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment and the support provided to other Ministries within Government. In addition, the Directorate will spearhead the promotion of the research function across the organisation.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS DIRECTORATE

Common Commercial Policy

The Department participated, monitored and continuously analysed the developments on the EU's *Common Commercial Policy* taking place within the framework of the Trade Policy Committee to ensure that Malta's interests are fully represented in the field of international trade and investment policy.

Trade Policy Committee

The Trade Policy Committee is a trade co-ordination and advisory committee to the European Union concerning all aspects of trade policy.

During 2011, the Department participated actively in various formations of this Committee including the Full Members, the Services and Investment Committee, the Committee on anti-dumping/anti-subsidy, the General System of Preferences Committee and the Steel, Textiles and Other Industrial Sectors Committee. The Department also followed other specific committees including the Trade Policy Committee Deputies and ad hoc Trade Policy Committee experts meetings. The Department consulted with Ministries and other government entities as well as the wider civil society to formulate Malta's positions on topics concerning international commercial policy.

Trade Policy Committee Titulaire

The Committee discussed the multilateral and bilateral aspects of international trade relations. The Department participated actively in this Committee that continued to discuss developments and coordinate positions with respect to the WTO Doha Development Agenda, the Southern Mediterranean Mandates for Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements, EU-India Free Trade Agreement, the EU-Canada Free Trade Agreement, the EU-US Transatlantic Council, Russia's WTO accession, and EU-Japan relations.

Market Access Advisory Committee

The Department participated and gave its feedback on issues of market access within the European Union's Market Access Strategy. The Market Access Advisory Committee meetings are held on a regular basis to ensure that EU companies, in particular small and medium sized enterprises, do not suffer from trade barriers that are imposed when exporting goods and services to third countries and that trade remains open and fair with economic partners.

Trade Policy Committee Services and Investment

The Department actively participated in the Committee and continued to analyse various aspects related to the liberalisation of international trade in services and also issues related to foreign investment. This includes the Regulation that is still being discussed at a technical level on establishing transitional arrangements for bilateral investment agreements between Member States and third countries. Concurrently, the Commission also released the 'Communication towards a comprehensive European international investment policy'.

Various measures were also implemented relating to the access for European companies in third country markets, including greater openness of international markets. In particular, the Committee discussed the negotiating offers in services with Canada, India, Ukraine and Morocco, amongst others.

Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) Working Party

Discussions continued on a newly proposed Regulation by the EU Commission intended to regulate tariff preferences to developing countries. The ultimate goal of this Regulation is to help developing countries increase their export revenue by granting tariff preferences for goods exported from these countries to the EU. Malta is participating actively in the discussions on the draft Regulation with the aim being the facilitation of the development of countries most in need.

Trade Policy Committee Steel, Textiles and Other Industrial Sectors (STIS)

The Department followed discussions and prepared Malta's positions on a number of industrial sectors in the form of sectoral *fiches*, including the electronics and pharmaceuticals sectors. The Committee discussed policy action in these sectors with the aim of securing EU access to raw materials and the competitiveness of EU industries. In this process, the Department sought feedback of other government entities and pertinent stakeholders as necessary.

Anti-dumping/Anti-subsidy Committee

As of December 2011, the European Union had 116 anti-dumping and ten anti-subsidy measures in force. The Department continued to closely follow developments on issues related to Trade Defence Instruments. The Department also formulated Malta's positions on these measures and participated actively in the meetings. Advice was provided on a number of trade defence issues, this being based primarily on an economic analysis whilst taking into consideration the European Commission's investigation findings and the objectives, interests and priorities of the various government entities and stakeholders.

Multilateral Trade Relations

Multilateral negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda continued in the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Major negotiations during 2011 were mainly in Non Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) which aims at reducing tariffs on non-agricultural products, including fishery products. Despite extensive efforts by the EU to try to achieve a compromise solution acceptable to all WTO countries, no agreement has been reached. This resulted in the technical negotiations being stalled.

The Department participated in the 8th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, which was convened in Geneva between 15 and 17 December 2011. During the Ministerial Conference, four new countries acceded to the WTO, namely, Russia, Samoa, Vanuatu and Montenegro. Malta supported all accessions.

In addition, Ministers at the WTO Ministerial Conference extended an e-commerce moratorium which aims at committing WTO members not to make any form of trade restrictions (duties or otherwise) on trans-national electronic transactions. A services waiver allowing WTO members to grant preferential treatment to services and service suppliers of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) without according the same treatment to similar services and service suppliers of all other WTO members was also agreed. Against a backdrop of growing protectionist pressures, especially following the recent global economic downturn, and also in view of the EU's fundamental systemic interests towards a functioning rules-based multilateral system, this Department has worked together with the EU Commission to engage in efforts to reinforce the WTO's monitoring and peer review related work under the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB). In particular, the aim has been to review the regular Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM) with the aim of making it more effective.

Bilateral Trade Relations

In the area of bilateral and regional trade relations, the Department consulted and co-ordinated with the competent authorities to be in a position to formulate a policy on a number of bilateral commercial agreements that the Commission is negotiating with third countries. These include:

EU-Southern Mediterranean: Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs)

Negotiations mandates were approved by the Council of EU Foreign Ministers on 14 December 2011 authorising the European Commission to open bilateral negotiations with Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia regarding DCFTAs. These future trade agreements that the EU will be negotiating with these four Southern-Mediterranean partners are expected to help consolidate the progress achieved in the Arab Spring and strengthen the democratisation process on the southern and eastern rims of the Mediterranean basin.

The DCFTAs will build on the present Association Agreements and their main aim would be to bring these four Mediterranean partners progressively closer to the EU single market. Malta supported the mandates for the negotiations with these countries which should serve for more and new opportunities in the areas of trade and investment with these countries.

EU-Eastern Partner countries: DCFTAs with Georgia and Moldova

Malta supported the launch of EU-DCFTA negotiations with Georgia and Moldova, which are intended to boost economic growth and investment with the Eastern European partners. The negotiations will tackle a broad range of trade and economic issues so as to achieve a closer economic integration with the EU. These free trade areas will be part of the Association Agreement under negotiation with Georgia and Moldova since July 2010 and January 2010, respectively, within the framework of the Eastern Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy. Both countries already benefit from preferential access to the EU market.

EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement

The Department continued to follow developments on the Free Trade Agreement with South Korea that was signed in 2009 and entered into force in early July 2011. This Agreement offers market access and commercial opportunities, including new investment in the Korean market, both in processed and manufactured goods, services, and other areas of economic interest.

EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

The Department was actively involved in the technical and economic aspects of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) that was launched in Prague on 6 May 2009. The Department performed specific macroeconomic assessments on potential implications through increased liberalisation with Canada in key strategic sectors for Malta. Negotiations during 2011 progressed swiftly with provisional agreements being reached in a number of areas. Key areas, such as trade in services and investment, were also discussed, and this Department was responsible for analysing key offensive and defensive sectors with respect to Canada.

EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

Since the launch of negotiations in June 2007, eleven rounds of negotiations were held between the EU and India. During 2011, negotiations intensified at a technical level. This Department was engaged in the technical consultations with the EU Commission, with respect to liberalisation in a number of areas including trade in goods, trade defence instruments, trade in services and establishment, transparency and dispute settlement, mediation mechanism and investment protection. Good progress was made in most areas of the FTA however there still remain a number of areas where further work needs to be done. From

an economic point of view, the Department aims at obtaining the greatest possible market access to the Indian market in sectors where Malta has an economic interest.

EU-China

The Department followed and analysed the ongoing developments taking place in the EU-China High Level Economic and Trade dialogue negotiations regarding proposals to enhance trade and investment with a view to achieve greater market openness and fair competition.

EU-United States

The EU pursued further negotiations for a stronger EU-US Transatlantic Economic Co-operation and closer integration of both economies within a globalised environment. The Department monitored the ongoing progress in EU-US relations in co-ordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other pertinent authorities.

EU-Japan

The Department monitored further developments arising from the bilateral dialogue with respect to the EU-Japan Regulatory Reform proposals in the High Level Group on trade and economic aspects and new avenues in the EU-Japan relations, including the possibility of negotiating a Free Trade Agreement.

EU-Africa, Caribbean, Pacific (ACP): Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)

The Department followed the developments in the negotiations of the Economic Partnership Agreements with Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries. In early 2011, the European Parliament ratified the EPAs with Papua New Guinea and Fiji. EU ratification was completed by Council in February 2011. Following the ratification by Papua New Guinea in May 2011, this EPA entered into force. Within the Eastern Southern Africa configuration, Madagascar and Mauritius have notified the provisional application in July 2011. Negotiations with other ACP members are still ongoing.

Other ongoing trade negotiations

The Department continued to support the Commission in its negotiations with respect to trade negotiations with third countries, including with Colombia and Peru, Ukraine, Singapore and the MERCOSUR region. The negotiations include the liberalisation in services and establishment, goods, non-tariff barriers to trade, government procurement, geographical indications and intellectual property rights, amongst other economic sectors.

International Investment Policy

During 2011, Malta and Albania signed the bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement.

Within the framework of the EU's competence in international investment policy, no negotiations have been held bilaterally with third countries.

The Department monitored developments and participated in discussions on the draft Regulation establishing transitional arrangements for bilateral investment agreements between Member States and third countries, as well as the Investor - State dispute Settlement - Financial Liability of the European Union.

Consultations

Besides consulting the various pertinent public and private authorities with respect to specific trade policy issues, the Department organised information meetings on a monthly basis with a number of stakeholders in order to disseminate information and consult stakeholders on international trade issues.

The Department also coordinated and contributed to several European Commission consultations, including a consultation on trade and development; the public consultation on investment relations with China and the consultation on products considered as dual use. The Department also contributed towards the European Commission's consultation on the sector relating to business of small and medium enterprises.

Advisory Services

The Department continued to provide its services to a number of government entities particularly through the preparation of information briefings and technical advice on Malta's position with respect to issues pertaining to international trade and investment policy. Research and analysis on international trade and economic issues were also carried out to respond to *ad hoc* requests by various government entities.

JOSEPH RAPA

Director General (Economic Policy)

Commerce Department

INTRODUCTION

The role of the Commerce Department is to assist business and facilitate trade whilst providing the necessary infrastructure to encourage the securing, utilisation and respect of intellectual property rights.

Initiatives aimed at fulfilling this role are undertaken through the concerted efforts of its three directorates namely the Industrial Property Registrations Directorate, the Trade Services Directorate and the Small Businesses and Crafts Directorate assisted by its Support Services arm.

OPERATIONS

The Commerce Department performs the following duties:

- registration of trademarks, certification marks, collective marks and designs;
- patenting of inventions;
- issuing of supplementary protection certificates in respect of medicinals and plant protection products;
- issuing of trade licences;
- recording of transfers, cancellations, amendments and renewals regarding trading licences as well as trademarks, patents and designs;
- authorisation of the export and transaction of dual use goods;
- issuing of import licences and export licences;
- administration of EU import quotas;
- administration of temporary state aid for sugar;
- licensing of auctioneers;
- dissemination of information relevant to the business sectors;
- administration of the flour transport subsidy;
- provision of first-hand assistance and advice to clients who require any service offered by the Department;
- acting as the National Coordinator (NIMIC) of the Internal Market Information System (IMI);
- running of Crafts Centre in St John Square, Valletta;
- developing and managing various initiatives aimed at sustaining the local crafts sector;
- providing support to the Malta Crafts Council, the Copyright Board and the Auctioneers Board;
- hosting the EU SOLVIT Centre for Malta;
- coordinating Malta's participation in the European Enterprise Awards;
- coordinating the drafting of legislation relating to trade and intellectual property;
- providing input on drafting of related EU directives and regulations as well as international treaties;
- participating in international and EU meetings as required.

Salient Statistics for 2011

Trade

The following applications were processed:

New applications for premises based activities	416
Reactivation of Licence	10
Transfer of Licence	356

Transfer by Inheritance	25
Market Hawkers	84
Street Hawkers	101
Buskers	20
Marketing Agents	5
Registration of Freelance Activity Non-premises Based	113
Extension of Time	13
Commercial Fairs	184
Car Boot Sales	14
Change or Additional Activity	68
Late Night Shopping	10
Import licences	1,382
Export licences	73
Exports of dual-use goods and military equipment	273

The Department through the Trade Services Directorate testified 769 times in court cases instituted by different authorities including Civil and Criminal courts, Family Courts, MEPA Appeals Tribunal and Local Councils Tribunals.

Industrial Property

Applications were received as follows:

Registration of new trademarks	859
Registration of new designs	7
Patenting of new inventions	16
Validation of European Patents in Malta	357
Renewal of existing trademarks	2,171
Renewal of existing designs	49
Renewal of existing patents	778

Furthermore, there were 2,428 Industrial Property searches.

The Commerce Department through its Industrial Property Registrations Directorate was called to testify in court 51 times on intellectual property related issues.

The Department's portal for Intellectual Property services was fully launched in 2011 and has marked the major milestone of successfully processing online filings and their corresponding payments for all the Department's IP services through this internet platform.

The Department has also extended its online presence by providing the IP portal's major News and Information services via a national IP Office Malta Facebook site that also began functioning in 2011.

Crafts

Members registered with the Malta Crafts Council as on 31 December 2011, stood at 936 craftsmen and 440 entrepreneurs.

The number of visitors (including locals and tourists) to the local exhibition of crafts at Crafts Centre Valletta was 19,442.

During 2011, the Malta Crafts Council participated in several crafts fairs/exhibitions held locally such as Great Spring Show, *Festival Nazzjonali tal-Ghana*, Artisan Fair in Valletta (as part of World Tourism Day), and others organised by various local councils, such as *Festa tar-Rebbiegħa*, *Hidma Agrarja u Tradizzjonijiet*, *Irkotta Fest*, *Lejl f' Casal Fornaro*.

The Department participated in the General Assembly of the World Crafts Council (Europe), which was held in Dublin on 8-9 June. During this event, the Department's representatives initiated discussions with senior officials of the Crafts Council of Ireland with the aim of establishing close ties of cooperation between the two organisations. As a result, Mr John Tynan, Head of Education Training and Development of the Irish Crafts Council was invited to address the Malta Crafts Conference which the Department held on 7 October.

A number of initiatives were organised or continued by the Commerce Department in line with the Government's allocation of the fund of €200,000 in the 2011 Budget i.e. Business Support Fund for Crafts and Artisan Work, namely:

- *National Action Plan on Better Development of the Maltese Crafts Sector and the First Maltese Socio-Economic Survey on Crafts and Craftsmanship*: The Commerce Department commissioned the National Statistics Office to send a questionnaire regarding crafts to 5,000 persons. The collated data was forwarded to an expert to draw up a report in the form of an Action Plan to be eventually presented to Government for more evidence-based policy making in the realm of crafts.
- *Helping Crafts persons registered with the Malta Crafts Council to create attractive websites*: a portal was created and is currently undergoing testing. The launch is expected in Q2 of 2012.
- *Helping Crafts persons registered with the Malta Crafts Council present their products more attractively while using the latest ICT knowledge available*: A number of courses were organised for crafts persons about the subjects of marketing and information technology.
- *Ġieħ l-Artiġġjanat Award*: The second edition was launched. The categories are intended to give recognition a) Innovative Crafts Products and b) Crafts Initiatives (teaching & research, awareness raising and promotion & sales). Approximately 100 applications were submitted.

Internal Market Information (IMI) System

The National IMI Coordinator carried out various activities in relation to the implementation of IMI:

- two new Competent Authorities were registered in the system; five new users were added to existing CAs, whilst four new users replaced users who left;
- 19 training sessions were held, through which users were given an overview of the IMI System or assisted in any difficulty they might have; eight of these were related to the new business register feature;
- in the Professional Qualifications Module, 10 requests were sent by Maltese Competent Authorities to their counterparts in other EU Member States;
- in the same module, seven requests were sent by EU CAs to Maltese CAs.

One request was sent in the Services Directive Module. One request was received in the Posting of Workers module which was launched in May.

ASSISTING BUSINESS

Business Care Unit

The Commerce Department through the Business Care Unit of the Small Business and Crafts Directorate continued to give first hand assistance and advice to clients who required any service offered by the Department.

During 2011, circa 2,163 telephone enquiries and 3,405 personal visits were received at the Business Care Unit mainly in relation to services offered by the Commerce Department.

Malta SOLVIT Centre

The Commerce Department has been hosting the EU SOLVIT Centre for Malta since 2004. SOLVIT is a network of centres throughout the EU and EEA, committed to solve cross-border problems which hinder

the rights of citizens and businesses in the internal market. The network works through an online database maintained by the EU Commission.

Officers from the Malta SOLVIT Centre attend regular training and updating through workshops organised jointly by individual Member States and the SOLVIT team of the European Commission. The Malta SOLVIT Centre at the Commerce Department hosted one of these workshops in Malta on 12-13 May where about 50 foreign delegates attended and participated. The following is a summary of SOLVIT's case activity in relation to 2011:

Total Enquiries	21	
SOLVIT		12
Non-SOLVIT		9
Cases entered in database as Home Centre	10	
Non-SOLVIT/Not accepted		4
Accepted (Solved 4 – Unresolved 0 – Open 2)		6
Awaiting acceptance/Draft		0
Cases received in database as Lead Centre	14	
Non-SOLVIT/Not accepted		5
Accepted (Solved 4 – Unresolved 2 – Open 3)		9

Awareness Activities and meetings with the Business Community

The Commerce Department organised or participated in several seminars or meetings aimed at raising awareness amongst local stakeholders on trade issues, intellectual property, crafts, SOLVIT and the Internal Market Information System. In particular one may mention the following:

- The Department presented its IP services during a national seminar on Research and Innovation organised by the Malta Enterprise, together with additional participation by the Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and the University of Malta.
- A national seminar celebrating the European Day of Chemistry was also jointly organised by the European Patent Office, the Commerce Department, the University of Malta and the MCST.
- A national seminar on the Harnessing of Intellectual Property for Investment Promotion was organised by the Malta Business Bureau together with the Commerce Department and the European Patent Office, along with the participation of MCST and the Generic Pharmaceutical Industry as well as Business Europe.
- A number of IP awareness raising talks and workshops were undertaken for start-ups in cooperation with the ETC, during which an overview of community trademarks and designs was also provided. In addition promotional material was also created through funds made available to this office under the Technical Cooperation Agreement entered into with the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (OHIM) – for Community Trademarks and Designs.
- The second edition of the Malta Innovation Awards was once more held in conjunction and the MFEI's Enterprise Policy Directorate, with input from other local stakeholders including the MCST, Malta Enterprise, MCAST, the Centre for Creativity. The winners were also bestowed with awards from the World Intellectual Property Organisation.
- The IP Check-Up Diagnostic service was continued with purposely trained officials from the CD visiting the premises of any interested SME and in full confidence advising them through a detailed and methodical report on the SME's IP potential not only for protection purposes but also, equally important, in order for the SME to strategically exploit its IP potential commercially.
- Senior officials from the Department attended a number of scheduled consultation meetings that were organised by the Secretariat for Small Business and Land in connection with the White Paper on Market Hawkers' Reform.

LEGISLATION AND BETTER REGULATION

The Department is regulated in its activities by the following main legislations: the Auctioneers Act, the Commercial Code, the Trading Licences Act, the Supplies and Services Act, the Trade Marks Act, the Copyright Act, and the Patents and Designs Act. These are complemented with a significant amount of subsidiary legislations. The following legislation was enacted in 2011:

- Amendments to the Trading Licences Act CAP 441 aimed at curbing alcohol abuse which was completed by various amendments the Trading Licence Regulations SL 441.7, namely Legal Notice Nos 52, 87, 96, 134, 208, 228 and 249;
- SL 117.32 simplifying terms and conditions of transfers of defence-related products regulations

INTERNATIONAL AND EU INITIATIVES

Officials from the Department participated in EU and international meetings pertaining to its remit or in order to assist other entities. Meetings concerned the following issues: Sanctions Monitoring, Dual Use Goods, Trademark Practice and Procedures, Protection of Designs, Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, Patents, Copyright, Patent Libraries, Technical Cooperation, the Internal Market Information System, European Enterprise Awards, and Regulation 2679/98 EC on Disruption to the Internal Market and Crafts.

In addition to the above, the Department participated in the General Assembly of the World Intellectual Property Organisation as well as other meetings organised under the auspices of WIPO, such as the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights and the Standing Committee on Patents. The Department also participated in the meetings of the Administrative Council of the European Patent Office and of the Administrative Board and Budget Committee of the Office of the Harmonisation of the Internal Market, as well as the EPO's Budget and Finance Committee, the Committee on Patent Law and the EPO's Technical and Operational Support Committee and OHIM's Liaison Meeting on Trademarks, Designs and Technical Cooperation.

In addition, national judges were given the opportunity to participate in a series of seminars for judges dealing with trademark and design cases organised by the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (OHIM) – Community Trademarks and Designs.

BILATERAL COOPERATION INITIATIVES

Cooperation with the Office for the Harmonisation of the Internal Market (Trademarks and Designs)

The Department actively participated in a number of projects in order to avail of the technological solutions being developed in the Trademarks and Designs fields for the enhancement of a number of services through the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market's Cooperation Fund. Amongst these projects, one can mention the Future Software Package, the Classification of Goods and Services and the TMView.

The Department also actively participated in the Working Group of the Class Headings Project under the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market's Convergence Programme, and discussions have been held on the possibility of further participation in other Convergence Projects.

Cooperation with the European Patent Office

Malta was the first European country member of the European Patent Office to introduce the SOPRANO system for Patents which is gradually replacing the manual system for the application, processing and granting of patents. During 2011, with the assistance of the EPO, the Ministry's IMU together with MITA

a full upgrading of the EPTOS set, including SOPRANO and the implementation of other software tools in the area of patents was completed.

Discussions were held on the new Bilateral Cooperation Plan for 2012-2017, which will significantly contribute to the enhancement of the Department's patent services and related infrastructure, as well as training and awareness related activities.

Cooperation with EU DG Enterprise

The Department was invited, accepted and signed on as a full partner in a new EU wide transnational project for IP Offices throughout the EU named Iporta, following on from the successful results achieved under the previous participation within the EU's IPeuropAware Project for SMEs, which drew to a close in 2011.

Cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)

A Memorandum of Understanding with the World Intellectual Property Organisation was signed and agreed activities under a Plan of Action for 2011 were implemented in addition to the discussions held and agreed for the 2012 Plan of Action, which will consist primarily of the significant upgrading in the Department's technological systems together with the enhancement of patent and related services as well as training and awareness related activities.

TRAINING AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY MEASURES

Ongoing exposure was given to the members of the SOLVIT team through participation in workshops partly funded by the European Commission and two members of the IMI team through training events also organised and partly funded by the EC. Other officials participated in workshops and training sessions organised by the Office for the Harmonisation of the Internal Market, the World Intellectual Property Organisation and by the European Patent Office.

During the past year, officials from the Department attended several courses organised by CDRT, as well as courses organised by the Commerce Department. During this year, a seminar on the Psychosocial and Disability Issues at work was organised, as part of the Employee Support Programme project launched by the Public Administration Human Resources Office. This project intends to assist employees in a professional and confidential manner in various issues such as stress related to the work place, mental and emotional health problems – family problems, terminal illnesses, drug and alcohol abuse as well as disabilities.

Where possible, new requests for teleworking were processed and approved by respective directorates. Moreover, requests for reduced hours continued to be approved.

GODWIN WARR

Director General (Commerce)

Office of the Notary to Government

The Office of the Notary to Government comprises two main sections: the Notarial Archives and the Notarial Section.

ARCHIVES SECTION

In the Notarial Archives are deposited deeds *inter vivos* and *causa mortis* published by Notaries Public who have practised or are practising in Malta. The latter are wills drawn up in the public form; the former are all other deeds relating to property transfers (sales, *emphyteusis*, partitions and others), loans, powers of attorney and so on. Moreover, in the Archives one finds also all deeds received by the Notaries to Government. All these deeds are deposited for custody and safe-keeping. At the head office in number 2/3, Mikiel Anton Vassalli Street, Valletta, are housed the original deeds, whilst the Registers (copies) are housed at 24, St. Christopher Street, Valletta.

All deeds are also accessible to the public for inspection, provided that the person enquiring about a particular deed can indicate the Notary who published same and the date thereof. Legal or informal photocopies thereof are issued on request. Requests are also made by means of e-mail and this system has helped to improve the services. Fees are charged for such inspections and for any copies requested.

Assistance was given to a great number of clients who had problems arising from deeds published by a defaulting Notary. In March, the Notary in question deposited all deeds and wills published by him following an order of the Court of Revision. Although these deeds were not visited according to law, they were at least made accessible to the public who had no access to them prior to this as the Notary was away from the island.

The Department checked the deeds which were in loose leaf form, put them in chronological order, bound them and enumerated them. The Chief Notary to Government communicated with the Notary for him to put in order a number of deeds which were not according to law or which had no stamp duty paid. The Notary complied up to a certain date; however there are still many problems pending and these are expected to be settled in Court.

NOTARIAL SECTION

The Notarial Section publishes deeds to which the Government, any corporate body established by law or any partnership or other body in which the Government of Malta or any such body has a controlling interest or over which they have effective control, is a party.

The Notarial Section liaises directly with various government departments to give effect to certain government policies and activities. The Department also receives requests for the publication of deeds relating to courses of study which the Health Division advertises from time to time for the training of medical and paramedical staff. These requests are also received when scholarships are granted by the Education Division, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MARRA and others.

Two Notaries from the Department were present at the offices of Transport Malta to oversee and record the proceedings of the opening of bids and the granting of 20 new taxi licences.

Two deeds were published in Gozo, one referring to the donation to Government of a stone tablet of archeological value, and another to the donation of the Giuliana Masini. A Deed of Trust was witnessed by the Chief Notary to Government relating to the University of Malta Research Innovation and Development Trust in a ceremony held at the Prime Minister's Office. This office also published a Deed of Loan to Transport Malta and a Guardianship Deed between the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage and Din l-Art Ħelwa regarding the Church of Our Lady of Victory in Valletta. Another Guardianship Deed was signed between the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage and Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna regarding the Couvre Porte Barracks at Vittoriosa.

The Chief Notary to Government was involved in a number of meetings with the ministry consultant and the President of the Notarial Council in discussions regarding the amendments to Chapter 55. The resulting bill was presented in Parliament and following a number of sessions in Parliament for the reading of the Bill and the Committee Stage, the Bill became law by virtue of Act XXIV.

Upgrading of Archives at Mikiel Anton Vassalli Street

During the summer of 2011, restoration works were carried out in the internal courtyard of these premises. Painting and restoration works were also carried out on the wooden balcony and apertures on the façade of these premises. Pest control was carried out in the rooms containing the volumes and the rest of the Department.

Upgrading of Archives at St Christopher Street

During the period under review, the office with the assistance of the Notarial Archives Resources Council continued working on the project of organising and upgrading the Archives at St Christopher Street Valletta. A number of distinguished visitors were received at these Archives and were impressed with the wealth of its contents. During the year under review, a number of volunteers offered their services at the Archives. A group of volunteers from HSBC were offered an extra day of leave which was to be dedicated to the digitisation process being carried out in these Archives. Another group of volunteers led by an expert in the field discovered a number of volumes had live insect activity. Steps were taken immediately to isolate these volumes and to treat them individually with an anoxic treatment. Normal pest control was also carried out. White washing works were carried out and carpenters replaced a number of apertures which were in a bad state of repair.

HSBC donated a number of office furniture to these Archives. A foreign volunteer started work on the compilation of a database of the *Bastardelli*. When this work is complete it will be of great interest and help to researchers.

The Archives were also the subject of a televised programme which appeared on Channel 22.

In September, an extension of the agreement was signed with the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library of St John's University, Minnesota in the United States for the digitisation of some of the oldest volumes. HMML pledged the sum of €150 per month for the duration of this extension to aid the Archives.

The Archives are officially open to the public twice a week; however by agreement with the staff they are in actual fact receiving the public every day.

Notarial Warrant Examination

In March 2011, a notarial warrant exam was held for 17 students. All students were successful and obtained their warrant in May.

List of Notaries

The Department also prepared the list of deceased notaries and their keepers, both in Malta and Gozo, as well as the list of practising notaries, in Malta and Gozo, for publication in the Government Gazette in January 2012.

Lotteries

The notaries from this Department were appointed by the Lotteries and Gaming Authority to be present to supervise the weekly Super Five and Lotto draws held throughout the year. These are being held in a private studio in Birkirkara and transmitted live on television.

A notary from the Department also supervised the Government VAT receipts lottery held monthly at Saint James Ditch, Floriana.

STATISTICS

Notarial Archives

Volumes of deeds received in the Archives in terms of the Notarial Profession and Notarial Archives Act (Cap. 55)	385
Volumes of deeds received from the Special Commissioner for Notarial Acts in terms of Act X of 1999	330
Copies of deeds issued	10,500
Volumes repaired	15
Volumes bound	102

Notary to Government Office

Deeds were published in connection with:	
Courses of Study and Scholarships	52
Sale of grave sites	13
Other transactions to which Government was a party	27
Notes of Enrolment, Hypothecs, and References entered in the Public Registry	78

Revenue and Expenditure

The revenue collected by the office during the year under review amounted to €78,545.39, and the expenditure during the same period totalled €295,991.10

DR CORA VELLA

Chief Notary to Government

Government Property Department

Directorate General

INTRODUCTION

The Government Property Department (GPD) is responsible for the management of Government's immovable estate. The mission of the GPD is to promote and maintain the highest and best use of Government's immovable estate and to ensure an equitable process for the acquisition of property that may be required for public purpose. The GPD incorporates the Land Directorate, Finance and Administration Directorate, the Estate Management Directorate, and the Joint Office all of which fall under the full responsibility of the Director General.

Whereas each of the four directorates has precise objectives to achieve within a specific remit, the GPD acts as the coordinator of all operations whilst ensuring smooth management through the provision of the necessary financial and administrative support.

Major Projects

The operations of the GPD are instrumental to the carrying out of major projects identified by Government. This is mainly due to the fact that GPD provides ongoing support to other Government Departments/Entities to achieve the project's objectives. The support service provided includes, information on government property, eviction of squatters, termination of leases, acquisition of private property, provision of alternative accommodation, drawing up of property drawings, drafting of deeds and presenting parliamentary resolutions.

The major projects in which GPD was heavily involved during 2011 include:

- the continuation of the City Gate Project and the relocation of all kiosks situated around the bus terminus;
- all preparatory technical work required in connection with the launching of the Special Property Vehicles (SPV) which Government is initiating in the near future;
- the finalisation of ERDF 104 project regarding the removal of all illegal structures and the embellishment of Verdala and St Nicholas Bastions areas in Cospicua;
- the ongoing process to transfer residential blocks to the Housing Authority according to Cabinet direction;
- removal of illegalities around the bastions in Mdina and Valletta for possible restoration of both areas which project is being co-financed by EU and is in conjunction with MRRA;
- relocation of mobile kiosks in Qawra as area has been identified for the building of the Aquarium;
- continuation of the masterplan earmarked for Marsaxlokk promenade;
- retrieval of land from VISET;
- the ongoing exercise to identify vacant property in Valletta;
- the ongoing process to retrieve property which had been expropriated on behalf of the roads authority in the past but had not been utilised, in order to release it to its former owners;
- an exchange of land previously occupied by GO plc; and
- settlement of claims for past expropriations.

Tender Committee

One of GPD's main functions is the disposal of government property which generally is made through a call for tenders. During the year, a change in the tendering procedure for the disposal of government

property was effected. This change was intended to achieve more transparency, accountability and efficiency in the tender process. To this effect a new Tender Committee, constituted by representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investments, and the Contracts Department and chaired by the Director General Government Property, was formed to cater for all issues of calls for tenders and subsequent adjudication and this without the need of referral to the Contracts Committee. Furthermore, the minimum value expected by Government is now indicated in all calls for tender. No changes were effected in the set-up of the committee.

Review of Internal Policies and Procedures

GPD started to review the existing policies and procedures, and all other templates which may be downloaded from the website. This preparatory exercise is in relation to the construction of a new website which will be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

Information Technology

At the beginning of 2010, GPD entered into an agreement with LOQUS for the provision of a new, comprehensive IT system to operate the Land Estate Management Information System (LEMIS). The first six months of 2011 were quite challenging. Management had to take decisions on whether the new IT system will address the requirements of the Department and ascertain that the system will support all relevant GPD business procedures efficiently and effectively with accurate functionality and data. The exercise also served to enable GPD staff members to become familiar with LEMIS operation and output. To actually confirm that the successful migration to Manhattan, there was an extended period of parallel run-testing to verify that the new system produces the same results as the old system and that it can handle the production load of the Department.

Training sessions were organised to cashiers at the local councils who are responsible to collect rent on behalf of GPD.

It is pertinent to know that the whole changeover to the new automated revenue system was completed successfully.

Conclusion

The Government Property Department's role is to ensure that government property is optimally utilised.

The major challenges for next year include the reduction of pending arrears especially those relating to commercial premises, the digitising of files and scanning of all documents, to finalise the refurbishment of the Auberge de Bavière and continue the implementation of the Manhattan in all other areas of the department including also the Joint Office data.

IMAN SCHEMBRI

Director General (Government Property)

Government Property Department

Finance and Administration Directorate

INTRODUCTION

The Finance and Administration Directorate is responsible for all the financial and administrative work of the Government Property Department and also provide support services to the other three Directorates falling under the Department's umbrella, namely the Estate Management, Land and the Joint Office.

Human Resources

During 2011, GPD carried out a capacity building exercise to address the Department's needs and requirements to be able to fulfil vacancies for the numerous tasks and responsibilities. In this connection, GPD prepared an analysis report and initiated procedures to issue calls for several positions.

Although GPD experienced the loss of staff members who left due to retirement or to seek alternative employment with the private sector, it managed to acquire one lawyer, three casual substitutes, five newly appointed clerks, two ICT officers, as well as the deployment of a manager, clerk and one minor staff from IPSL.

Another public call for application was issued to recruit two Junior Legal Officers in order to decrease the backlog in the legal section. The process to issue other calls for the position of managers and one A&CE is still ongoing.

The post of Director in the Estate Management was filled by an incumbent officer and consequently, approval has been acquired from PAHRO to issue three calls for applications for the posts of Assistant Directors. The post of Senior System Administrator is still vacant as the person who was successful for the interview refused the position.

Overtime hours were allocated for specified jobs only and this further decreased the allocated amount.

During 2011, GPD continued to implement the family-friendly measures and in the last quarter of 2011, one officer who worked on a reduced time-table, opted for telework and thus increased the working hours. Teleworking is being monitored by the respective Department Head.

Training initiatives

GPD, together with CDRT, designed a Training Needs Analysis to assess each staff member's actual attributes. These are being mapped against the desired requirements and subsequently a suitable corporate/individual training programme on the basis of the emerging discrepancies/variations was prepared. This is an ongoing process, which is underway and will engage all officers of the GPD no matter the grade and the responsibility. Sessions will be staggered accordingly.

Car Tracking System

All departmental cars have been equipped with a tracking device so GPD will be in a position to monitor all vehicles used during the day.

Departmental Tenders

Departmental tenders were issued to regulate all eviction works including the building of rubble walls, the removal of illegalities from government-owned land and the transportation of furniture following eviction. One other departmental tender was issued for the provision of cleaning services to the Auberge de Bavière.

Revenue Collection

During 2011, no less than 62,700 rent invoices were issued to ensure timely recovery of rent dues. Special efforts to recoup rents arrears were made either by mailing reminders or through legal procedures; judicial letters and termination warnings. GPD also managed to fulfil the estimated budget by 100.3% and the total amount of income generated was €41,062,932. The sum also includes sale of land through the tender procedure.

Parliamentary Questions

The number of parliamentary questions replied by GPD in 2011 amounted to 212, which exceeded the number of PQs replied in 2010 by 62.

Staff Welfare Committee

The Finance and Administration Directorate also set up a staff welfare committee with the objectives of organising in-house sports activities during break and also participate in tournaments earmarked for government employees, organising other activities after office hours to enhance social interaction between all employees of the Department; to improve staff morale and foster a greater sense of belonging in the civil service, and also assisting persons working at the GPD who find themselves in hardship or distress related to terminal sickness and may need financial assistance for treatment abroad. During 2011, the staff welfare committee organised mass on the first Friday of each month, fund raising activities, participated in the football league organised for government and parastatal employees, organised an in-house table tennis mini tournament, organised a Christmas party for children of employees, and also organised a competition for the best decorated office for Christmas by using recycled objects.

NANCY CARUANA

Director (Finance and Administration)

Government Property Department

Estate Management Directorate

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

The EMD's mission is to help the Government Property Department shape and deliver Government's immovable property agenda by providing quality property-related advice and services. EMD helps the Government achieve its policy objectives by contributing to three key outcomes:

- improved and more efficient property operations;
- sustaining government finances;
- sustaining government projects and initiatives.

PROPERTY OPERATIONS

Property Records

The update and maintenance of government property records is a fundamental task carried out by the EMD. This comprises of several property datasets including a textual database of government-owned property, deed packets as well as a number of map-sets. These records are an important information source for such government projects as Enemalta SPV project, the Grand Harbour project, City Gate project, housing, roads etc.

Properties occupied by Government Departments/Entities

In order to consolidate the property terrier, properties occupied by government departments/entities are being investigated and verified; this exercise is being carried out to confirm occupation, type of use, extent and actual occupier. During 2011, EMD continued the task of verification and consolidation of properties occupied by Enemalta and Heritage Malta, whilst initiating records of property held by MRRA.

Property Information Requests

As part of its role in maintaining the property terrier, the EMD provides property-related information to a varied list of clients that ranges from private individuals and companies to government ministries, departments, agencies and authorities. Information is typically required in connection with the possible disposal of such property and in relation to government projects and initiatives. During 2011, the EMD handled over 11,375 such requests/reports. In addition, the EMD carried out 2,525 property inspections, apart from giving assistance to the Land Directorate in 45 court cases. 691 property status reports were also drawn up.

Property Plans

The preparation of property plans and drawings is an essential element in the management of government immovable property and the maintenance of a property terrier. The EMD utilises a custom-developed GIS-based Property Drawing System for the preparation of all property drawings. This system also interfaces with specific off-the-shelf computer aided design software to facilitate layout drawings. During 2011, the EMD put up a total of 1,658 property drawings in connection with leases, sales and permits over

government-owned property. In addition, 3,276 copies of plans were provided by the GPD in relation to such matters as Parliamentary Resolutions, land registrations, tenders etc.

Protection of Government Title to Property

Under the provisions of the Land Registration Act, the first registration claimant to a property obtains a pre-emptive advantage over other pretenders. To safeguard Government's rights, the EMD checks every single application for property registration made with the Land Registry. During 2011, about 180 such applications were checked and, where applicable, the necessary cautions raised. The Department also investigated and resolved 28 cases of cautions and corrections raised against it by private parties. To further secure Government's title to its real estate, the EMD also undertakes the laborious process of registering Government's title via ad hoc applications to the Land Registry. During the year, some 1,512 land registration plans were prepared, of which the EMD registered a total land area of 389,341 square metres.

SUSTAINING GOVERNMENT FINANCES

Tender Proposals

Tender proposals are prepared for the eventual issue of tenders for the disposal of government property. During this process, EMD analyses and submit proposals for the issuing of tenders, taking into account factors such as demand, location, type of use, property ownership, etc. During 2011, EMD prepared and referred to the Land Directorate 222 tender proposals. In addition, 376 property valuations were carried out.

SUSTAINING GOVERNMENT PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Devolution of Property to Local Councils

The EMD's task is to assess the devolution proposal, draw up necessary plans and ad hoc conditions and then refer the matter to the Land Directorate for finalisation of contract of transfer. During 2011, the Government Property Department concluded the devolution/leasing agreements for nine properties as approved by EMD.

Property Expropriation Assistance for Infrastructural Projects

The EMD also handles requests made by government departments for the expropriation of private property for public purposes, mainly in connection with infrastructural projects. The EMD collects all relevant technical data, takes corrective measures as appropriate, liaisons with the sponsoring department and prepares the necessary plans for the expropriation. The EMD also provides technical assistance to the Land Directorate in acquisition cases taken in front of the Land Arbitration Board. In 2011, the EMD approved the release back to the original owners of 7,165 square metres of land that had been expropriated but was never made use of by Government.

Special Projects

During 2011, the EMD continued to play an active role in special projects sponsored by Central Government including the Enemalta SPV project, Malta Drydocks, City Gate project, the GO/Government property exchange and the Grand Harbour project. EMD's involvement relates to the identification of land boundaries, status and burdens, participation in the preparation of disposal conditions, preparation of plans and in some cases provision of final documentation.

Land Transfer to Government Entities

Other major projects that involved the EMD during 2011 were those related to the transfer of government-owned properties to government entities. These included the transfer of several parcels of land to Enemalta, MEPA and MIP.

Facilitation of the Home Ownership Scheme

As in previous years, the EMD continued to sustain Government's efforts to promote home ownership by authorising the transfer to the Housing Authority of properties for eventual sale to tenants. 103 legal notices were issued.

Agricultural Land Scheme

This scheme was a corporate initiative that enabled cultivators of government-owned agricultural land to register for the possibility of acquiring a new title to the land even where occupation was irregular. During 2011, the EMD processed and approved for leasing 794 applications, of which 631 lease agreements were signed.

Support Services

The EMD also provides support services by providing property related information to such government bodies as MEPA, MRRA, Department of Social Housing, Land Registry, MIMCOL, MIP, Transport Malta and Housing Authority.

RAYMOND CAMILLERI
Director (Estate Management)

Government Property Department Joint Office

INTRODUCTION

The roles of the Joint Office are:

- managing and administering the immovable estate transferred to Government by the ecclesiastical authorities in terms of the Ecclesiastical Entities (Properties) Act, Cap. 358;
- validating and verifying the data being transferred to it by the ecclesiastical entities. The scope is to determine the exact value of all the properties transferred so that the necessary adjustments are made to the original amount of €65,378,523 (Lm 28,067,000), which the Government issued in Bonds in terms of the 1991 Agreement with the Ecclesiastical Authorities;
- to register at the Land Registry all the properties which it administers, as well as those retained by the ecclesiastical entities.

PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION AND ALIENATIONS

In 2010, the following properties were alienated:

As per 2002 Initiative or original deed	389
Perpetual Emphyteusis (not part of 2002 Scheme)	41
As per Tenders/Exchange/Direct Disposal/Conversion	11
Total	441

The Department also received requests for the recognition of emphyteutae and tenants in their respective properties. In 2011, the Department processed 2,039 of these requests.

2002 INITIATIVE

This scheme was a result of Government's announcement in the 2002 Budget Speech, that the Government was putting on the market all the properties being administered by the Joint Office and which are either resident-occupied or used as a summer residence. By 29 January 2009, when the scheme was suspended, the Joint Office had received about 5,500 applications for the redemption of ground rent and for the purchase of leased premises.

With a view to hastening the process, the Joint Office farms out to architects in private practice, the valuation of certain properties and to notaries in private practice the publication of deeds of redemption or sale.

AGRICULTURE LEASES SCHEME

The Joint Office liaises with the Estate Management Directorate for processing applications received by February 2001 in terms of a scheme whereby persons occupying government-owned land for agricultural purposes without title were given the opportunity to regularise their position.

RECONCILIATION, VERIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

Transfer of Information on Properties

During 2011, the transfer of information from the Church Administrative Offices to the Joint Office regarding properties transferred to the Government by the Church continued at a steady pace. Up to the end of the year, about 25,000 forms concerning properties, listed in Annex 8 of the Church/State Agreement, were forwarded to the Joint Office by ecclesiastical entities.

It is to be noted, however, that a large number of correction forms had to be raised or confirmed regarding this information, which corrections have to be approved by the Control Committee in terms of Section 4 (2) of the Agreement. These corrections entail additions of properties inadvertently left out of the Annexes to the Agreement, deletion of others that were erroneously included, and correction to the capitalised amounts of properties.

In 2011, the Control Committee approved 454 of the above mentioned corrections. The Committee also signed 335 property forms, thus confirming the final amount due to ecclesiastical entities in respect of the properties concerned.

The Joint Office continued to reconcile the values of properties previously owned by 99 different ecclesiastical entities. During the year, while reconciliation continued on six entities, work on another five entities was taken in hand. Out of these five were reconciled, thus by the end of the year the Joint Office has reconciled a total of 62 entities. During 2011, in terms of properties, a total of 871 properties were reconciled.

By Legal Notice No 201/2011 the sum of €466,000 in Government Stock was issued to ecclesiastical entities following the reconciliation of these entities.

Registration of Properties

The Department continued with the registration of property with the Land Registry in terms of Cap 358. During 2011, the Joint Office registered 609 properties. The related work entailed the drawing up of relative plans. Besides these new registrations, 256 other plans were referred to the Land Registry in respect of corrections to previous registrations. This brought the total number of properties registered as of 31 December 2011 to 13,432. The following table shows the number of properties which were registered during the past years:

	2008	2008	2009	2010	2011
Properties registered	607	607	542	555	609

REVENUE COLLECTION

Besides the collection of rent of leased properties, the Department identified properties available for disposal in terms of the Disposal of Government Land Act. The following table shows the comparative figures of revenue collected during the past years:

	2008 €	2009 €	2010 €	2011 €
Rent	888,428	1,066,711	1,371,097	1,487,662
Sales	13,266,255	2,310,012	5,188,321	2,460,530
Total	14,154,683	3,376,723	6,559,418	3,948,192

41% of the amount of rent collected during 2011 consisted of arrears. This was the result of an ongoing enforcement exercise undertaken by the Joint Office in conjunction with the Land Directorate.

CONTROL COMMITTEE

The Control Committee is a body set up in terms of Article 17 of the 1991 Agreement between the Holy See and the Government of Malta. Two members of the Committee are nominated by the Holy See and two members are nominated by the Government of Malta. Chairmanship of meetings is by rotation. The present members representing the Government of Malta were nominated in January 2002. During 2011, this Committee met ten times.

The functions of the Control Committee are promoting and monitoring the correct and timely application of the provisions of the above-mentioned Agreement with particular reference to the approval of corrections to the Annexes, and the alienation of property and in particular to bonds that have to be issued to the Foundation for Church Schools.

By Legal Notice No 202/2011 the sum of €2,858,800 in Government Stock was issued to the Foundation for Church Schools in respect of property alienated in the previous year.

COORDINATION WITH THE ESTATE MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE AND LAND DIRECTORATE

For further coordination and related cooperation of the Joint Office with the other divisions forming the Government Property Department namely Estate Management Directorate and the Land Directorate, considered to be essential for uniformity in adapting common policies of the Department, it was decided that the Joint Office be moved to the Auberge de Bavière so that now all directorates forming the Department would be housed under one roof.

VINCENT GILSON
Director (Joint Office)

Government Property Department

Land Directorate

The Land Directorate's role within the Government Property Department is the legal aspect of government property management. This means that after the Estate Management Directorate or Joint Office has decided on the best possible use for a particular property, the issue is taken over by the Land Directorate for the actual disposal of the property under the procedures permitted in the Disposal of Government Land Act.

In general terms, the formal disposal of government property requires either the issue of a call for tenders or else an ad hoc Parliamentary Resolution. It is the Land Directorate's task to prepare tender documents, publish them and award the disposal. Likewise, ad hoc Parliamentary Resolutions are prepared by the Directorate. Subsequent to the disposal of a property through lease agreements/contracts, the Land Directorate is then responsible for the follow-up and enforcement of any conditions imposed on the transferee. These include the payment of rent and the proper maintenance of the property but may also contain other special conditions such as the development of structural improvements within specified time limits. The finalisation of contracts also includes those related to the acquisition of private property for a public purpose under the auspices of the Land Acquisition (Public Purpose) Ordinance. Indeed, the expropriation of private property is a primary task of the Land Directorate, one which enables Government to carry out major infrastructure works and other projects of benefit to Maltese society.

The Land Directorate is organisationally split up into two branches, namely the Enforcement Branch and the Contracts Branch; between them, these cater for the wide ranging roles entrusted to the department. As the names suggest, the former is responsible for all enforcement measures required to better manage government property, whilst the latter takes care of the formal requirements of leasing or selling/purchasing property and finalising related contracts.

Enforcement

The enforcement of contractual conditions is essential if property management is to be given any significance. Within this aspect, the very small number of Enforcement Officers carries out site checks to ensure that conditions of leases and permits are being honoured. Non-compliance is met by counter measures to ensure that defaulters are brought back on track. These measures include formal warnings, the issuing of prohibitory injunctions and also eviction proceedings. In this regard Chapter 228 of the Laws of Malta - Land (Compulsory Eviction) Act – gives the Commissioner of Land extensive powers to evict persons who occupy government property without title. This power is used with caution but the Land Directorate is committed to ensure that government property is not abused of.

Contracts Branch

The role of this branch is the formalisation of any disposal or acquisition of property.

As already indicated, the Disposal of Government Land Act stipulates that government property can generally be disposed of either through tenders or through a Special Resolution of the House of Representatives. The publication of tenders necessitates continual liaison with the Estate Management Directorate and the Joint Office to ensure that the appropriate conditions are set out in the tender. Transparency is ensured by opening all tender documents in public.

Government has for decades made use of the provisions of the Land Acquisition (Public Purpose) Ordinance (LAO) to enable it to take over private property without having finalised acquisition proceedings. The lack of property ownership information in Malta makes the whole acquisition process cumbersome and time consuming. Since 1994, the Directorate has limited the growth of the acquisition debt by requiring government departments that originate the need for the acquisition to provide up-front the full estimated value of the effected property. This ensures the payment on demand for any acquired property.

In an attempt to eliminate the accumulation of the acquisition debts due for expropriated property prior to 1994, during the last ten years additional funds were provided and between 2002 and 2011 over €101,000,000 were paid for expropriated property.

In accordance with the provisions of amendments brought into force in 2003, the Department can take action to process past outstanding acquisitions and purchase property under certain conditions set out by law. These are intended to minimise the expropriation debt as well as to enable Government to draw up the long outstanding HOS plots contracts and dispose of residences within housing estates constructed on land still under acquisition. Under these amendments a total of 116 bank accounts were opened in 2011 on which the total sum deposited amounts to €8,260,281.

In terms of Act XXI of 2009, which came into force on 1 December 2009, the Land Acquisition (Public Purpose) Ordinance was amended further to establish a method of valuation for the expropriation of historical property, allow the owner/s to contest the public purpose, qualify further the role of the architects and appointment of architects sitting on the Land Arbitration Board as experts, make court appointed architects' reports accessible and to the parties who may wish to make questions to members of the Land Arbitration Board and allow persons to appeal on both points of law and facts before the Court of Appeal.

2011 Highlights

During 2011, the Land Directorate continued in its efforts to maximise the use and return on government property. The major efforts include:

Abuse of government property/evictions

During the last four years, every effort has been made to strengthen the Enforcement Section and during 2011, the number of inspectors increased to nine. The Enforcement Section carried out without break several enforcement actions and successfully managed to free public and government land from illegal occupation. As a result, the Land Directorate won the support of the public in its commitment to stop abuse of government land. A total of 156 evictions and approximately 993 inspections on illegalities were carried out during 2011.

Tenders, Leases and Sales

During 2011, the Land Directorate advertised a total of 124 tenders for the lease/sale of government property. A total of 216 lease agreements were concluded in terms of the Agricultural Scheme. 277 encroachment permits were issued. These included permits for mobile kiosks and permits for the placing of tables in public areas, one-time permits and permits for structural alterations. The Land Directorate also completed the sale of government land/property, including ex church property resulting in revenue for 2011 of €14,319,216.

Acquisition

In 2011, the Directorate finalised a number of acquisition deeds paying a total of €3.85million to owners of expropriated property. 55 new President's Declarations for the expropriation of land mainly for road formation were issued. 61 President's Declarations of past outstanding acquisitions in order to compensate

the owners in accordance with the amendments made to the Land Acquisition (Public Purpose) Ordinance (Cap 88) were also issued.

Releases

In 2011, a total of 11,854square metres of land in various localities formerly acquired in virtue of the Land Acquisition (Public Purpose) Ordinance (Chapter 88) was released back to private owners.

Conclusion

In 2011, the Directorate continued with the capitalisation of approximately 100 acquired properties under the title of possession and use/public tenure in the Cottonera area and the complete acquisition of land by outright purchase in Paola and Gudja. The Directorate aims to continue with its commitment to conclude past contracts of acquisition for the complete acquisition of areas within housing estates in order to enable HOS beneficiaries to purchase their residences.

ALBERT MAMO
Director (Land)

**Ministry of Justice & Home
Affairs**

Attorney General's Agency

INTRODUCTION

In the course of 2011, the Attorney General's Office continued to provide the Government with a wide spectrum of legal services. These included the ownership of numerous criminal prosecutions, civil cases before the European Court of Human Rights, before the European Court of Justice, as well as the representation of Government on European Union, Council of Europe, United Nations Committee relating to human rights and other legal issues. The Office also regularly provided primary legal advice to Government and numerous 'second opinions' to public corporations falling within the direct responsibility of Ministries.

The trend towards more Europeanization of work of the Office in all fields continued during 2011, as has the trend towards increasing levels of complexity of the work.

The essential role of the Office in pointing out problem areas calling for changes in legislation cannot be understated.

With its wide overview of developments in the criminal, in the civil, and the human rights areas of law, the Office is in fact in a unique position to indicate where legislative intervention is urgent or is likely to be required in the near future.

The Attorney General's Office is not a policy maker but its duties in the legal and court fields mean that it has a vital contribution to make in indicating those areas where the legal developments might dictate that laws and policies might need to respond.

Apart from assisting in litigation, the Agency also assists government departments and ministries in filing reports to international organisations on legal matters and in the negotiation of various types of contracts and legislation.

In general, the Agency acts as the main legal advisor to Government both in criminal and in civil matters.

During September 2011, the issue of lack of staff was addressed through the recruitment of a number of trainee lawyers in various sections of the Agency. The statistics attached to this report confirm the increase in the workload at the Office of the Attorney General. Due to the high number of applicants that were interested in joining the office, the selection process was highly competitive.

The legal staff complement at the Office of the Attorney General Agency as it stood at the end of 2011 was as follows: the Attorney General; Deputy Attorney General; Head of Unit (International Cooperation in Criminal Matters); six Senior Lawyers; six Lawyers; 12 Junior Lawyers; four Legal Procurators; and five Trainee lawyers. The administrative and clerical staff complement of the Agency was made up of a Head of Corporate Services, and a number of officers in the various clerical grades, who perform duties either as clerical support staff to the legal departments or in the administrative sectors of the Agency.

The premises where the Agency is housed are crowded and inadequate. The problem of office space is a recurring problem that will be addressed when the Office of the Attorney General is relocated to its new premises, at Archbishop Street corner with Strait Street, Valletta. In order to enhance the working environment of the legal and administrative staff, the Agency continued work on a limited embellishment programme at its Palace and Main Guard quarters.

ACCOUNTS

The total revenue accruing to the Office of the Attorney General during 2011 was registered as follows:

Affidavits	€314.36
Legal Fees	€141.188
Miscellaneous	€3,534.55
Procès-verbaux	€9,655.55
Total	€13,465.648

The Accounts Section made great efforts to recover pending legal fees and in fact a substantial amount of was recovered. However, there is still a lot to be done and the Accounts Section will strengthen its efforts in this regard over the coming year.

NEW PREMISES PROJECT

The realisation of the new premises project, at Archbishop Street corner with Strait Street, Valletta, remains an imperative goal for the Agency, which is essential for it to be in a position to honour its commitments as outlined in the Government/Agency Agreement of 31 May 2005.

In November 2011, fresh drawings were re-submitted for the third time in a year to be processed by MEPA. It is envisaged that, provided the relative MEPA permit is issued without undue delay, the tender in respect of the construction works will be issued during the first quarter of 2013.

ENHANCED LIBRARY

The library facilities were essential to support legal officers at the Office in their function of advising and representing Government. These were also enriched with up-to-date material on various legal topics, in particular on Community Law and Human Rights Law. The process of equipping the Agency with the indispensable legal literature to ensure that it remains in the best position to advise and guide Government was accelerated in recent years, and the period covered by this report continued to see the Agency's library grow with the acquisition of new important legal reference works.

PROSECUTIONS UNIT

The Attorney General is also the Public Prosecutor before the Criminal Court and the Court of Criminal Appeal. Certain prosecutions initiated by the Police require the previous consent or direction of the Attorney General as a form of safeguard of the fairness of such presentation.

The Prosecutions Unit is responsible for the examination of Inquiries (*processi verbali*), the piloting of proceedings before the Court of Magistrates as a Court of Criminal Inquiry (*kumpilazzjonijiet*), the prosecution of appeals from the judgements of the Court of Magistrates, the filing of bills of indictment before the Criminal Court, and the filing of appeals from trials by jury before the Court of Criminal Appeal. Trials by jury are prosecuted by legal officers from the Unit.

The introduction of sentence bargaining and its increased take-up by persons charged of serious criminal offences has also created the need for the Unit to keep updated statistics about court sentences, with a view to using these statistics as an essential tool in establishing the reasonable limits of sentence bargaining in

particular cases. Sentence bargaining has significantly contributed to the reduction of the number of pending trials, but it is also a laborious process for the Office.

The Office is also the depository of all *procès-verbaux* drawn up by Magistrates in Malta and Gozo following a judicial inquiry. The *procès-verbaux* are vetted by the legal staff for any further investigation that may be necessary. During 2011, 972 *procès-verbaux* were reviewed. Such processing is directed at ensuring that magisterial inquiries satisfy procedural legal requirements and that any compiled evidence is exhaustive. The Unit also deals with the granting of consent to the Police for summary proceedings, with the issuing of orders by the Attorney General with respect to drug cases, replies to applications for bail and appeals from decisions of the Court of Magistrates to grant bail, and on various issues connected with criminal proceedings and requests for visiting permits to prisoners awaiting trial.

The Unit also represents Malta in a number of EU Council Working Groups regarding legal initiatives in the criminal law field.

Appendix B (Table 2) gives a statistical data of the activities of the Prosecutions Unit during 2011.

CIVIL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAW UNIT

The Civil, Constitutional and Administrative Law Unit principally assists government departments through the tendering of legal advice on various topics. This involves the setting up of meetings, conferencing and legal research.

Lawyers within this Unit plead on behalf of Government before the Small Claims, Inferior, Superior and Appeal Courts and before the Constitutional Court, in court cases of a civil, administrative or constitutional nature. Lawyers within this Unit represent Government both before the Maltese and Gozo Courts. They also plead on behalf of Government in arbitration proceedings at the Malta Arbitration Centre, as well as before boards, tribunals and committees including the Land Arbitration Board, Industrial Tribunal and the Committee for the Deprivation of Maltese Citizenship.

Lawyers, legal procurators and clerks in the Unit also pursue the drafting, filing and follow-up of numerous judicial acts and legal letters required to collect monies due to Government and to enforce legal claims.

Another important field of activity of the Unit is the drafting and vetting of legislation.

This Unit also plays a pivotal role in international cooperation in civil and commercial matters both within the European Union and with third countries. This function includes the service of Maltese legal acts outside Malta and of foreign legal acts in Malta, as well as the taking of evidence both in Malta and abroad. Lawyers and legal procurators from the Unit are designated as contact points in the European Judicial Network. The contact points attend meetings organised by the Network.

Lawyers from this Unit also act as National Liaison Officers for Malta with the Fundamental Rights Agency and attend meetings organised by this Agency.

This Unit is also involved in the drafting, preparation and pleading of cases to which Malta is a party before the European Court of Human Rights and before the Grand Chamber.

Lawyers in this Unit represent Malta in a number of EU Council Working Groups regarding legal initiatives in the civil and administrative law field.

The data regarding the activities of the Civil, Constitutional and Administrative Law Unit during 2011 is found at Table 1 in Appendix A.

EU AFFAIRS UNIT

The functions of the EU Affairs Unit within the Office of the Attorney General are principally as follows:

- Conducting litigation on behalf of Malta before the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and the General Court, and advising ministries and departments on matters related to such litigation;
- Assisting and advising other lawyers within the Office of the Attorney General when EU-related issues arise in the course of local court proceedings;
- Providing advice and guidance to ministries, departments and the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU on EU legal questions;
- Representing Malta in a number of Council working groups;
- Providing advice on the drafting of EU-related national legislation, in particular national legislation transposing EU Directives.

Infringement Actions Initiated against Malta in 2011 currently pending before the CJEU

Case C-178/11 (re Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise): by virtue of these infringement proceedings, initiated before the Court of Justice on 18 April 2011, the European Commission is essentially requesting the Court to declare that, by failing to establish strategic noise maps in respect of the major roads and agglomeration previously identified by Malta under the second subparagraph of Article 7(1) of Directive 2002/49/EC, Malta has failed to fulfil its obligations under said Directive. Malta lodged its Statement of Defence in these proceedings on 26 May 2011, and its Rejoinder (in response to the Commission's Reply of 22 July) on 10 October 2011, both of which were drawn up by lawyers from the EU Affairs Unit in collaboration with officials from MEPA.

Interventions made by Malta in 2011 in cases before the CJEU

- Preliminary Reference Case C-347/09 - *Dickinger & Ömer* (Austria) re: the provision of cross-border i-gaming services by Maltese-licensed operators. The EU Affairs Unit assisted the Lotteries and Gaming Authority (LGA) in preparing Malta's oral submissions in this case and a lawyer from the Unit presented the same at the hearing before the CJEU, arguing in favour of the free movement of such services between EU Member states;
- Joined Preliminary References C-72/10 and C-77/10 - *Costa & Cifone* (Italy) re: provision of cross-border i-gaming services by Maltese-licensed operators in Italy. The EU Affairs Unit assisted the LGA in preparing Malta's oral submissions in this case, which a lawyer from the Unit presented at the hearing before the CJEU, arguing for the free movement of such services between EU Member States;
- Preliminary Reference C-604/10 - *Football Dataco* (United Kingdom) re: the subsistence or otherwise of intellectual property rights in annual fixture lists produced and published for the purposes of the English and Scottish football Premier Leagues. The EU affairs Unit assisted LGA in preparing Malta's oral submissions in this case, which argued for a narrow application of copyright protection afforded to such fixture lists in terms of Directive 96/9/EC (*The Database Directive*).

Judgments Delivered by the CJEU in 2011 in actions against Malta

Case C-376/09 (*Commission v Malta*): the CJEU delivered its judgment in favour of Malta on 19 May 2011. These infringement proceedings concerned the interpretation and application of Article 4(4) (v) and Article 16 of Regulation 2037/2000 on substances that deplete the ozone layer, re: the requirement for Member States to decommission fire protection systems and fire extinguishers containing halons for non-critical uses on board ships. The Court essentially upheld Malta's arguments in favour of a broad interpretation of 'critical use', thus finding that the Commission had not proved Malta's alleged failure to fulfil its obligations under the said Regulation.

Preliminary References referred to the CJEU by Maltese Courts in 2011

In 2011, no preliminary references from Maltese Courts were submitted to the Court of Justice of the European Union. However, towards the end of 2011, the Constitutional Court was in the process of drawing up a preliminary reference, which it intends to submit to the CJEU in relation to the interpretation of certain provisions of Directive 2002/20/EC on the authorisation of electronic communications networks and services. The issue arose in the course of litigation between Vodafone Malta Limited, Mobisle Communications Limited and the Comptroller of Customs and the Ministry of Finance, amongst others, on the legality or otherwise of imposing a 3% excise duty on mobile telephony services.

The Constitutional Court requested the assistance of the parties to the litigation in the process of drafting the preliminary reference. The EU Affairs Unit gave its input and assisted with the formulation of the terms of reference.

Pending Infringement Procedures

In the course of 2011, the EU Affairs Unit assisted and advised a number of ministries and the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU in relation to infringement procedures which are currently being pursued by the Commission but not yet referred to CJEU. The following are a few of the currently pending infringement procedures in connection with which the EU Affairs Unit gave substantial input in the course of 2011:

- IN 2009/2161 re: persons receiving a Maltese statutory social security pension and a civil service pension from another EU MS (UK service pensions);
- IN 2008/4008 re: Directive 96/67/EC on access to the ground-handling market at Community airports;
- IN 2010/4219 re: non-recognition of professional experience and seniority acquired in other Member States for the purpose of determining working conditions in the Maltese Public Sector (Article 45 TFEU and Article 7(1) of Regulation 1612/68);
- IN 2011/2032 re Directive 2004/38/EC (free movement of EU citizens – partners in a durable relationship);
- Pre-infringement letter from the Commission re: charging of different bus fares for residents and non-residents under the reformed public transport system;
- Pre-infringement letter concerning Article 36(20) of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act, requiring that an employee who abandons work within six months after her return from maternity leave must refund the wages received during her maternity leave.

The EU Affairs Unit also provided advice and assistance on a variety of EU legal issues and held meetings in connection therewith with a number of ministries and departments.

The EU Affairs Unit is also representing Malta in a number of Council Working Groups as follows:

- Working Party on the Court of Justice: at the moment this WP is discussing a number of fundamental changes to the Rules of Procedure and the Statute of the Court of Justice, in particular the Court's proposal to increase the number of judges at the General Court by twelve (to 39), as well as a number of key changes to the conduct of proceedings before the Court of Justice;
- Working Party on Fundamental Rights, Citizens Rights and Free Movement of Persons (FREMP): the EU Affairs Unit follows/attends meetings of this WP whenever the EU's accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is on the agenda for discussion. In 2010, the Commission was mandated to conduct negotiations on behalf of the Union with the Steering Committee on Human Rights of the Council of Europe (CDDH) for the elaboration of a draft accession agreement. A Draft Accession Agreement was elaborated in the course of 2011, however, there remain a number of important outstanding issues that require further discussion in this WP.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN CRIMINAL MATTERS UNIT

Another field of the Agency's work area is that of international judicial cooperation in criminal matters. During 2011, another official was recruited to work within this unit so that in all, the complement of this unit working on inter alia international criminal cases was increased to four. In general, the unit handles requests for legal assistance by the police and judicial authorities with regards to trans-frontier crime and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, such as requests for information, tracing of assets (including issuing investigation and attachment orders), requests for extradition, execution of European Arrest Warrants and International Arrest Warrants and also the transfer of sentenced persons.

Given the proximity of the work to the subject-matter of the prosecution unit, lawyers in the Unit also assist in the work of the latter, including the piloting of proceedings before the Court of Magistrates as a Court of Criminal Inquiry (*kumpilazzjonijiet*) and also in the prosecution of appeals from judgements of the Court of Magistrates. In particular, lawyers in this unit also deal with the examination of *procès-verbaux*. When it comes to the latter, the unit must ascertain that each magisterial inquiry satisfies the procedural legal requisites and also that the evidence compiled therein is conclusive and exhaustive.

The lawyers within this unit are also charged with assisting the Police in every manner in the enforcement of anti-money-laundering laws and in matters concerning the proceeds of crime, and especially in combating crimes affecting the EU's financial interests. They also give regular assistance to agencies combating illicit financial activities, inter alia, the Financial Investigations and Analysis Unit, and the Internal Audit and Investigations Department.

Legislative drafting and vetting of international instruments, especially those related to mutual cooperation and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters (together with their transposition into domestic laws), is also dealt with by this unit. Moreover, Treaties and Agreements about to be concluded by the Government of Malta and concerning the area of activity of the unit, are also examined and vetted after these are received from other governmental departments or from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so as to verify whether any amendments to domestic legislation would be warranted before signing or ratification of the same.

The year 2011 also saw radical changes in the governments of many Arab nations. This unit was thus very active in this regard owing to the additional work which it had to take on as a result of the sanctions imposed on Tunisia and Libya in particular, and also due to the many requests for legal assistance received from the authorities of these nations regarding a multitude of people who were being investigated following the revolts and the subsequent developments in those countries.

The unit also deals with the transposition into Maltese law of international criminal substantive and procedural instruments on mutual legal assistance through the drafting of domestic legislation to that effect. In 2011, a number of European legislative instruments were drafted, including Framework Decisions, Joint Actions of the EU, Treaties, Agreements and Conventions of the Council of Europe, and also of the United Nations.

Legal officers in this unit also follow topics within the European Union and Council of Europe Committees and working groups and are appointed as representatives to Eurojust and to the European Judicial Network. These tasks require them to participate regularly in international and EU meetings.

Appendix B (Table 3) gives a statistical data of the activities of this Unit for the year 2011.

DR PETER GRECH
Attorney General

APPENDIX A

Table 1

CIVIL & CONSTITUTIONAL ACTS DEALT BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL			
SUPERIOR COURTS			
	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
Judicial Letters	116	218	299
Writs of Summons/Rikorsi Ġuramentati	115	173	175
Appeal Applications/Replies	93	100	112
Applications/Replies on Oath	111	173	181
Garnishee Orders	12	31	19
Miscellaneous Judicial Acts (including Applications, Statement of Defence, Notes of Submissions)			
First Hall	1,217	1,219	1,255
Second Hall/Family	122	145	134
INFERIOR COURTS			
	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
Judicial Letters	972	1,643	554
Writs of Summons/Application	34	32	21
Warrants of Seizure	12	2	2
Garnishee Orders	60	152	184
Miscellaneous Judicial Acts (including Applications, Statement of Defence, Notes of Submissions)	1,217	2,098	1,804
GOZO COURTS			
	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
Judicial Letters	46	61	20
Writ of Summons/Statement of Defence	2	1	12
Warrants	2	0	10
Miscellaneous Judicial Acts	67	69	58
CIVIL CASES			
	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
Decided	375	343	445
Current Cases	734	710	925
New Cases	374	372	474
Sine Die	36	43	33
Waiting for hearing	24	31	42

APPENDIX B

Table 2

Criminal Proceedings 2009- 2010		
	2010	2011
Bills of Indictment	62	28
Trials by Jury		
<i>Deċiżi</i>	26	55
<i>Ammisjoni</i>	3	38
C. Order	18	16
Adjurnments	0	4
<i>Sine die</i>	1	Nil
'Gurin'	1	Nil
Cases remitted to Magistrates Courts for Judgement including Counter Orders	289	245
Consent for Summary Proceedings in terms of Section 370(4) of Criminal Code	843	894
New Preliminary Investigations referred to the Attorney General by the enquiring Magistrate	373	393
New cases remitted to the Attorney General as per Article 392a1 after a 'Guilty Plea' is registered	208	130
Drug Cases examined under Caps. 31 and 101 for Attorney General's Order to proceed	605	615
Miscellaneous Applications	2,567	1,788
Appeal Applications from Court of Magistrates including appeals under Articles 392 A(1)	101	119
Procès Verbaux (Malta)	950	917
Procès Verbaux (Gozo)	28	55
Total	978	972

Table 3

International Cooperation in Criminal Matters Unit Statistics – 2011		
	2010	2011
<i>Extradition</i>		
Malta as Requesting State	1	0
Malta as Requested State	2	2
<i>European Arrest Warrants</i>		
Malta as Requesting State	16	15
Malta as Requested State	12	9
<i>Financial Penalties</i>		
Malta as requesting State	0	0
Malta as Requested State	6	3
<i>Transfer of Sentenced Persons</i>		
Malta as Requesting State	1	8
Malta as Requested State	5	0
<i>Transfer of Proceedings</i>		
Malta as Requesting State	0	0
Malta as Requested State	1	3
<i>Requests for Mutual Legal Assistance</i>		
Malta as Requesting State	40	12
Malta as Requested State	61	99
<i>Money Laundering (Domestic)</i>		
Issue of Investigation & Attachment Orders	2	2
<i>Confiscation Orders</i>		
Malta as Requesting State	0	0
Malta as Requested State	1	1
<i>Freezing Orders</i>		
Malta as Requesting State	0	0
Malta as Requested State	1	3

Police Department

ADMINISTRATION

In-service Training Programme

The training programme to all police officers continued uninterrupted. More than 1,600 officers followed an eight-hour per month blend of core (physical training oriented) and non-core (academic) subjects at the Police Academy.

Attachment of German/Dutch Police Officers

During July, six German and two Dutch Police officers also followed a two-week attachment policing programme prior to their attestation as sergeants in the German and Dutch Police Services. The officers were shown the various sections and branches of the Force where they were able to gain hands-on experience as to how their Maltese counterworks work, as a measure of routine, in their day-to-day duties. In September, two other Dutch police officers followed the same programme. In December, a Polish law student was also granted a 13-day attachment in the Police Force.

New Police Academy

Tangible progress was registered vis-à-vis the New Police Academy. In July, the foundation stone of the new Academy was laid down at Ta' Kandja in the presence of the Prime Minister and the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs. Various meetings ensued between the architect and engineers in charge of the project and senior staff and tenders were issued for excavation works. Construction work at the new premises has in fact started and is progressing quite steadily.

Chair of the Annual Programme Committee (CEPOL)

Malta's role in this Committee, in the year under review, was that of Chair. This task was executed by the Superintendent in charge of Headquarters. As a result of this position, two Annual Committee meetings were held, one in Malta and the other in Lyon, France in March and November respectively. As Chair, Malta had to attend four Strategy Meetings, one Project Rationalisation Meeting, three Governing Board Meetings, and one Internal Audit Service Meeting. All were held abroad under the auspices of CEPOL.

CEPOL seminar held in Malta

In 2011, the Superintendent in charge of the local CEPOL Office, was as in previous years, tasked to assist in a training seminar held in Malta under the auspices of the European Police College – CEPOL. The seminar for SIRENE operators held in Malta between 27 - 30 September was chaired by Inspector Mario Cuschieri. 21 participants from various EU Member States, including three from Malta, participated. Four foreign experts in SIRENE matters delivered lectures to the participants. A positive rating was given to the organisation and content of the seminar, by the participants as well as by the trainers.

Bijografji

Two programmes of about an hour each on the Malta Police Force were coordinated by the Superintendent in charge Headquarters to be aired on the well-known documentary: *Bijografji*. All interviews were conducted in October 2011, with the programmes scheduled to be aired on PBS in January 2012.

APS Corporate Social Responsibility Award

In December, the Malta Police Force was awarded the APS Corporate Social Responsibility Award during the Malta People Award 2010, which was organised by the Foundation for Human Resources Development. The award is intended for organisations that show initiative and commitment in corporate social responsibility. The organisers recognised the determination in which the Corps organises extra activities and commitment to the public in general.

District of the Year Award

The internal competition held in connection with crime reduction between all police districts was won for the second time by Police District No 1 (Valletta and Floriana), which managed to reduce the reported crime rate by 15.19%, when compared with the previous year (2010), as shown in the table below:

Reported Crime by District				
District	2010	2011	Comparison	% Change
1	845	709	-127	-15.19
2	897	863	-8	-0.92
3	827	1,084	272	33.50
4	864	823	-24	-2.83
5	1,147	1,076	-56	-4.95
6	1,900	1,811	-56	-3.00
6A	2,303	2,904	618	27.03
7	1,147	1,163	38	3.38
8	1,017	1,121	117	11.65
9	1,748	1,964	238	13.79
10	493	465	-25	-5.10
GHQ	127	198	73	58.40
Total	13,315	14,181	1,060	8.08

Officer of the Year Award

The Award, introduced in 2006 to identify that member of the Force who throughout the preceding year, had manifested exceptional commitment to service, thereby upholding the highest traditions of the Force, was awarded to PC 1606 Robert Vassallo stationed at the Traffic Section, who was awarded with three certificates of commendation last year.

Police Constable Vassallo went beyond his normal call of duty, when on various occasions throughout the year, he showed great motivation and interest in his work. The award was to be presented to PC 1606 during the Annual Reunion ceremony in January 2012.

Certificates of Merit/Commendation

During the year, 18 certificates of merit/commendation for outstanding performance were awarded by the Commissioner to PC 265 Kenneth Ciangura, PC 869 Kurt Gauci, PS 1240 Joseph Camilleri, PC 1316 Peter Agius, WPC 67 Vanessa Borg, PS 1354 Claudio Redent Coppola, PS 114 Massimo Persiano, PC 729 Kevin Decelis, PC 450 Christopher Bartolo, WPC 297 Rhian Spiteri, PC 77 Carmel Parnis, PC 121

Josef Vassallo, PC 1606 Robert Vassallo, PC 1430 Alexander Mizzi, PC 1597 Alfred Chetcuti and PC 1129 Adrian Elich.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT

During 2011, the Internal Affairs Unit received and investigated 100 complaints against members of the Force. Besides, other investigations were initiated on the initiative of this unit, such as those following inspections or on receipt of confidential information. Apart from the above, 11 cases that were originated during previous years were concluded during the year under review.

Other investigations made by this Unit, which are not included in the list as shown hereunder, include breaches of discipline during supervisory patrols, failure to attend court sittings, etc.

The nature of complaints is shown hereunder. 49 of these complaints were concluded, whilst the remainder are still being investigated or pending. The outcome of those concluded ranged from action before a disciplinary board or internal disciplinary action, to no further action - as allegations proved unjustified.

Nature of complaint	Reported	Concluded
Breaches of the provisions of the Malta Police Act	27	15
Breaches of the provisions of the Laws of Malta	9	2
Service not rendered	15	4
Failure to enforce the law	6	2
Others	43	26
Total	100	49

Quarter Master Stores

During 2011, various items were purchased to cater for the daily needs of the Trades Section (MT and Carpenters) besides the usual uniforms and accoutrements, from local agents and retailers after due authorisation from HQ was obtained.

Items found by individuals and delivered to the Police were also dealt with by this section after the publication of each item in the respective Government Gazette.

Bullet proof vest covers were tailored by members of this section and distributed to all members of the Force below the rank of Inspector as a personal issue.

During the year, three Daelim motorcycles were purchased for the Central Delivery Office, while two Ford Focus Estates and 20 Ford Focus Saloon, were procured for use by the Mobile Squad.

COMMUNITY AND MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT

Community Relations

The remit of the Community and Media Relations Unit is that of:

- processing of requests for information by students, NGOs and the general public;
- handling of the Customer Care System and the OPRES (Online Police Reporting System) as regards requests for information;
- liaison with other Police units for the Police Day programme;
- liaison with various NGOs, local councils and schools requesting services of various police officers in educational talks, Traffic Safety Campaign, the services of the Police Band and Jazz Group and visits to the Police Academy and Museum as well as the Police Dog and Mounted Sections;
- quarterly publication of the Police Magazine;

- coordinating for the visiting of the Last Supper Display for schools and local councils;
- lecturing in various schools regarding careers in the Police Force;
- coordinating visits to Police sections (Police Museum, Crime Museum, Police Academy, Dog Section and Mounted Section) by students and other NGOs as required;
- disseminating crime prevention material, such as posters and book marks to all local councils and police stations and in talks delivered to schools.

Requests received during 2011 were:

- visits by schools, NGOs, etc – 164
- displays/participation at schools, local councils, NGOs, etc – 122 (57 by Dog Section, 22 Mounted Section, 18 Police Band, 6 Jazz Band, three Silent Drill, 13 Traffic, three others (Mascot, Mobile Squad, SAG);
- requests for interviews from students, newspapers, researchers, etc – 56
- participation/interviews on TV Stations or Radios – 194
- requests for talks at schools, local councils, NGOs, private entities, etc – 93
- requests for filming including borrowing of police equipment, uniforms, etc and assistance by the Police during filming – nine
- information requests received from journalists, students and others – 303
- Online Reporting System (OPRES) – 382 received; 359 settled.

Media Relations

- Daily monitoring of news both visual and radio, newspapers and internet, publications of press releases and coordination of press conferences;
- Recording and monitoring of news bulletins and programmes where these concern the Police;
- Arrangements as requested by the Media for interviews of police personnel;
- Processing of requests for information for the radio, TV and print media;
- Liaison with producers from Net TV, One TV, and PBS, Favourite Channel in connection with various police participations on day-to-day running of police sections. Such programmes are on a weekly basis and run throughout the winter and part of the summer schedule;
- Liaison with local producers as regards requests for filming for local programmes (requesting police assistance, uniforms and liaison with other police departments)

Type of Activity	No
Issue of Press Releases	618
Editorial Meetings/Crime Conferences/Press Briefings	3
Replies to articles published through the Media	11

HUMAN RESOURCES BRANCH

This Office was once again heavily committed during 2011 due to the National Referendum on Divorce. This event involved major preparation and organisation by this Office in the selection of police personnel to distribute the relative voting documents, supervise polling places and to sustain continuous supervision and order across all the localities.

The Branch also performed the following activities:

- *Retirements:* During 2011, there were 87 cases of retirements/resignations/medically unfit/dismissals/deceased from the Police Force (two Assistant Commissioner; one Superintendent; six Inspector; four Sergeant Major; ten Police Sergeant; 62 Police Constable; two Woman Police Constable).
- *Other HR functions:* The HR Office also examined confidential reports regarding Police personnel for eventual promotion from one scale to another, advancements and confirmation in their respective appointment. Medical and injury boards were also appointed by this Office, together with the keeping of

records concerning sick and vacation leave, unpaid, emigration and responsibility leave, allowances and financial information in order to keep documentation for pension purposes.

This Office kept updated members of the Force with directives issued by the Commissioner. Consequently, various GHQ Circulars were issued and circulated from this Office so as to inform all the members of the Police Force with these directives.

- *Attestations:* Following a call for applications issued on 18 May 2010, 83 recruits were sworn in as Probationary Police Constables on 12 September 2011.
- *Applications:* Throughout 2011, as per call for applications for Police Constables issued on 8 April, a total of 150 applications were received and processed. All applicants were interviewed and 87 recruits were selected to commence a one-year course at the Police Academy as from 19 September 2011.

In relation to the call for applications for Police Inspectors issued on 2 March 2010, for which 59 applications had been received, 31 applicants were sworn in as Probationary Police Inspectors on 27 September 2011, after successfully completing an ad hoc course at the Police Academy.

During the year under review, there were also two re-instatements.

- *Promotions:* During 2011, the following promotions were effected: 36 Police Constables to Police Sergeants and 18 Police Sergeants to Second Class Sergeant-Majors.
- *Disciplinary Sittings:* This Office also issued disciplinary charges for offences against the Police Act (Cap 164 of the Laws of Malta). Seven summary procedure sittings were held, during which 133 cases were heard.
- *Meetings Office:* During the year, this Office received and processed a total of 104 applications for the holding of public activities: five meetings, eight public discussions, 31 protests/marches/conferences/manifestations, 12 demonstrations, one mass meeting and 47 prayer meetings.

Upgrading and Renovation of Police Stations/Branches

The following is a list of Police Stations/Branches that were refurbished during the year under review:

- Overhaul at GHQ's Police Chapel - Plastering and White washing, new electrical installation, new timber soffit, new furniture. new gypsum partition;
- Refurbishment at QMS's Strong Room - Plastering and white washing, new electrical installation and new filing cabinets;
- Refurbishment at Forensic Science Laboratory - Plastering and white washing, new gypsum soffit and installation of two new ceiling air conditioners;
- Refurbishment at Forensic's D.N.A/A.F.I.S offices - Plastering and white washing, polishing floor tiles, new gypsum soffit, new electrical installation and new furniture;
- Refurbishment at Forensic Garage - Plastering and white washing, layering new floor tiles, repairs and adjusting of lighting system and servicing the vehicles' lifter;
- Refurbishment of Forensic Garage's toilets - Plastering and white washing, installation of two new toilets complete with flushings, new electrical installation, installation of air extractor, installation of automatic hand paper rolls and soap liquid dispenser, two new flash doors, layering of new floor and wall tiles and installation of water system;
- Refurbishment at Hut 120 used by Forensic Section - Demolition of old timber partition and old floor tiles, construction works regarding the ground floor and first floor. Sand blasting of walls and arch, plastering and white washing with special material. New electrical and water installation, layering of new floor tiles and stairs tiles, layering of parquet at the first floor. Covering ground floor walls with special gypsum boards. Installation of new gypsum soffit, installation of fire alarm system and plastering of the front façade. Installation of two ceiling air conditioners and new timber apertures and offices furniture. Works are still in progress;
- Refurbishment at CID Lock-Up - Plastering and white washing, maintenance on stainless steel wash hands basins and new kitchen cupboard and repairs on minor electric lights;
- Maintenance at Officers' Quarters at GHQ - Plastering and white washing, and installation of new lockers;

- Maintenance at Accounts Section - Plastering and white washing, installation of new wall plugs as requested, layering of new floor tiles and some new office furniture. These works were done in all offices;
- Maintenance at VISA Office - Plastering and white washing, layering new floor and wall tiles in toilet room, and painting of apertures;
- Refurbishment of the new police Secretariat Office at GHQ - Plastering and white washing, new electrical installation, replace broken floor tiles and painting the aperture;
- Overhaul at the new Valletta Police Station
- Plastering and white washing, new office furniture for the Office of the Assistant Commissioner and Superintendent in charge, inspectors and Sergeant Major Offices, orderly room, new lockers and maintenance on all air conditioners;
- Marsa Police Station Orderly Room - Installation of new furniture, counter desk and office desks;
- Naxxar Police Station Orderly Room - Installation of new furniture, counter desk, lockers, office desks, plastering and white washing;
- Hamrun Police Station Inspector's Office - Installation of new office furniture;
- Balzan Police Station Inspector's Office - Installation of new office furniture;
- B'Kara Police Station Inspector's Office - Installation of new office furniture;
- Mgarr (Malta) Police Station - Installation of new kitchenette cupboard and new flash door. Plastering and white washing;
- Sea Port Police Station - Installation of new units and shelving;
- Police Band's Room at Fort St. Elmo - Plastering and white washing. New units of shelving and office furniture;
- Mobile Squad's Strong Room - Installation of one new timber unit for keeping firearms;
- Refurbishment at C.D.O. Inspector's Office - Plastering and white washing, installation of electric system, new gypsum partitions and new office furniture;
- Ghadira Police Station - Plastering, white washing and maintenance on apertures;
- Refurbishment at Mellicha Police Station - Plastering and white washing, roof maintenance and installation of new office furniture at Inspector's Office;
- B'Bugia Police Station - Installation of new glass door;
- Refurbishment of CID Yard toilets - Removal of old damaged floor and wall tiles, toilets, new water and electrical installation, layering of new floor and mounting of wall tiles is still in progress;
- Zurrieq Police Station - Repairs and maintenance on the drainage pipes and system;
- Sliema Police Station - Plastering and white washing, new office furniture;
- SAG – New Police Academy - Demolition of old ex-rescue and scuba quarters. Works are still in progress;
- Maintenance on Police Sentry Boxes - Painting and modifications of windows and roof;
- Dangerous structure at SAG (electrical service room) - Repairing dangerous wall (this wall is part of a boundary wall) as it collapsed during inclement weather. Work is still in progress.

Other everyday requirements in the respective police stations and branches, such as plastering, whitewashing, plumbing, electricity, network cables, installation and maintenance of air conditioners, lifts, drainage systems, membrane repairs, carpentry works, repairing of barriers, traffic signs and other needs were taken in hand on a regular basis, in order to keep the best working environment in all police premises, in the interest of the general public and staff deployed thereat.

IT SERVICES

During 2011, the IT Services continued to expand their services in preparation of major projects that are expected to be concluded during 2012. These include major European projects such as the Prüm Data Exchange network (that includes fingerprint and DNA exchange), continuation of the SISII project, ECRIS (which also involves the implementation of a new criminal records system), and the further development of our border control system. All these works were carried out in parallel with other projects supporting existing police end-users.

Schengen Information System (SIS)

The IT Services, through the National SIS MT, has been responsible for the management and upkeep of all connectivity and interaction with the Schengen Information System (SIS) since 2007. This process involves ensuring that access is available to the Schengen Information System (SIS) on a 24x7 basis and that all national applications interact with data available through this system.

During 2011, access to the SIS was not available for a total period of seven hours and 57 minutes. This relates to unscheduled downtime and was mostly due to failure from external factors such as electrical power availability. Scheduled downtime only amounted to six hours and 25 minutes.

During the first quarter of 2011, the Police/MJHA/Agile contract was signed for additional development, maintenance and support in relation to the new SISII system. This service level agreement is part of the SIS II implementation. Through this contract, specific roles have been identified by Agile that are to be designated to police personnel.

Throughout the year, AGILE (Italia), together with a local contractor and members of the IT Services section, installed all the hardware and software necessary to allow the system to operate from two identified Police Data Centres, one at Police HQ, and the secondary backup data centre at the Malta International Airport. Towards the end of 2011, some of the hardware had to be changed and upgraded as a result of exigencies imposed by the EU Commission on data retention.

Visits by AGILE software engineers intensified during 2011 with regular testing and maintenance being coordinated by IT Services personnel. This also included the procurement and installation of firewalls necessary to provide additional protection.

During the last quarter, the IT section was subject to a Security and Risk Analysis by security officers from AGILE as part of the contract. This was necessary to highlight any weaknesses and to establish varying stress levels. From this report, it transpired that an Escalation Plan and a Crisis Management plan needs to be developed. This means that resources need to be identified and given appropriate roles including training according to the project action plan.

Police Incident Reporting System II

Developments within the Police Incident Reporting System II context continued during 2011. A new statistical collation module was introduced to facilitate the process of collecting and processing of statistical data. This has helped the Statistics Office to publish new and more detailed reports.

A new alert system involving images of wanted and missing persons was introduced. This measure allows instant notification of such alerts to all PIRS II users. The notification is in real-time. This has proved to be a successful new addition.

Works have also continued towards the integration of the Criminal Records Project with the PIRSII. The resultant product should see a complete case management system that will allow the Malta Police Force to manage incidents from the moment of being reported until a person is arraigned in court and sentenced. This process will automatically update the criminal records database whilst providing operational police officers with a series of query tools such as criminal record data, bail conditions, wanted persons, and arrest data. Although most of the works have now been concluded, it is expected that this project will be ready during 2012.

Border Control System

The existing Border Control System remained operational during 2011 with virtually no downtime. Due to the stability of this system, our border control officers have been in a position to use this very important

tool to maintain the security of our nation. Talks were initiated to integrate the VISA system operated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. System contractors were assigned the task of modifying the border control system to allow for VISA checks. This will be carried out together with other existing checks that relate to Schengen Information System (SIS) and National Stop List (NSL) data. The immediate task is to include alpha numeric VISA checks as part of the border control process but the scope is to eventually introduce biometric checks at the border.

An agreement was also reached with the contractor to renew all equipment related to this project. This equipment renewal is expected to start during the 1st quarter of 2012. The cost related to this renewal is expected to be absorbed by the project sponsor. Biometric devices are being tested.

Under the Border Control Project, two new sites have been identified as being new border control check points. These are the Valletta Gate Terminal and Virtu` Terminal, both situated in Valletta. Designs were discussed with the contractor and are scheduled to be implemented in 2012.

Prüm Framework Decision

The role of the IT Services section in this project is to assist the Project Manager assigned the task of implementing the Prüm Framework Decision. In preparation for this legal requirement new systems, namely a new Automated Finger Prints Identification System (AFIS), a new DNA exchange database (CODIS) and integration with the European Car Registration Information System (EUCARIS), were prepared.

The main activity in this area focused on the preparation, design, publication and award of two major tenders related to the Prüm Framework Decision project. This entire process was carried out within stipulated project timeframes. Two major contracts were awarded and works have started and will continue throughout 2012:

- DNA - A technical decision was taken to make use of CODIS version 7.0. This represents the latest version of DNA information systems. A tender was prepared, issued and adjudicated for the provision of computer hardware and software necessary to implement the DNA database. The project also includes business continuity and disaster recovery components. Equipment derived from this tender process was installed and commissioned and is now operational within the ITS infrastructure. A delegation from the United States assisted during the installation of the DNA exchange database. This system consists of two different applications, namely a production and test environment. Works are still in progress and are scheduled to be completed during the 1st Quarter of 2012.
- AFIS – A tender document was prepared based on the requirements of both the Prüm Framework Decision and the requirements of our Forensic Science Laboratory. The tender was adjudicated and awarded within the stipulated project time period. The contract has now been awarded and is currently within its implementation phase. The system is scheduled to be operational by the 2nd Quarter 2012.

As regards EUCARIS, a decision was taken to integrate this system with PIRS II. A contract was signed with MITA for development of web services that would allow for the exchange of information between these systems.

A specific computer room was prepared according to ICT standards for these two new systems. This project was completed as scheduled during 2011.

Criminal Records

The criminal records project which was initiated in 2010 involves creating a system to record and manage criminal records. The concept is to integrate the system to the existing PIRS II and provide a single complete workflow system allowing users to process data through one major system.

The first stage that involved creating a data entry programme which would allow the police to assign users with the arduous task of capturing historical criminal records information had been completed and is being used. The second phase which involves the capture of all criminal records (both Malta and Gozo) is still ongoing. Data capture is being performed by officers with a solid legal background. The third phase involves creating an interface that allows for data exchange between the criminal records system and the PIRS II. A number of user groups were coordinated, bringing together police officers from various sections. This consultation process has provided valuable information that will lead to the establishment of a system based on experiences, requirements and policies. This phase of the project was concluded during the first half of 2011. Additional works related to peripheral services such as court scheduling, witness management and citation processing is being planned for 2012.

Weapons System

A scoping exercise for a weapons administration system was concluded in 2010. The system is required to ensure that all registered weapons are properly managed and processed within a reasonable time. The project will also integrate with the PIRS II, SIS and NSL system, therefore creating a real-time notification and alert system. The project design has been concluded, but the project tender process has not been launched pending funding.

Infrastructure

- The Valletta Police Station was re-allocated to new premises. This required the implementation of new infrastructure and services.
- Due to ever demanding bandwidth requirements and added computer services requested by users, new Fibre Optic connections were installed to strengthen the GHQ main building infrastructure. This required that a new cable be laid between the IT Services main building and the Main Administrative building. This includes new links to the Forensic block (new and old), Human Resources wing, Prosecutions and Drugs Squad area.
- The Marsa and Floriana Police stations were added to the police network infrastructure. These stations were provided with standard office automation services, access to PIRS II and affidavits.
- During the last quarter, 17 new Layer II - Network Switches were introduced, replacing older versions of equipment. This forms part of the ongoing restructuring and security re-organisation at Police General Headquarters. These new switches were installed at the Investigations Building, Control Room, Legal Office, Secretariat, Security Branch, Eurodac, Criminal Records and the IT Services amongst others. The scope of this new hardware is to improve performance and to enforce security measures.
- New networks were installed at the new Secretariat wing, the new designated Prüm Office at the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) and a new location for the main FSL offices at Police Headquarters.
- The Police Domain, FORCE, was substantiated with additional storage capacity to handle online storage and backup to all users with the Police. The total number of computers joined to the Active Directory is 730.
- Further to the above implementation, an ongoing exercise is that of the issuing of individual login names and passwords to all police computer users. The total number of police users on the main domain is 1,187 accounts - an increase of 35% from 2010.

Provision of new computers

A total of 276 computer units, procured through the leasing agreement, were deployed during 2011.

Help Desk Services

One key aspect of IT Services is to provide help desk facilities to all users on a 24x7 basis. Assistance is provided to both internal police users and international colleagues in relation to systems such as the SIS and Europol.

During 2011, the Police Networks Operations Centre (NOC) managed and assisted over 5,477 calls generated by end users (i.e. are not Schengen related). Of these, 2,231 calls required call-outs, i.e. an officer from the ITS Unit was requested to call on site to assist the end user or to repair faulty hardware or software. 1,021 calls were related to network incidents, whilst 201 calls were due to faults or difficulties involving databases.

Given that the NOC provides a 24x7 support for both international and national calls, the amount of call outs and support services was impressive considering the small team of officers available for this purpose.

Telephony services

The IT Services was also heavily involved in the implementation and monitoring of a new support and maintenance contract related to the Police telephone network. Considering the importance of this network for both internal and external communication traffic, IT Services dedicated a considerable amount of time to ensure that the police retain a high quality communication infrastructure.

The IT Services were also involved in the review of the 112 telephony infrastructure. This process involved not only technical support, but expanded into the core analytical and management area of monitoring and control incoming traffic. The 112 network was also the subject of a successful EU Commission monitoring event.

The changes related to the 112 network ranged from infrastructural preparation and installation of equipment/software to testing and fine-tuning.

The IT Services is also involved in a project that oversees the automatic transfer of call location data with all emergency calls. This involves the development of a new information system that requires the cooperation of all telephone services providers. A contract was prepared and will be completed during the first half of 2012.

Training

One of the roles of the IT Services is to provide end-user training to all police officers in relation to specific computer based systems. During the year, 258 officers were trained in the use of PIRSII. These officers were trained on how to best make use of the system's functionality and services.

Additional training was also provided to 21 police officers nominated to attend CEPOL courses on exchange periods abroad.

All new recruits were trained at the Police Academy in relation to communication systems which are available to the Malta Police Force vis-à-vis Schengen, Interpol and Europol. 153 new recruits were trained in PIRS II and Schengen matters.

CYBER CRIME UNIT

As expected, the work load experienced by the Cyber Crime Unit continued to increase. The rapid advance of technological change (technology is becoming cheaper, thus more accessible to the general public), and the Maltese Government's strategic direction towards wider internet use guarantees that this increase will continue in the future.

Reported Crime

It is difficult to quantify the exact number of computer misuse related crimes that are reported to the police. This is mainly due to the fact that most computer-based crime forms part of more conventional or

traditional crime categories. Nevertheless the table below indicates the number of call-outs submitted to the Unit requesting assistance in computer-based investigations.

	2009	2010	2011
Adult Pornography	3	4	-
Child Pornography	29	17	12
Computer Misuse	80	128	134
Counterfeit Currency	2	1	1
Fraud, Forgery and Misappropriation	68	60	67
Trafficking in Human Beings	1	-	2
Illegal Gambling	1	4	-
Incitement of Racial Hatred	-	4	1
Information Gathering re: Other Police Reports	25	24	23
Information Gathering re: Missing Persons	4	4	3
Insults, Threats and Private Violence	85	88	91
Intellectual Property Rights	-	3	1
Other Serious Crimes	5	20	20
Prostitution	-	-	4
Sexual Offences (incl. Defilement of Minor)	12	10	10
Terrorism	2	8	3
Total	317	375	372

During the same period, the Unit collected 1,978 items to be analysed and documented. As well as an increase in the actual number of items received for analysis, one must also consider that the time-frame required to process such digital evidence is also increasing exponentially to the increase in capacity of the devices being forensically examined (i.e. the size of the storage devices such as hard disks and USB devices).

	2009	2010	2011
Computer Systems	97	82	101
Hard Disk (Internal/External)	154	97	122
Compact Discs/DVDs	1,335	1,080	1,652
3.5" Floppy Diskettes	34	22	28
Other Media	43	47	75
Documents/Logs/Paper Evidence, etc	-	10	-
Total	1,663	1,338	1,978

Crime Prevention Initiatives

The Cyber Crime Unit was involved in a number of crime prevention initiatives. The unit was involved in 52 public talks that were focused on creating awareness on how to avoid becoming a victim of computer related crime and how to react should an incident occur. The meetings were designed to address the specific needs of focus groups, namely teaching staff, parents and youths and students.

During the same period, the Unit was also invited to participate in 24 crime prevention initiatives held through the local media (including TV shows and radio programmes).

	2009	2010	2011
Teaching Staff	10	6	3
Parents	16	23	13
Youths and Students	26	32	35
Others	1	1	1
Local Media	8	6	24
Total	61	68	76

An ongoing crime prevention initiative that is being undertaken by the Cyber Crime Unit is an awareness campaign entitled *Be Smart Online* launched by the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) with the participation of the Commissioner for Children, Aġenzija Appoġġ, Education Department, church schools and the Malta Police Force. The Cyber Crime Unit represents the Malta Police Force in regular meetings

held in relation to this project as well as appearances on the local media. Another aspect of the same project is to promote the Internet Reporting Hotline (IRH) operated by Aġenzija Appoġġ. The Unit receives regular feedback from reports received by the IRH about actions which might amount to criminal activity that have been reported through these means.

Perhaps the most important crime prevention measure is the manning of a Child Abuse Internet Filter, through which Maltese internet users, making use of the service provided by internet service providers participating in this initiative, who attempt to access internet websites containing child indecent material are being re-directed to a 'Stop Page'. This is another ongoing initiative that requires regular updating of the 'stop-list' associated with this filter and continuous correspondence with ISPs. Currently, four local ISPs agreed to participate in this voluntary preventative measure and are currently blocking nearly 800 known child abuse webpages. Another ISP is currently testing and is scheduled to go 'live' during the first quarter 2012. A bid will be launched under the ISEC 2011 funding programme in an attempt to develop and implement a more in-depth technical solution.

The Cyber Crime Unit also continued to strengthen partnerships with local and international agencies in an attempt to prevent computer-related crimes. Most notably, the Unit strengthened relationships with Aġenzija Appoġġ, local internet and communication service providers, *Telefono Arcobaleno* (Italy), the FBI Innocent Images Task Force (USA), the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) of the United States of America, Microsoft Corporation, Hi5, InHope, Google and Facebook.

International Initiatives

The unit also participated in a number of international conferences, seminars and training programmes.

Despite the size of the Cyber Crime Unit, efforts were made to identify and benefit from funding opportunities. These include;

- An agreement was reached with the BKA (Germany) to hold a research and training programme in Malta during 2012. The course will focus on solid state technology. It is worth noting that at present no training on this subject exists. The whole training module will be created with the support of the Cyber Crime Unit. This is part of the ISEC 2010 funding programme of which Malta is also a partner. The course will be developed and submitted to EU member states and candidate countries in November 2012.
- A CEPOL bid related to the organising of a 'Child Abuse in Cyberspace' was accepted by the EU Commission. A grant agreement is expected to be signed during early 2012.
- Participation with the Latvian Police in the improvement of the investigation process related to child pornography crimes on the Internet. This is part of an ISEC 2010 grant agreement. Should this project be accepted, members of the Cyber Crime Unit will be using their expertise and experience in the development of a manual to be used for child pornography investigations.

Local Projects

The Unit also participated in a number of local initiatives. These included:

- Participation in the Internet Governance Forum - a joint initiative of MITC and MCA, which brings together stakeholders from key entities within the government, business and civil society;
- Cooperation with the University of Malta's Faculty of ICT, through which initiative students following courses at the University are being given the opportunity to develop tools that will be eventually used by law enforcement in investigations;
- Another initiative with the University, specifically the Students Council and the Criminology Students' Association, is a Degree Plus Course in Cyber Crime offered to all university students. Around 40 students completed this ten-week long course, which was delivered by members of the Cyber Crime Unit in conjunction with representatives from the industry and academia.
- An agreement was also reached with the Faculty of Information Technology of the University allowing for closer cooperation, enabling students to opt to participate in three technical projects as part of their studies.

STATISTICS OFFICE

During 2011, the Statistics Office produced a regular number of monthly and annual reviews providing Police Senior Management with crime statistics necessary to address crime patterns and trends. These reports provided necessary information that allowed the Malta Police Force to prepare and implement a strategy to reduce reported crime.

The Statistics Office also published a number of ad hoc reports related to parliamentary questions, information requests submitted by the media, students, organisation and the general public. Over 220 requests for statistical information, primarily related to media and students requests were processed during 2011. The Office also published a number of thematic reports that were requested by other police sections and branches.

POLICE ACADEMY

The principal aims and objectives of the Police Academy remain that of teaching and training police personnel and trainees to be as professional as possible to fulfil their role in the Malta Police Force with ability, knowledge and expertise, integrity and impartiality, effectively and efficiently. With these objectives in mind, training to officers and also to the other ranks, remains the top priority of the Academy.

Several training courses were organised during the year:

- regular monthly in-service training addressed to the other ranks. Collectively, the attendance of these members (other ranks) reached 33,145. These courses, tailor-made to the officers' duties, consisted of both academic and practical subjects that are of interest to the members of the Force, to enable them carry out their duties in the most professional manner;
- firearm handling and shooting training to 11,380 members of the Force, as well as to 94 gazetted officers, 83 trainees and officer deployed for duties overseas;
- 10,863 attendances by serving members and 83 trainees at the 31st Basic Training Course at training in unarmed combat, self defence and proper arresting techniques;
- basic parade drill to 252 serving members;
- physical training sessions to 8,024 officers;
- lessons leading to the attainment of the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) certificate;
- PIRS II training given to 65 members;
- on 12 September, 83 trainees attending the 30th Basic Training Course graduated to Probationary Police Constables.
- 70 trainees attending the 32nd Basic Training Course, which commenced in September, also receiving training in life saving. As a result of these courses (open to both serving members and trainees), the Malta Police Force in 2011 was awarded the Aggregate Shield by the Royal Life Saving Society (Malta Branch);
- commencement of the 8th Officer Cadet Training Course (open to both serving members and civilians); on 27 September, 31 participants were appointed Police Inspectors;
- educational/career visits to the Academy by students from a number of different schools - 1,334 students participated in these visits.

The annual shooting competition was held during May 2011, in which 1,283 members of the Force participated.

During the year under review, the Police Academy Board met on a number of occasions and discussed various issues, including the new Police Academy, Basic Training Courses and the relative curriculum for Police trainees and the general direction of the Academy.

EU AFFAIRS OFFICE

The Police EU Office is an integral part of the Malta Police Force. The purpose of this Office is to assist the Malta Police Force in carrying out its EU-related business. Amongst others, the EU Office carries out the following roles:

- information gathering
- raising the Malta's Police Force profile in the EU
- developing regional links
- exchange of information

The EU Office is also responsible for the handling of classified information which is regulated by a number of laws which inter alia include the Official Secrets Act (Cap 50), Professional Secrets Act (Cap 377), Security Service Act (Cap 391), Code of Organisation and Civil Procedure (Cap 12), and Data Protection Act (Cap 440).

One main function of the EU Office is the processing of documents received from various ministries as well as from other foreign organisations such as Frontex, CEPOL, OLAF, the European Commission, Europol, Interpol, etc. Information received differs from council decisions and regulations to training programmes for police officers. These training programmes and courses offer police personnel a chance to acquaint themselves with new methods of policing as well as information gathering and thus enhancing efficiency and competency in the Malta Police Force.

On several occasions, the Malta Police Force was requested by different organisations to host meetings in Malta. As a means of demonstrating its commitment, the EU Affairs Office is often involved in the coordination and logistical requirements of such meetings and training courses.

The number of invitations received for officers to travel abroad during 2011 totals 917 invitations. Average acceptance of participation to these invitations amounts to 41.5%. The following courses, meetings, conferences, seminars were attended by Police personnel during the period under review:

EU-related		
Organisation	Courses	Attendees
EUROPOL	49	49
EUROPOL/OLAF	1	1
FRONTEX	65	68
EU PROJECT	1	1
EUROJUST	6	4
EU COMMISSION	34	34
COMMISSION/FRONTEX	1	1
EU CONSILIUM	1	1
OLAF/EU COMMISSION	1	1
OLAF	2	2
EUCPN	1	1
COUNCIL OF EUROPE	8	8
INTERPOL	1	1
COSPOL	1	1
CEPOL	36	35
EUROPEAN POLICE NETWORK	4	4
ATLAS COMMISSION	4	4
EURO PROTECT	1	1
HUNGARIAN PRESIDENCY	1	1
POLISH PRESIDENCY	2	2
ISEC Project	5	5
ISEC	2	2
OSCE	1	1
Project CEART	1	1

Project STARR	1	1
UNODC	1	1
EDPOL/EU COMMISSION	1	1
Total	232	232

Non EU Meetings		
Organisation	Courses	Attendees
<i>Ministero Dell'Interno</i>	2	5
Embassy of Malta	1	2
FBI - Embassy of the United States of America	1	1
Embassy of the USA	1	1
Italian Customs Agency	1	1
Italian Police	1	1
Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development	1	1
Other Non-EU	5	6
Total	13	18

Courses/seminars organised in Malta by the EU Affairs Office		
Partner Organisation	Course	Attendees
CEPOL	20 th Annual Programme Committee Meeting	27
CEPOL	Sirene Advanced Training Preparatory Meeting	8
CEPOL	Sirene Advanced Training Course	30
Total		65

LEGAL OFFICE

The Legal Office is responsible for various tasks, including data protection issues and the application of the Freedom of Information Act in the Police Department.

Legal Advice

This Office delivers both oral and written advice/opinions on various legal matters mainly criminal, administrative and civil matters. Members of this Office are faced on a daily basis with criminal cases where investigating officers seek advice as to whether a case merits prosecution or not. These cases may be discussed in depth jointly with the investigating officer and cases are scrutinised to establish if there is enough evidence to obtain a conviction in court. The Office is at times consulted in order to decide whether a case is of a criminal nature or not.

The Police are also involved with administrative matters, such as the issuing of licences for weapons, explosives and certain commercial activities that are held on specific days. Also, the Legal Office is consulted on the procedure for the processing and revocation of licences, as well as other administrative measures in those areas where the Police are competent to act. This Office was approached several times to assist in those cases which are usually heard before the Police Tribunal, where the Police would have objected to the issue of a licence for a one-off event.

Members of this Office also deliver consultation regarding cases of a civil nature, which the Malta Police is involved in. The most common civil cases are those having to do with instances where the Malta Police Force are possessing or using premises as a police station, collisions where police vehicles are involved, and giving advice on Judicial Acts notified to the Police. Furthermore, members of this Office sometimes appear on behalf of the Commissioner of Police in civil cases.

Assistance in the Prosecution of Criminal Cases

The Legal Office assists prosecuting officers by discussing any legal issues that crop up during the prosecution of offences in court. It assists prosecuting officers in compiling note of submissions and

replying to court decrees. In some cases, legal officers appear in court to assist prosecution officers during the criminal proceedings as directed by the Commissioner of Police. Furthermore, an Inspector is responsible for the prosecution of offences in the Juvenile Court and at times also prosecution duties in the Family Court, when the Vice Squad inspectors are not available due to other work commitments.

During 2011, this Office investigated various sites uploaded on the internet that refer to racial hatred.

Drafting of Legislation & Internal Circulars

The Legal Office is in charge of drafting domestic legislation. This year, this Office was involved in the drafting regulations about the serving of summons by post and immigration regulations. Moreover, this Office also drafts internal circulars regarding legal issues. During 2011, circulars were prepared concerning Gaming and Amusement Machines, Sale of Alcohol, and VAT Registration.

Transposition of EU Laws

The Legal Office is involved in the necessary works to transpose EU laws into national legislation. Several meetings were held jointly with MJHA on the transposition of certain other EU legal instruments such as: Directive 2009/52/EC providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third country nationals, the Return Directive for returning illegally staying third country nationals, and Directive 2008/115/EC on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals, in accordance with fundamental rights as general principles of Community law, as well as international law, including refugee protection and human rights obligations.

Domestic meetings on legal affairs

Members of this Office participated in meetings with other public authorities relating to domestic legal affairs. During this year, this Office attended meetings held jointly with the Malta Tourism Authority and the Trading Licensing Unit, regarding the issue of bottle shops in particular those situated in Paceville area, with the Information and Data Protection Commissioner and the Office of the Prime Minister on data protection issues, with MJHA on the necessary amendments to the Bill on restorative justice, and with the Commissioner for Children on the drafting of teen party regulations.

The role of this Office in these meetings was to discuss certain legal points raised from other authorities from a law enforcement perspective.

EU Working Groups and EU Evaluation

Officers within this Office attended a number of EU working groups mainly: LEWP (meetings held monthly), Data Protection, and Eurojust National Correspondent meetings.

Prior to these EU meetings, an amount of preparation is required. Officers attending these meetings have to acquire feedback from other police sections and also discuss certain topics with the Ministry as the position that Malta should take during the discussions. Following the meetings, apart from compiling the required report, in particular where legal issues were discussed, this Office will scrutinise domestic laws and highlight which laws may require certain amendments.

As national correspondent for Eurojust, the Legal Office participates in meetings that deal with the Eurojust national coordination system. This system includes participation by the Attorney General and MITA for the necessary network.

In view of an Police Cooperation evaluation scheduled for 2012, the Legal Office in 2011 started preparing for this evaluation, as well as for an evaluation of Data Protection standards.

Implementation of EU Projects

The major project that this Office is highly involved in is the implementation of the Prüm project. Various discussions and meetings were held in 2011 on this project both internally, and also with other parties that have a direct link to this project, which are MJHA, MITA and Transport Malta.

During 2011, DNA equipment was purchased and the CODIS software was installed. The AFIS tender was issued and evaluated in 2011; the contract was awarded to MORPHO Safran on 12 December 2011.

The contract with MITA on the necessary works required to enhance the PIRS, in order to be able to search with the EUCARIS system, was also finalised this year.

During the year, the Police Force also assisted and participated in the project for the computerisation of criminal records. Several meetings were held with MITA and the CID on the implementation of this project.

Lectures at the Police Academy

Lectures are delivered to new recruits, in-service police officers and officer cadets at the Police Academy. Furthermore, lectures are also delivered to civilians who apply to be issued with a licence to manufacture fireworks.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS OFFICE

Parliamentary Questions

Parliamentary questions are of an urgent nature having priority on other work, and are to be replied by a specified date, normally at very late notice. During 2011, this Office dealt with 501 parliamentary questions all concerning the Police Department. This entailed clerical duties consisting of registration of file, maintaining manual and computerised indexes, conducting a research on past parliamentary questions on subject in order to prepare background information, distribution of parliamentary questions to the respective districts and specialised branches, as well as requesting draft replies to prepare summarised draft replies.

General Collection

This Office processes the collection of contributions from Force members towards the General Fund, the Mutual Help Association (of serving members) and the Malta Police Association. After the contributions are paid in at the respective districts and sections, the funds are brought over to this Office for reconciliation and subsequent depositing at the Accounts Section. An estimated amount of about €105,023 was handled during the year. Further work is involved in the collection of contributions and other arrears from 'late paying' members.

Mutual Help Association (of retired members)

During the year, the sum of €48,071 was given on behalf of the Commissioner of Police to 23 families of deceased ex/members and four serving members of the Force whilst the annual subscription payment amounting to about €14,399.40 was collected from 1030 members (ex-servicemen) who either called personally at this Office or sent their payment by post.

International Police Association

This Office also serves as the official IPA Office within Police Headquarters, which Office serves the purpose of Information Office, Customer Care and renewal of IPA memberships.

Numerous foreign IPA members and their respective families, who came to Malta for vacation, visited the Police General Headquarters. They were all welcomed at the IPA Office for the customary reception. Amongst these visitors was a group of 25 Danish Police Choir singers from the IPA Denmark Section who were received by the Commissioner and IPA officials for a courtesy visit at Headquarters.

This Office also helped organise and coordinate the annual internship programmes of six German and two Dutch serving officers. Such officers performed work experience within various sections of the Police Force and also visited a number of cultural and historical sites across the Maltese Islands.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The main role of the Finance and Administration Directorate is to provide support and direction to the various units within the Police Department on matters related to finance and administration within the parameters of the established financial regulations and the Public Administration Act, as well as, to regulate, monitor and manage in an efficient way, the financial allocation approved in the budget estimates.

During the year under review, the Finance and Administration Directorate maintained regular contact with the various Police Units through consultative meetings, in order to fulfil the objectives of the Police Department according to the budget financial allocation under the five cost centres of the Department. In this respect, the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment (MFEI) was kept adjourned on the financial situation reported every month by the Department's accounting section, highlighting any variation required on items of expenditure.

EU related projects

Since Malta joined the EU, the Malta Police Force benefited from a number of projects co-financed by the EU. In this respect, the Directorate contributed directly together with the respective project leader of each project to prepare the draft tender documents before being forwarded to the Department of Contracts for verification. These included the DNA, AFIS, and other tenders under the External Border Fund Programme. During the year under review, this Directorate assisted the EU auditors on audit exercises performed under the Activities of Forced Return Programme, as well as the Open Complex at Ta' Kandia. This Directorate also kept constant coordination with the Programme Implementation Directorate, MJHA, to ensure that the Police Department could make the most of eligible EU funds.

Malta was represented in the various EU fora by police personnel, who participated in meetings, seminars and conferences primary intended to coordinate better the police operations among all the EU Member States.

Investment on Capital Items

Another important task performed by this Directorate was the input on procurement activities on capital items, including various protective equipment and vehicles required by the Police Force, in line with the efforts to curb delinquency and maintain public order. A total of 42 new vehicles were procured, together with two personal transporters, three motor cycles, portable digital radios as well as a number of IT systems and equipment.

New Police Academy

Following the issue of the MEPA permit, works were immediately initiated on the new Police Academy project. The site was cleared from all debris and dangerous structures were removed. Tenders for the excavation and construction of a water reservoir, as well as that for the Academy block were prepared, including all the details required to publish a tender for a turnkey project.

ACCOUNTS/PROCUREMENT SECTION

Considerable financial activity took place during 2011. Expenditure was monitored regularly in order to ascertain that it was in line with the estimated figures allocated in the budget for the Department. Monthly returns were prepared and forwarded regularly to MFEI indicating any variations required on particular items of expenditure, as well as highlighting the estimated savings made under the utilities item, following rigorous control on the use of resources, including fuel and vehicles' spare parts.

The issue of travel abroad by police personnel required to attend EU meetings and other activities remains one of the primary causes of expenditure in the budget for the Police Department. A slight decrease was noticed in the number of visits compared with previous years. The following is a table showing expenditure during the years 2010 and 2011:

Recurrent Expenditure	2010 €	2011 €
Personal Emoluments	42,134,672	42,754,499
Operational & Maintenance	4,847,357	4,294,445
Total	46,982,029	47,048,944
Capital Expenditure	585,734	379,667

This Directorate was also responsible for the issue of certificates for the classification of films, trailers, and stage productions. The following is a statistical record of classification of certificates issued during 2011:

Rating	Films	Trailers	Stage Productions
U	28	115	1
12	36	15	8
14	38	1	7
PG	28	35	3
16	68	0	27
18	85	53	7
Banned	1	1	0
Total	284	220	53

Collisions Board

Assistance was also provided on the various boards concerning collisions involving police vehicles. 19 board meetings were held to assess a total of 81 cases.

HUMAN RESOURCES (CIVILIAN PERSONNEL) SECTION

Another important task in the routine operations of the Police Department was carried out by the Human Resources Section, which caters for all the requirements of civilian personnel, including the 61 Immigration Officers stationed at the Malta International Airport and seaport. Apart from the routine duties and requirements of the civilian staff stationed at Police Headquarters, the HR Section dealt with a number of issues in line with the Public Service Management Code. These included salary scale progressions including the submission of appraisal reports and the drawing up of letters of appointment or progression, regular verification of attendance sheets, and the management of vacation/sick leave. Performance Management Programmes reports were also drawn up and updated for the 79 officers entitled

to such a report. Furthermore, 40 draft replies for parliamentary questions were also prepared and forwarded for the necessary final submission.

REVENUE SECTION

An extra effort was made during the year to collect arrears of revenue on sporting licences, taxes and fees which were due from previous years, and which had accumulated to a considerable figure. Representatives from Police Districts were briefed on the importance of the exercise which at the end of the financial year yielded a total of €968,146, which is a surplus of €158,146 over the estimated budget. Further revenue was generated from annual weapons licences, taxes, fines, Criminal Records Office, ID Cards Section, Police Licences Office, Seaport, the Central Immigration Office and Principal Citations Office, and other miscellaneous income due to the Police Department, including other expenses reimbursed from collision cases with police vehicles. All the revenue was deposited regularly and reconciled with the statements received from commercial banks. The following table is a breakdown of revenue generated during 2011:

Item	2011
Sporting Licences	968,146
Miscellaneous Licences	71,383
Miscellaneous Fines	32,495
Permits/Certificates	251,051
Fees on Visas	59,110
Services to Third Parties	309,652
Road Accident Reports	47,885
Miscellaneous Receipts	176,915
Total	1,916,637

SALARIES SECTION

The Salaries Section worked out the required adjustments on 13 salaries payments, allowances, overtime, bonus, and income supplements to over 2,000 employees in the Police Department. During the 4th quarter of the year, various meetings were held with OPM to introduce salaries payment on the DAKAR system, including the electronic submission of the pay slips to each employee. Moreover, this Section also carried out the computation on the extra duty services performed by police personnel with third parties, government departments, commercial banks, sports activities and other private functions where the presence of the Police was essential.

SECRETARIAT/REGISTRY SERVICES

The Registry also played an important role in the organisation and management of the Department's records. Apart from routine operations normally associated with the Registry, this Section managed and handled a good number of police files, incoming and outgoing correspondence, as well as the distribution of 100 official circulars to all Police District Offices and Police General Headquarters. The following is statistical data in respect of 2011:

Letters received from government departments, authorities and the general public	21,500
New files opened	5,856
Correspondence letters received and logged in their appropriate files	15,000
Reports/letters were prepared and typed	17,500
Letters addressed to government departments and private entities	36,000

The Secretariat also processed the tracking of 3,313 death certificates, 250 judicial acts, 900 *procès verbaux*, 1,744 tickets of admission in respect of unpaid court fines, 2,500 archiving of files, and 210 notices to the Department of Information by electronic mail for publication in the Government Gazette of all traffic deviation during national activities, village feasts and activities, etc.

Updated records relating to proceedings against public officers, proceedings against commercial establishments, appeals, and tickets of admission (DKR), were also kept and recorded by the Secretariat.

INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT

The primary role of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) remains that of investigating serious crimes. A secondary but equally important role is that of addressing the problem of crime in a proactive way - with a view to preventing and reducing crime. For this purpose, ad hoc teams from CID met regularly with local councils, whereby matters related to crime occurring in particular localities, were addressed. These meetings served for more than one purpose. On the one hand, this collaboration between the police and local councils gave a clearer picture and a better understanding of how crime was being committed, thus it gave an opportunity to identify new crime trends. On the other hand, it also served for the implementation of new strategies to prevent or detect crime, as well as to promote crime prevention awareness within the community. Since crime is not the problem of the police alone but one of the community in general, it remains a fundamental principle of this Department that community needs to play an important role in the fight against crime. Undoubtedly, having the police working together with the community would be an effective way to reduce the risk and fear of crime.

During 2011, a total of 758 CID case files were opened for investigation. These investigations led to the arrest and the interviewing of 735 persons, out of which 425 were detained for more than six hours. As a result, 453 cases were solved. Of these, 445 cases were presented in court with a total of 239 arraignments, which involved the prosecution of 330 persons, 16 of whom were under the age of 18.

Out of the 453 cases solved during 2011, eight cases, resulting in eight arraignments totalling to ten offences and involving nine persons, are yet to be prosecuted in court.

The following is a list of offences instituted in court during 2011 in connection with the above mentioned cases. This list shows the number of arraignments related to cases solved prior to 2011.

Arraignments of Solved Offences - 2011	Arraignments	Offences presented in Court	Persons Arraigned	Over 18 yrs		Minors under 18yrs	
				Males	Females	Males	Females
Arraignments of offences solved in 2011	211	977	294	243	35	15	1
Arraignments of offences solved prior to 2011	28	98	36	31	5	0	0
Total	239	1,075	330	274	40	15	1

Offences presented in Court 2011	
Offence	No
28B Chap 9 commission of an offence during the operational period of suspended sentence	14
41(1) Chap 9 Attempted offence	40
42 Chap 9 accomplice in crime	4
48A Chap 9 Conspiracy	7
49 Chap 9 Recidivist	106
91 Chap 9 violence and threats against public officers	1
95 Chap 9 bodily harm to public officer	5
96 Chap 9 Assault or resistance to public officer	4
86 Chap 9 illegal arrest, detention or confinement	27
108 Chap 9 false swearing	1
101 Chap 9 calumnious accusations	1
110(1) Chap 9 fabrication of false evidence	4
110(2) Chap 9 simulation of offence	9
111(2) Chap 9 suppression, destruction or alteration of traces of crime	1
151 Chap 9 simple escape	3
158 Chap 9 harbouring of criminals	1
183 Chap 9 forgery of public, commercial or private bank documents by person etc.	2

184 Chap 9 malicious use of false documents	2
186 Chap 9 use of false declarations or certificates	1
187(1) Chap 9 forgery of private writing	1
188 Chap 9 false declarations or information to a public authority	7
211 Chap 9 wilful homicide	1
216 Chap 9 grievous bodily harm	12
221 Chap 9 slight bodily harm	15
225 Chap 9 involuntary homicide	1
249(1) Chap 9 threats by means of writings	1
249(2) Chap 9 threats by word of mouth	1
251 Chap 9 private violence	1
251A Chap 9 harassment	4
251B Chap 9 fear of violence	11
261 Chap 9 aggravated theft	323
284 Chap 9 simple theft	3
286 Chap 9 possession of stolen articles by person previously convicted of theft etc.	2
287 Chap 9 unjustified possession of monies, articles, etc by person previously convicted	1
288 Chap 9 theft from mere use	1
295 Chap 9 insurance fraud	1
298D Chap 9 tampering, removal, etc of chassis or engine number	1
308 Chap 9 obtaining money or property by false pretences	4
309 Chap 9 other cases of fraudulent gain	5
316 Chap 9 arson endangering life	1
325 Chap 9 spoil, damage or injury in general (wilful damage)	83
334 Chap 9 receiving stolen property	47
334A Chap 9 failure to inform, etc property	3
355AL Chap 9 Breach of Police Bail	1
337C Chap 9 unlawful access to/use of information	2
338 Chap 9 contraventions affecting public order	13
339 Chap 9 contraventions against the person	11
340 Chap 9 contraventions against property	4
387 Chap 9 breach of conditions laid by the court	1
579(2) Chap 9 breach of bail conditions	36
138 Chapter 10 unlawful entry into cemetery	3
7(2) Chap 63 prostitution	1
MVR Chap 65 Motor Vehicle Regulations	20
3 Chap 104 driving or permitting someone to drive vehicle without insurance policy	5
45 Chap 204 forgery and uttering of currency	1
46 Chap 204 possession of forged currency	1
3 Chap 248 press act	2
8 Chap 258 failed to inform change of address on identity card	1
9 Chap 258 incorrect particulars on identity card	1
41 Chap 445 cultural property	1
53 Chap 445 damage to cultural property	1
7 Chap 446 probation order	22
22 Chap 446 absolute or conditional discharge	12
3 Chap 480 General Prohibition	2
5 Chap 480 Licence to keep, possess, export or import firearms, weapons and ammo	19
6 Chap 480 licence to carry knives	18
41 Chap 480 failure to inform C of P regarding firearm	8
55 Chap 480 Possession of firearms during commission of a crime	25
LN 79 2006 shooting in public	3
Total	977

Offences committed prior to 2011 but presented in Court in 2011	
28B Chap 9 breach of suspended sentence	2
41 Chap 9 attempted offence	3
48A Chap 9 conspiracy	2
83A Chap 9 promoting an organisation of two or more persons to commit crime	4
110(1) Chap 9 fabrication of evidence	1
110(2) Chap 9 simulation of an offence	1
186 Chap 9 use of false declaration or certificates	1
188 Chap 9 false declaration to a public authority	1

221 Chap 9 slight bodily harm	1
249(1) Chap 9 threats by means of writing	1
257 Chap 9 disclosing of professional secrets	1
261 Chap 9 aggravated theft	19
288 Chap 9 theft for mere use	1
325 Chap 9 spoil, damage or injury in general (Wilful damage)	7
334 Chap 9 receiving stolen property	6
28B Chap 9 commission of an offence during the operational period of suspended sentence	2
49 Chap 9 Recidivist	15
579(2) Chap 9 breach of bail conditions	2
62 Chap 37 failure to pay Tax	2
80 Chap 98 evasion of VAT	2
8(a) Chap 101 possession of resin cannabis	1
45 Chap 204 forgery and uttering of currency	1
46 Chap 204 possession of forged currency	1
Chap 373 Money Laundering	1
5 Chap 480 Licence to keep, possess, export or import firearms, weapons and ammo	3
20(2) Chap 480 transfer of firearms to an unauthorised person	1
41 Chap 480 failure to inform C of P regarding firearm	2
52 Chap 480 arms different from licence	1
55 Chap 480 Possession of firearms during commission of a crime	1
86 Chap 9 illegal arrest, detention or confinement	1
GN292-1939 possession and trafficking of heroin, cocaine and methadone	5
7 Chap 446 breach of probation	4
22 Chap 446 breach of conditional discharge	1
LN 79 Conservation of wild birds	1
Total	98

HOMICIDE SQUAD

During 2011, the Homicide Squad investigated three murder cases that occurred during the same year. These investigations led to the solution of two of these homicides. Out of the two solved homicides, one person was brought before the courts and charged accordingly, while in the other case, the offender committed suicide immediately after committing the murder.

Regarding the other homicide, a foreign national who is suspected of committing this crime had left the island immediately afterwards and prior to the discovery of the crime by the police. All necessary warrants were issued to trace suspect in order for him to be brought back to Malta for investigations.

The Homicide Squad also investigated three attempted homicides, of which two were solved and persons arraigned in court whilst the other is still under investigation.

The Squad also investigated other cold cases of which, particular attention was given to the homicides of Raymond Caruana and that of Karen Grech. Numerous persons were interviewed or interrogated by the squad and by the Inquiring Magistrate.

The Squad was also tasked to investigate a number of undetermined deaths. Additionally, the Squad was deployed to investigate and examine a number of scenes where corpses were found and assisted the District Police until foul play was ruled out. The cause of the latter cases resulted to be of either suicidal or of accidental/natural causes.

CULTURAL PROPERTY CRIME UNIT

The CID Cultural Property Crime Unit (CPCU) is a unit within the CID designated to investigate heritage crime. It also serves as a contact point for the Council of the European Union Justice and Home Affairs.

During the year, the Unit was involved in a number of initiatives intended to the protection of cultural heritage, not to mention investigations of a number of crimes related to cultural property, including crimes

of theft, illegal movement and export of cultural property, online sale of antiques and other breaches of the Cultural Heritage Act. The Unit also contributed to the protection of the country's heritage by the adoption of crime prevention measures and special police patrols with sites of national and international importance.

The CPCU is the appointed representative of the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs in the Inter-ministerial Commission for the European Capital of Culture Valletta 2018. On a regional and international level, CPCU is also involved in EU-funded projects on law enforcement issues related to cultural heritage. PSYCHE (Protecting System for Cultural Heritage) is a proposed project, led by the Italian *Carabinieri* with the support from NCB Rome and in cooperation with the Interpol General Secretariat, in which the Unit has partnered. The project aims at modernising Interpol's Stolen Works of Art database.

The Malta Police, also represented by the CPCU, partnered with Malta Customs in the Joint Customs Operation named *Operation Colosseum*, with the aim of collecting data related to the detection and seizures of antiquities, works of art and cultural goods illegally moved within the EU and exported to/imported from third countries. The project aims for a comprehensive EU-wide threat assessment for the development of risk profiles/indicators to combat this illicit activity. Among the participants on *Operation Colosseum* are several EU Member States, third countries and organisations including WCO, RILO WE, RILO ECE, RILO CIS, European Commission/OLAF/DG TAXUD, Interpol, UNESCO and ICOM.

In order to provide a better understanding of the subject to other police officers and with the aim of improving their investigative skills, the Unit delivered several lectures to members of the Force during in-service and recruitment courses at the Police Academy. Furthermore, another CID inspector attended a CEPOL course regarding cultural heritage.

During the year, the contribution of the Police in protecting the country's heritage was also promoted through several talks on the media.

STOLEN VEHICLES SQUAD (SVS)

During 2011, the Stolen Vehicles Squad carried out the following vehicle inspections:

- 2,043 second-hand imported vehicles;
- 159 second-hand imported engines;
- 450 other vehicles were inspected by SVS Technical Unit at MT Garage;
- 261 vehicles or engines were punched with new Police VIN or Engine no. stamp by the SVS Technical Unit at SVS/MT;
- SVS Technical Unit personnel inspected seven vehicles on assistance to other government departments, and inspected seven vehicles during assistance to other police sections in other investigations,.
- Two vehicles were seized pending investigations, whilst a vehicle was recovered by the SVS after resulting to have been either reported stolen or having tampered/false identifications or other discrepancies;
- 290 SVS query files involving vehicle/engine discrepancies were originated by the SVS Technical Unit;
- 310 vehicles and loose engines were photographed by SVS Technical Unit for investigation/record purposes whilst another 26 vehicles were photographed by the SVS Investigative Team (CID) pending other investigations;
- SVS investigations led to the prosecution of three persons who were charged with vehicle crime-related offences and other offences, consisting of three arraignments, which cases are included in the statistics presented by the Department.

The following inspections were carried out during the period under review:

Type of Inspection	Total
2 nd hand imported vehicles	2,043
2 nd hand imported engines	159

Vehicle inspections at MT	450
Punching of chassis/engine numbers	261
Front Half Cuts with Engine	64
Assistance to Customs and other Government Departments	7
Assistance to other Police sections	7
SVS Files re-discrepancies	290

CRIMINAL RECORDS OFFICE (CRO)

During 2011, the Criminal Records Office issued 44,496 Conduct Certificates and Conviction Sheets for Personal Use against the payment of €2.33c (which was later amended to €2.50c) and €5.00c each respectively. The total amount of revenue collected was €109,738.20c.

8,268 persons were convicted during the same year, of which 5,371 were convicted for crimes, while 2,897 were convicted for contraventions. The following gives a breakdown of the gender of persons convicted:

Crimes	No.	Contraventions	No.
Males	4,218	Males	2,519
Females	422	Females	218
Male Foreigners	543	Male Foreigners	105
Female Foreigners	52	Female Foreigners	10
Males Underage	99	Males Underage	41
Females Underage	32	Females Underage	4
Males Foreigners Underage	4	Males Foreigners Underage	0
Females Foreigners Underage	1	Females Foreigners Underage	0

From the total number of persons convicted of crimes and contraventions, 715 were foreigners and 181 persons were under the age of 18 years.

The punishments inflicted by the Courts were as follows:

Imprisonment	725
Suspended Sentence in terms of Sec. 28A of the Criminal Code	565
Conditional Discharge in terms of Sec. 22 of Chapter 446 of the Laws of Malta	2,307
Conditional Discharged in terms of Sec. 7 of Chapter 446 of the Laws of Malta	379
Fine (<i>Multa</i>)	3,490
Fine (<i>Amenda</i>)	853
Prohibited from entering sport activities	22
Reprimand and Admonition (R&A)	661
Interdiction	25
Destruction of items	35
Forfeiture	213
Forfeiture and <i>multa</i>	21
Sec. 383 Chap. 9	285
Payment of Court expenses	193
Suspension of nautical licence	14
Suspension of driving licence	577
Suspension of firearms licence	49
Detention	10
Community work	1

The number of CRO returns of cases decided received at this Office during the year in question totalled 7,174. An amount of 4,308 cases were dealt with summarily, whilst the remaining 2,866 were dealt with through compilation of evidence.

MOBILE SQUAD

The Mobile Squad's primary function is that of providing rapid response to calls received by the GHQ control room. The Squad has always maintained a reputation of responding to calls in a very short time, varying from one minute to not more than five minutes. On average, there are ten Mobile Squad vehicles patrolling the Island on 24/7 basis. The Squad is equipped with a fleet of 21 Ford Focus vehicles with their distinctive police livery.

During 2011, members of the Mobile Squad managed to arrest 413 persons due to suspicious criminal activity or involvement in fights. 52 of these cases involved persons caught *in flagrante*, 66 arrests were effected in connection with persons wanted on the Police Information Report System (PIRS), whilst 295 persons were involved in other suspicious activities.

The Mobile Squad also attended to a total of 306 scuffles or fights in progress. Presently, the Mobile Squad is also conducting roadside static observations where the area patrol cars mount a 'Stop and Observe' procedure for a short period of time normally of about 15 minutes, in order for the police officers to control and observe passing drivers/vehicles. These 'Stop and Observe' procedures help to increase recognition in respect of police presence in the street. During 2011, static observations totalled to more than 3,500.

During the same year, the Mobile Squad deployed more than 50,000 vehicular patrols, aimed primarily at curbing armed thefts from the person, commercial outlets and burglaries from residential areas - amongst others. The usual patrols were intensified during Easter and Christmas periods. In addition, the Mobile Squad managed to locate 19 absentees, dispatched on 31 cases of suicide/attempted suicide and assisted in 11 cases of crimes against morals.

Mobile personnel managed to locate 26 stolen vehicles and 44 wanted vehicles for further investigations. The Mobile Squad responded to 312 alarms involving commercial banks, ATMs and Exchange Bureaux. The Squad also responded to 400 alarms originating from factories and other commercial outlets and attended to 152 house burglar alarms. Members of the Mobile Squad were also deployed to respond to seven shooting incidents and eight stabbings.

District Police were assisted on 572 occasions, whilst the special branches including CID, Drug Squad, ECU, Vice, Traffic Branch, ALE and Special Branch were supported on 141 events. Other public officers, such as Local Wardens, were assisted on 65 occasions.

Thefts which were in progress requiring the response by the Mobile Squad amounted to 128 cases, whilst there were 82 drug finds, mostly on suspected drivers. Stolen items were recovered on 28 instances. In addition, 353 searches were carried out on suspected individuals while 209 searches were effected in motor vehicles. Searches inside residences, garages and other buildings amounted to 64 instances.

The Mobile Squad mounted 60 road checks, and there were 306 instances where the Mobile Squad was sent to intervene during fights in progress. The Squad also assisted in 171 traffic accidents, where 36 persons were tested positive for driving under the influence with the portable breathalyser apparatus. The Squad assisted in rescue operations, rendered other assistance or administered first aid for 109 times. Assistance in controlling fires was given in 49 instances.

Type of Response	No.
Alarms at residences	152
Alarms at Factories & Retail outlets	400
Alarms at commercial banks/ATMs and other financial institutions	312
Roadside Breathalyser tests	36
Interventions in drug related offences	22
Road checks	61
Interventions in cases of public order	306

Searches	626
Arrests	361
Illegal Immigrants	1
Assisted in Traffic accidents	171
Static Observations	3,500
Assistance to public officers	65
Retrieval of stolen and wanted vehicles	70
Frequent Patrols	50,000
Person caught stealing red handed	52
Drug finds	82
Retrieval of stolen items, valuables and firearms	28
Escorts	273
Suspicious persons and vehicles investigated	203
Assistance in thefts, armed robberies, and bag snatching	155
Assistance in moral crimes	13
Absentees	19
Shooting and stabbing incidents	15
Issue of charges and TOT	158
Assistance in suicides and attempted suicides	31
Assistance in bomb threats	9
Fixed Points	27
Persons checked	141
Assistance to other police branches	691
First Aid and rescue	109
Assistance in explosions and arsons	49
Assistance to cash vans	19

CID Lock-Up

The CID Lock-Up is located at the CID yard. Its primary function is that of serving as temporary housing for persons who have breached or are suspected of having infringed the laws of the State. The majority of persons detained at the Lock-Up are arrested by the investigative teams at specialised branches. However, it is also regularly used by the district police. In 2011, a total of 2,333 persons were registered at the Lock-Up. 1,576 of these detainees were Maltese and the remaining 757 of foreign nationality. Out of these detainees, 2,036 were males and 297 were females. 367 detainees were released on police bail conditions.

Out of the 2,333 that were registered at the Lock-Up, 1,402 waived the right to consult a lawyer prior to their interrogation, whilst 636 opted to exercise this right. Of the persons detained, 138 persons were held in connection with immigration issues, 150 were held in connection with arrest warrants, respite warrants or court orders, and another seven were held in connection with admission tickets to CCF.

Refused to consult lawyer	1,402
Released	639
Arraigned	502
Police Bail	261
Consulted lawyer	636
Released	217
Arraigned	313
Police Bail	106
Immigration	138
Warrant of Arrest, respite warrants	150
Tickets of Admission to CCF	7
Total	2,333

The following lists show the persons detained at the Lock-Up by branch/district and by nationality:

Arrests by Specialised Branches and Districts	
CID	425
Drug Squad	293
ECU	107
Special Branch	302
Vice Squad	134
ALE	8
IRU/CIU	4
Mobile Squad	9
Traffic Section	1
Terrorism Unit	5
Money Laundering	3
District No. 1	154
District No. 2	51
District No. 3	115
District No. 4	69
District No. 5	86
District No. 6	99
District No. 6A	161
District No. 7	117
District No. 8	76
District No. 9	110
District No. 10	2
Total	2,333

Nationality	No.	Nationality	No.
Albanian	2	Japanese	1
Algerian	3	Libyan	90
Austrian	3	Lithuanian	1
Bangladeshi	1	Macedonian	1
Bosnia & Herzegovinian	1	Malian	29
Belarusian	2	Maltese	1,576
Belgian	1	Moroccan	9
Brazilian	3	Nigerien	5
Bulgarian	6	Nigerian	45
Burkina/Faso	2	Norwegian	1
Canadian	3	Philippine	2
Chadian	4	Pakistani	3
Chinese	21	Palestinian	8
Congonian	2	Polish	6
Ivorian	24	Portuguese	1
Croatian	3	Romanian	53
Dutch	1	Russian	3
Egyptian	14	Saudi Arabian	1
Ecuadorian	1	Senegalese	9
Irish	3	Serbian	9
Eritrean	7	Sierra Leonean	1
Ethiopian	11	Slovakian	2
Estonian	6	Somalian	61
French	27	Spanish	10
Gambian	4	Sudanese	15
Georgian	3	Swiss	2
German	5	Syrian	35
Ghanaian	9	Thai	1
Guinean	1	Togolese	4
Greek	1	Tunisian	9

Hungarian	5	Turkish	6
Indian	4	Ukrainian	23
Indonesian	9	United Kingdom	43
Iraqi	3	USA	1
Italian	41	Uzbek	11
Jordanian	4	Yugoslav	3
Israeli	1	Zambian	1
Total			2,333

INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES – DRUG SQUAD

During the year ending 31 December 2011, the Drug Squad persisted with the policy implemented during the last couple of years, to target the top known drug traffickers. Its resources were mainly engaged towards determining, investigating, interrogating and prosecuting them in court.

As a matter of fact, the Drug-Squad managed to successfully complete drug investigations of noteworthy import, in particular a number of investigations into the drug activities of suspected individuals/groups locally and abroad, some of whom had been targeted some years back and others who although have pending court cases, are out on bail and still active.

The presence of drug-squad personnel at MIA has remained an important mission, and checks on selected passengers arriving on particular sensitive flights originating from Schengen internal and external borders are carried out on a regular basis, and in shared operations with the Customs Enforcement Unit.

This strategy led to record seizures of cocaine and cannabis during the last couple of years. On the other hand, due to this success and the prosecution and incarceration of prime individuals forming part of organised criminal groups, the identification of drug couriers has become an intricate task more than ever before. These OCGs are mainly controlled by West African nationals, in particular of Nigerian origin. It has been noted that couriers are now being hired from West European countries in addition to East European countries.

The scheduling of the substance (mephedrone) in 2010 has left a positive impact on the abuse and availability of substance on the local market. As a matter of fact, during year 801grms were seized, compared to 5kgs 584grms during 2010.

Exchange of information and intelligence with our counterparts in the two North African countries closest to Malta, Libya and Tunisia, had to be momentarily interrupted due to the political situation in both countries. However, this is expected to resume shortly, and as a matter of fact an initial meeting has already been held with the Tunisian authorities through the Maltese Tunisian Mixed Commission. Further meetings are planned in 2012.

On the other hand, cooperation with most of the EU MSs, through Europol, has been strengthened and a number of joint investigations have been carried out both locally and abroad. Others are still ongoing.

Other minor anti-drug operations mainly targeting street level drug-pushers were also positively concluded.

Special investigative techniques in the form of controlled-deliveries and the use of participating-informants continued to be adopted in a number of successful operations.

The table below refers to the total seizures recorded during the 2011. The availability of heroin on the streets during the year remained stable, and the abuse of cocaine appears to have decreased. During the 12-month period, a total of 91kgs of cannabis in the resin and herbal form were seized, an increase of

109% over the previous year. An increase of 26% has also been recorded in the total seizures of cocaine in 2011 compared to 2010.

It was also noted that in addition to the actual illegal substance, a number of couriers were found carrying large amounts of substances which though not illegal, are mixed with the actual illegal substance as cutting agent in order to increase its volume. In all, 7 kg 689 gms of these substances were seized.

Total Seizures	
Drug Type	Quantity
Cocaine	5 kgs 355 grs
Heroin	3 kgs 967 grs
Opium	89 kgs 497 grs
Cannabis Resin	1 kg 510 grs
Cannabis Grass	44 plants
Cannabis Plants	61 seeds
Cannabis Seeds	2,142 tbs
Ecstasy	29 tbs
Ecstasy (look-a-likes)	801.11 grs
Amphetamine	5 kgs 355 grs
Methadone	3 kgs 967 grs
Mephedrone	89 kgs 497 grs
Methadone	300 ml
Khat	1401 kgs
Cutting Agent	7 kgs 690 grs
Ketamine	9 grs
Diazepam	4.43 grs
Lorazepam	40 tbs
Spice	1.6 grs
GBL	10 ml
(4-MEC)	500 grms

The positive results recorded in the last five years have definitely left an impact on the supply of drugs in Malta. The strategy to target high profile drug traffickers has proved to leave an impact on drug trafficking, however this success has directed other active drug traffickers to change their *modus operandi* therefore complicated matters for the law enforcement agencies to investigate, with the current resources available to the Police.

It is worth mentioning the fact that the Drug Squad also focused its investigations on the seizure of assets from drug traffickers and the police have seized cash which have been duly exhibited in court, in addition to expensive vehicles and other immovable assets. Parallel money-laundering investigations were also initiated by the Economic Crimes Unit, in line with the drug investigations.

The table below highlights the most significant seizures recorded in the same period of time, and most of them are the result of a number of operations targeting specific individual traffickers or criminal groups.

Statistical Information re: arrests, raids/searches and sentences passed

Subject	Males	Females	Total
Arrested Persons	399	81	480
Raids/Searches	-	-	293
Sentence Passed	-	-	325

The total numbers of arrests/searches and raids have decreased by 19% over 2010. The total number of arrested persons decreased by 5% - from 506 to 480 individuals. The number of sentences pronounced by the Magistrates, Criminal and Court of Appeal decreased by 6.5% over 2010; however the latter had increased by 24 % over 2009.

Arraignments of offences liable to imprisonment over six months

Offence	Males	Females	Total
Possession	243	38	281
Trafficking	112	15	127
Total	355	53	408

The total number of court arraignments for trafficking of drugs during 2011 decreased by 20% over the previous year, whereas the number of arraignments for possession of drugs remained more or less on the same level as in 2010.

INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES (ECONOMIC CRIMES AND VICE SQUADS)

ECONOMIC CRIME SQUAD

The Police Economic Crimes Squad was set up to prevent, curb and solve crimes related to the economic sector, thus enforcing and enhancing the importance of this sector. The Police Economic Crimes Squad is responsible for investigating all serious financial and fraudulent crimes, and for investigating other related offences that concern the economic sector in an indirect manner, such as corruption, counterfeit currency and intellectual property rights' infringements.

For another year, the Economic Crimes' Squad had a very high number of complaints and reports pouring in to investigate, apart from the investigations that are initiated directly by the Squad or from within the Police Department itself. The rate of solved cases is optimal and very high and successes continued on a daily basis during the year under review. The highest rate of successful investigations was in those cases that concerned bribery, even though this criminal offence is of a very complex nature. These concerned both government funds and also funds coming from the European Union. The fight against the circulation of counterfeit currency continued and the few cases reported concerning circulation of such currency were immediately put to a halt. The curbing of intellectual property rights' infringements and the sale of contraband cigarettes and alcohol on the local market was also given their due importance with various inspections and raids. The officers at this Squad managed to seize almost 6,000 pieces of counterfeited items. Credit card fraud was in a decline this year and a very limited number of cases were reported. A part of this could well be attributed to the information campaign made by members of this Squad to the general public on the modus operandi of these criminals and methods to avoid being defrauded with such cards. Again, the few cases reported were committed by foreigners. This year, we also again experienced two more cases of black money scams.

The Economic Crimes Squad is responsible to investigate the following: fraud, misappropriation, money laundering, contraband, investigation of all customs-related offences, intellectual property rights violations, breaches of the Financial Institutions Act, extortion, corruption, usury, forgery of documents, embezzlement; plastic card fraud; currency counterfeiting, computer crime, judicial requests for assistance from abroad regarding economic crimes, and police requests from abroad through Interpol regarding economic crimes.

During 2011, the problem of Intellectual Property Rights infringements was again addressed intensively. In fact, this Squad changed the method of inspections since the majority of infringements are being committed over the internet. However inspections at retail outlets and open markets still continued. A lot of energy this year was spent on the investigation of cases of corruption and trading in influence. Apart from the investigations carried out, the personnel at the Economic Crimes' Squad had the added burden of effecting raids and inspections for contraband cigarettes, alcohol and intellectual property rights' infringements. These were as follows:

IPR Enforcement seizures 2011

Number of raids	11
Number of cases in court	6
Persons arraigned in court	6

Items Seized	Quantity
Music CDs	26
DVDs	672
Cigarettes	5,037
Total	5,857

During 2011, the Economic Crimes Squad investigated the under-mentioned crimes:

Offences Investigated	No. of Cases
Fraud	136
Misappropriation	84
Forgery	16
Embezzlement	1
Cheques Bounced	2
Cheques Stolen/Forged	2
Plastic Card Fraud	4
Local Counterfeited Currency	3
Intellectual Property Rights Infringements	1
Usury	8
VAT Investigations	5
Customs Investigations	27
Contraband Related	19
Extortion/Blackmail	13
Bribery	4
Trading in Influence	1
Money Laundering (FIAU)	18
Money Laundering (Police)	1
Foreign Requests for Assistance in Investigations	18
Commissions Rogatories	8
Others	13
Total	431

Court Arraignments – Economic Crimes Squad			
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Persons Arraigned	313	26	339
Cases (Arraignments)	-	-	309
Arrested	224	43	267
Persons Interrogated	324	95	419
Persons Interviewed	334	115	449

Money Laundering Unit

The Money Laundering Unit this year was subject to an evaluation by the Moneyval Group of Experts of the Council of Europe. The results will be published in the coming year.

The Unit is responsible for investigating all cases of money laundering, but also has to deal with judicial requests for assistance and with other requests for assistance from our foreign counterparts concerning matters related to money laundering investigations that they will be carrying out in their country. This Unit investigates all suspicious transaction reports that are referred to this unit from the Financial Intelligence and Analysis Unit, together with other information received from other independent sources. Other investigations are initiated by the Unit itself or are referred to the unit from local police sources.

Money Laundering Activities

Persons charged in court	6
STRs FIAU	18

STRs Police	12
Requests for Assistance	54
Rogatory Letters	52

Assets seized were very high this year; however this was mostly due to a particular case concerning the UN sanctions. The other seizures were in the region of €300,000. The work performed by this small but effective unit was appreciated by the Moneyval evaluators and they recommended more human resources and training. The seizure of the assets derived from crime remains the main goal of this Unit.

VICE SQUAD

The Vice Squad is responsible for investigating all sexual offences, domestic violence, child abuse, child neglect, curbing of prostitution, missing persons, illegal gambling, clandestine lotto, paedophilia on the internet and trafficking in human beings, and other criminal offences.

Sexual exploitation and the curbing of loitering and soliciting for prostitution remained high on the agenda. These were given priority and a lot of time and human resources were invested into these two major social problems. Several persons were charged in court following successful raids, inspections and investigations concerning these serious offences.

Repeated and continuing raids and inspections were made in those areas that are known for loitering for prostitution. However, other areas were also kept under observation so that such activity would not mushroom in other new areas. The most important areas for this crime remain the areas of Gżira, Msida, Marsa and Ta' Xbiex. Hal-Far was also frequently patrolled, but no such activity was ever observed or reported.

The Vice Squad also performs a social work function and not just law enforcement. The cases handled require expertise and many times compassion and understanding both of the victims and sometimes, also of the suspects. Such cases cannot be counted in numbers but the time and energy required to be invested in such cases are a lot. This work concerns mostly domestic violence issues including child abuse, child neglect or family issues. Other cases such as victims of sexual offences and missing persons also require this type of approach and attention.

As already mentioned, missing persons also fall under this type of approach by the personnel at the Vice Squad. Tracing and finding persons who go missing requires a lot of time, energy and dedication by the Squad. Missing persons are given a high level of importance. 'Gentlemen's clubs' were still inspected on numerous occasions. The police also provided shelter and security to victims of trafficking during all the time they were in Malta till the time they chose to return to their country.

The Vice Squad also assisted social workers in the execution of court orders, by accompanying them when these authorities sought our assistance, apart from escorting women who were housed in shelter homes and required police protection due to their violent spouses or partners.

The statistical data concerning Vice Squad activities for 2011 is as follows:

Subject	Total
<i>Investigations</i>	
Missing Persons	460
Domestic Violence	11
Rape	13
Defilement of minor	20
Sexual Activities with Minors	9
Violent Indecent Assault	5
Sexual Violence	2
Immoral Acts in Public	2

Child Pornography	8
Pornography (Possession for circulation)	4
Loitering and Soliciting for Prostitution	190
Living off the earnings of prostitution	1
Keeping a brothel	2
Illegal Arrest	1
Child Neglect	1
Child Abuse	2
Bigamy	2
Breach of Gaming Act	15
Illegal Gambling	8
Slight Injuries	3
Grievous Injuries	1
False Report/Simulation of Offence	2
Others	21
Total	783
Raids and Inspections	
Inspection at Gentlemen's Clubs	13
Raids for prostitution	557
Raids for Illegal Lotto & Gambling	39
Total	609

Persons Interrogated			
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Persons Arraigned	128	159	287
Arrested	104	30	134
Persons Interrogated	78	20	98
Persons Interviewed	119	261	380

Charges in Court -2011			
Subject	Charges	Persons	Cases
Rape	4	5	13
Attempted Rape	1	1	0
Defilement of minor	15	12	16
Sexual activities with minors	15	4	9
Violent Indecent Assault	16	5	5
Sexual harassment	0	0	2
Immoral acts in public	21	9	2
Child pornography	6	6	8
Loitering and soliciting for prostitution	189	189	188
Living off the earnings of prostitution	6	0	1
Compelled/induced persons of age to prostitution.	4	0	0
Keeping a brothel	6	1	2
Complicity in keeping a brothel	0	0	2
THB for the purpose of prostitution	4	4	0
Complicity in trafficking of human beings	4	0	0
Illegal Arrest	10	2	1
Child neglect	0	0	1
Child Abuse	0	0	2
Bigamy	2	2	2
Breach of the Gaming Act	27	27	15
Illegal gambling	9	9	8
Slight injuries	10	8	3
Grievous injuries	1	1	1
False report/Simulation of Offence	2	2	2
Others	40	9	17
Total	392	296	300

CRIME INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS UNIT

Meetings with CIAU personnel

Two meetings were held with the CIAU personnel regarding the ongoing work of the Unit. All operations, prior to be assigned, were discussed in detail by the same personnel. The surveillance team reported back their findings, by the end of the day. The Unit in itself, apart from carrying out office work, continued its daily operations carrying out surveillance, intelligence gathering and covert operations, mostly in drug related crimes, and into the possibility of human trafficking.

Seminars Attended

Inspector in charge CIAU attended two seminars abroad, one covering Covert Surveillance which was held in Selm, Germany, between 7 and 9 November 2011. The aim of the conference was to share best practices, legal frameworks and special tactics. The other seminar dealt with Crime Intelligence, Risk Assessment and Intelligence-led policing, and was held in Munster, Germany, between 28 November and 2 December 2011. The objectives of the seminar were to create a common understanding of intelligence-led policing and intelligence risk assessment, to learn about different approaches in various member states at a European level, to share experiences in this field by discussing in work groups, and to establish new methods on how to implement and improve intelligence-led policing and crime risk assessment in their own organisation.

FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORY

The Malta Police Forensic Science Laboratory is one of the main pillars of the Force. It is the only laboratory on the Island that is capable to offer a wide range of services related to criminal investigations. All officers are trained and specialised in different fields and provide services to the courts and to other sections within the Police Force. With the implementation of the Prüm Treaty, these services were also extended to other foreign European countries. The laboratory absorbed the function to be the contact point in the exchange of information related to dactyloscopic and DNA data.

The Inspector in charge is also an active member and represents the laboratory in a number of working groups within the Council of Europe and Frontex namely, the Working Group on information exchange and data protection on Dactyloscopic and DNA data, the Working Group on Information Exchange on False and Authentic Documents and on the Working Group on FADO users and training, the Working Group on Euro Counterfeiting and the Working Group of document experts for the reference manual and translation tool.

The Forensic Science Laboratory is divided into a number of units, where each unit specialises in a particular expertise.

BALLISTICS UNIT

The unit provides a wide range of services related to firearms and ammunition. The maintenance, inspections and testing of all firearms used by the Police officers are one of the main functions of these ballistic experts followed by the processing of firearm licences, inspections at firearm retailers, inspections at shooting ranges and the safe keeping of seized firearms by the Police and Customs Department. These officers are also called to assist other officers during the escort of firearms used in the film industry.

The work performed by this unit throughout this year was:

Servicing of firearms	170	Firearms referred for destruction	62
Inspections of imported firearms	6,234	Participation in the Weapons Advisory Board	19
Inspections re-exporting of firearms/weapons	946	Inspection at firearms dealers	2

Inspections of firearms with incorrect serial no.	3,626	Court Nominations	8
Firearms referred by the Customs Department	38	Interviews regarding licences	627
Firearms referred by Police for safe keeping	117	Inspections at shooting ranges	1

PHOTOGRAPHY SECTION

This unit is responsible for the processing of all digital images taken by the scene of crime officers, surveillance of all police, sports and other social activities and the enhancement and stills productions from surveillance footage. As expected with the introduction of new surveillance systems in the market, there was a drastic increase in demand with the number of surveillance enhancements which aid in police investigation. In fact, the number of CCTV footage, downloaded from privately-owned systems and enhanced, doubled in amount as compared to the previous year.

During this period, this section was called upon to perform the following work:

Printing of photographs	61,260
Photographic/video surveillance during sporting activities	129
Photographic/video surveillance during other activities	86
Video & photo coverage at other police commitments	213
Enhancement regarding surveillance footage	948
Other miscellaneous work carried out with other sections including SVS, MT Garage, Vice Squad, SB, CIAU and Anti-Terrorism Unit	347

DACTYLOSCOPIC DATA UNIT

This unit is responsible to take impressions of suspects, convicted people, victims of crime for elimination purposes, asylum seekers as part of the process for asylum application, the inputting of latents recovered from the scene of crime into the Automated Fingerprints Identification System (AFIS), and the comparisons of outstanding latents with the suspects' database.

Thanks to the Prüm Implementation process, the Police Force is awaiting for the procurement of the new AFIS system. This system, which was funded by the EU, comprises the actual storage, processing, comparisons and exchange of data with other European foreign countries of tenprints, palmprints and hypolinear prints. This state of the art system is expected to be one of the best in Europe.

Presently, the place where the new equipment will be mounted was refurbished and everything, including network connectivity and the operating platform, were set and tested.

The AFIS operators managed to perform 46,300 transactions into the system, which transactions vary from a simple input of tenprint impressions to the comparison of latents recovered from the scene of the crime against tenprints of convicted and suspected individuals.

Vehicles examined (not related to Magisterial Inquiries)	96
Persons fingerprinted	610
Tenprints/palmprints newly inputted into the AFIS System	422
Latents entered into the AFIS System	1,464
Positive hits recorded	65
Files processed received from different departments including Europol, SIS, Siren and Eurodac	996
Scene of crime attendance to assist as technical support to scene of crime officers	96

Fingerprint Chemical Enhancement Unit

This is a sub-section of the Dactyloscopic Unit and is responsible to carry out chemical examinations to enhance fingerprint, palm prints and shoe marks, and the identification of blood and other body fluids from items recovered from the scene of the crime.

The Police Force has invested in apparatus that provides the possibility to enhance impressions that are not visible to the naked eye. This innovative equipment was used in 183 cases related to crime scene recoveries, and in 36 anonymous letters. The unit personnel were appointed as experts in 107 magisterial inquiries. It was also instrumental in assisting investigators in 198 cases, where the majority proved in the positive. These cases include:

Paper documents	382
Plastic including selotape, bags, wrappers etc	2,106
Metal including firearms, foil etc	104
Glass/material	8
Vehicles	8

The Fingerprint Chemical Enhancement Unit is also responsible for the restoration of obliterated serial numbers and performs restoration examinations on firearms, vehicle engines and chassis numbers. During this period, staff was involved in ten investigations which resulted positive.

SCENE OF CRIME UNIT

The scene of crime teams are responsible for the preservation of every scene of the crime they attend, the recovery of evidence and the analysis of exhibits in search of physical evidence and traces.

In 2011, the scene of crime officers, were called to assist on 2,869 cases, of which 1,137 included magisterial inquiries. The other 1,732 cases were related to police investigations. They were also called to attend to 1,339 court sittings upon their appointment as court experts.

The scene of crime cases include 27 cases of vandalism, 12 cases of smearing of paint or oil, 23 cases of grievous bodily harm, seven cases involving rape, 128 cases involving substance abuse, 230 forensic examinations on vehicles, nine cases of overdoses, 38 cases of armed robberies, 16 cases of stabbings, 37 cases of traffic accidents including those which were fatal, 81 suspicious deaths, 20 cases of accidental falls, one explosion, six identity parades, 125 cases involving fire or arsons of premises or vehicles, seven hit and runs, 856 thefts from residences and retail outlets, 25 cases related to attempted/suicides, 75 recoveries of vehicles, 49 cases of wilful damages, 34 recoveries of stolen goods, two cases involving the recovery of bodies, two homicides, and 13 cases involving shootings or usage of firearms.

NATIONAL DOCUMENT EXAMINATION UNIT

The main role of this unit involves the examination of travel documents and assisting investigators in the analysis of other documents such as anonymous letters.

Members of the unit delivered training to all immigration and visa officers, to officers working within Maltese embassies and consulates abroad, and other members within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In fact, 239 hours of training sessions were delivered during this year. Equipped with highly sophisticated apparatus, this Unit was instrumental in the examination of:

Forged passports examined	14
Forged residence permits examined	1
Counterfeit identity cards examined	15
Counterfeit passports examined	17

Counterfeit residence permits examined	7
Counterfeit visa document examined	3
Imposter documents examined	22
Fantasy documents examined	2
Genuine documents examined	17
Anonymous letters examined	52
Alerts and bulletins distributed	352
Alerts issued	11
Specimen documents processed	161

DNA DATABASE UNIT

With the financial support of the European Union, the Malta Police invested in setting up a new DNA database system in line with the implementation of the Prüm project. This system is intended for the exchange of DNA data with other European Member States, which data includes profiles from stains recovered from the scene of crime of unsolved cases and, of suspects of crimes.

The system operates using a software created by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and caters all the requirements for DNA data exchange online and automatically. At the moment, the system is at testing stage and expected to be fully operational early in 2012.

FORENSIC REGISTRY

The Forensic Registry is responsible for back office operations of the MPFSL. Duties include the registration of cases, opening of files, monitoring of file movements, reporting of analysis/findings to investigating officers and the courts, where needed. Staff assists in investigations related to sexual offences where female victims are involved and to assist in the production of e-fits, of which around 20 were produced in 2011.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

TRAFFIC BRANCH

The Traffic Branch focused mainly on reducing traffic accidents, improving the flow of traffic and assisting drivers, pedestrians and other road users alike. Traffic personnel devoted most of the time to proactive policing with a mixture of reactive policing.

Traffic motorcyclists made their presence seen and felt, particularly throughout the rush hours both in the morning and in the afternoons. Additionally, they were regularly deployed at strategic spots frequently used by motorists. They were also utilised along main and arterial roads where works were being carried out. The objectives were twofold; maintaining the free flow of traffic particularly where deviations were necessary, and to curb and control abuses by drivers. They also focused on reducing traffic accidents especially around known black spots.

Five main issues dealt with and heavily focused on were (a) drink-driving, (b) driving without seat belt, (c) driving and using mobile sets, (d) crossing on red lights and (e) speeding.

During spot checks carried out by the Traffic Branch, 28,934 drivers were stopped and charges were issued where necessary. As distinct normal road checks, specific spot checks were also carried out with the aim of enforcing seatbelts regulations, driving with mobile phones, excessive speed and drink and drive regulations.

Other involvement consisted in keeping a look-out for criminals who were either wanted by the section or other sections within the Force. There were few occasions where vehicles which had been reported stolen, had also been recovered by personnel from the Traffic Branch. On few occasions, officers from this section were also successful when assisting other units during hold-ups, or recovering stolen items following snatch and grabs.

The total number of charges and Traffic Offences Tickets (TOTs) issued by the Traffic Branch is indicated below. Those charges which could not be otherwise included in the TOTs had to be issued separately.

Number of drivers stopped	29,628
Charges Issued	583
Traffic Offence Tickets (TOTs) Issued	33,149

Personnel from this Branch were also responsible for providing police escorts with internationally renowned political dignitaries visiting Malta on official functions. There were 32 occasions, involving about 430 traffic motorcyclists, in which traffic personnel contributed during the year under review.

Similar escort duties were provided with His Excellency the President of Malta, as well as with the Prime Minister, and in some instances with some Ministers, the Attorney General and the Chief Justice. Such escorts were carried out on 462 occasions with more than 644 members in participation.

Traffic motorcyclists also contributed during sports events, in particular bicycle and athletic events, by assisting participants during the course of these competitions. Likewise, their contribution was also evident during the summer patrols carried out in various localities.

Traffic motorcyclists were continuously involved in delivering public talks to local councils, government and private schools. The Traffic Safety Campaign was given regular public awareness through continuous participation on the local media, both on TV and radio stations.

The Traffic School Campaign was also continued during the year with seven school campaigns and a total of 2,715 students participating.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Administrative Law Enforcement Unit continued with its efforts to safeguard our environment. During the year in question, 2,563 individuals were booked. The major emphasis this year was on smoking in public places and offences against the Litter Act, while every effort was put in place to continue to monitor the countryside from illegal hunting/trapping activities. The latter had a new facet in 2011, since trapping for song birds was prohibited throughout the year.

As in previous years, the Administrative Law Enforcement Section continued to collaborate with other entities outside the Force and in 2011 bridges were built with the Fisheries Department with a view to hold closer collaboration in 2012.

Lectures on maritime issues were given to all ALE staff in conjunction with the Transport Authority personnel, before the summer period and thus all those involved in sea patrol duties had a better understanding of their roles at sea.

Officers from this section assisted also other units within the Force during lean periods. These included the Mobile Squad and Traffic Branch. Officers on bikes in 2011 were not only deployed on beach patrols, but also assisted in traffic management during the Presidential Fun Run held in December 2011.

During the year under review, the Inspector in charge of the ALE represented Malta as a supporting country for organising an international CEPOL Course on Environmental Crime. 25 foreign counterparts participated in this four-day international course in Rome.

Nature of Charge	No.
Illegal Bird Trapping	190
Illegal Hunting on land	170
Illegal Hunting at sea	8
In possession of protective species	36
Illegal selling of birds	5
Litter Act	45
Dumping	5
Infringements of the MMA Regulations	220
Traffic Offences Tickets	709
Traffic Charges	84
Smoking in public places	469
Arms Act	103
Illegal cutting to Protected trees	1
Taking of rabbit	0
Illegal importation of protected species	4
Auto dealers	12
Goldsmith Act	0
Illegal Fishing	3
Illegal movements of animals	2
Transportation of swill	9
Under age with alcohol	10
Under age persons inside bars	35
Permitting under age persons inside bars.	37
Consuming alcohol in the streets	12
Failed to cover merchandise	54
Others	83
Total	2,301
Seizures	
Protective species seized	195
Weapons seized	586
Cartridges seized	3,306
Total	4,087

Court Cases	
VAT Sitings	50
VAT New cases	4,726
VAT decided cases	2,070
ECO Tax Sitings	6
ECO Tax new cases	221
ECO Tax cases decided	22
ALE Sitings	8
ALE new cases	521
ALE cases decided	262
Total	7,786

COMMAND AND CONTROL ROOM

Emergency Line 112	Total
Total number of calls answered	411,050
Total number of calls unanswered	150,104
Total number of calls transferred again to GHQ from other emergency services	2,737
Total number of calls transferred to various government emergency entities	51,549

Total number of calls transferred to CPD	10,797
Total number of calls transferred to AFM	273
Total number of calls transferred to Mater Dei Hospital	35,231
Total number of calls transferred to 112 Gozo	1,815
Total number of calls transferred to Gozo Health Dept	696
Total Number of Calls received on the 112 during 2011	564,188

In September 2011, additional software was introduced with a view to fine-tune 112 call statistics. In addition to this, a GHQ circular was issued to all police officers directing them to desist from calling 112 unnecessarily. Furthermore, a new setting was introduced to disallow transferring of 112 calls to other numbers. The tagging systems highlighting hoax, wrong number, already reported and unattended calls since being introduced has been effective. Further to these improvements, additional personnel were posted at the Command and Control Room to facilitate response time. A public awareness campaign was also launched to improve the service.

The following table depicts the process of 112 calls handled, between in 2011, by the unit operators:

<i>Total Calls Answered</i>	<i>411,050</i>
Calls answered between 0 and 15 seconds	366,026
Calls answered between 16 and 60 seconds	42,103
Calls answered after 60 seconds	2,921
<i>Total Calls Unanswered</i>	<i>150,104</i>
Calls unanswered between 0 and 15 seconds	139,663
Calls unanswered between 16 and 60 seconds	9,274
Calls unanswered after 60 seconds	1,197
<i>Total number of tagged calls</i>	<i>249,712</i>
Call Flagging – Hoax Call	34,860
Call Flagging – Wrong Number	47,313
Call Flagging – Already Reported	9,072
Call Flagging – Unattended Phone Call	158,467

Personnel at the Control Room, apart from answering 112 calls, are also responsible for incoming general calls made, mostly by the public, on telephone number 21224001/9. They also cater for incoming calls on the Crime Stop – 119 and the Information Line – 21221111. They likewise handle all calls made from other extensions connected to the General Headquarters and outlying police stations.

Distinct from the 112 calls, Control Room personnel handled as well 444,056 calls on the general consoles relating to 21224001. In addition to these, 499 calls were handled on the Information Line – 21221111.

It is also their responsibility to operate radio communications with their colleagues from various branches, sections and district officers. They also monitor bank alarms and other security alarms some of which are connected to commercial establishments as well as private premises. As part of this responsibility, it is essential for them to monitor, from time to time, police vehicles and motor cycles deployed on patrol. For such a purpose, they carry out necessary checks on a trekking system which also requires them to make ‘check calls’ with their colleagues deployed on field duties.

Control Room personnel also have the duty to collate the Daily Morning Report in respect of the tour of duty of all members of the Force. They also manage the Police Incident Report System which caters for all incidents reported to the police in all districts and branches.

PRINCIPAL CITATIONS OFFICE

This Office was responsible to issue a large number of subpoenas, not only in connection and directly connected to police work, but also for many other government departments. During 2011, this Office prepared paper work for the following court sittings:

Nature of Sitting	No of sittings appointed	Cases Appointed	Cases put off	Cases Decided
Traffic	48	2,560	1,464	1,096
Collisions	41	1,039	665	374
Health	34	985	799	186
DIER	22	566	422	144
Health/Safety	2	84	36	48
Appeals Court	83	1,340	1,010	330
Appeals Traffic	6	81	35	46
Juvenile	13	254	132	122
ETC	10	665	291	374
Evasion of Duty	12	208	191	17
Family court	53	2,545	988	1,557
Inland Revenue	30	3,468	2,579	889
Total	354	13,795	8,612	5,183

CENTRAL DELIVERY OFFICE

Personnel in this Office handled quite a massive number of citations, subpoenas and other court-related papers as illustrated shown in the table hereunder:

Incoming papers	Outgoing papers	Undelivered	Working days	Percentage of deliverable/undeliverable
93,006	99,526	9,168	252	10%

In 2011, 11 new Peugeot model LXR 125cc motorcycles were purchased, thus bringing the total to 15 motorcycles being used by members of this section in their respective duties.

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS GROUP (SAG)

The Special Assignments Group was deployed on 17 occasions in connection with anti-riot/crowd control situations. A further seven occasions necessitated the need for special weapons and tactics. There were 371 occasions where close security protection was given to dignitaries and other VIPs.

One of the tasks assigned to the SAG is to escort persons abroad or return them back from other countries. These include escorts requested by EUROPOL and Frontex. A total of 20 escorts of this sort were carried out.

Furthermore, the SAG performed 17 jobs on foreign land - 16 SAG members performed duties with Air Malta while airlifting people during the Libyan war, and in October, one SAG member took part in the Poseidon Joint Land Operation in Alexandroupolis Greece for a period of four weeks.

There were 18 occasions when the SAG was tasked with providing armed escorts during the transportation of valuables. Also, on 1,480 instances the SAG gave protection to venues where valuables were held. Depending on the circumstances, these duties were performed either in plain clothes or in uniform.

Another duty delegated to the SAG is the guarding of visiting warships (shore patrol). This service was rendered 28 times during the indicated period.

The SAG deployed its members to guard the United States of America Embassy at Floriana, the British High Commission at Ta' Xbiex, the Libyan Embassy at Attard and the Libyan Ambassador's residence at Bahar iċ-Ċagħaq. These duties totalled 1,250 times.

Patrols are performed at Paceville during the weekends and on public holidays in order to assist the District Police. In 2011 these patrols amounted to 220. Other instances where SAG patrols were requested were for particular events such as when high level meetings were held. There were 52 patrols of this sort.

SAG Duties	No of Duties Performed
Anti-Riot situations	17
SWAT assistance	7
Close Security Protection	371
Escorting of Persons Abroad (incl EUROPOL & Frontex)	20
Duties Abroad	17
Escort duties with valuables	18
Uniformed/Plain Clothes guarding of venues	1,480
Guarding of Warships (Shore Patrol)	28
Fixed Point Duties (US, BHC and Libyan Embassies)	1,250
Patrols in Paceville	220
Other Patrols in Places of Importance	52
Total	3,490

MOUNTED SECTION

During the year the Mounted Section participated in 33 ceremonial duties, escorting ambassadors during presentation of credentials, and five presidential escorts to visiting heads of state. There were 23 gala occasions where the Mounted Section stood guard in ceremonial dress. 11 Mounted Police displays were held throughout 2010.

Personnel from the Mounted Section were also deployed on patrols in certain strategic places. These duties amounted to 236 times in Malta and Gozo. Furthermore, during the summer period, personnel were called ten times to carry out patrol on horseback and 92 times on foot patrol at the major beaches.

During the year, the Mounted Police were called 60 times at the Marsa Race Track. The Section contributed also to policing at football games held at the Ta' Qali national football stadium where they were called 57 times to assist in crowd control.

The Mounted Section deployed its personnel 17 times at Paceville and performed 25 patrols as part of Mobile Squad patrols. The Section was also called 16 times for reinforcement duties.

Mounted Section Duties	No of Performances
Presidential Escorts	5
Ceremonial duties (Escorts)	33
Gala Duties	23
Marsa Race Track	60
Football Stadium	57
Patrol on horseback	214
Patrol on horseback in Gozo	12
Summer Patrol (horseback)	10
Foot patrol	61
Displays	11
Duty at Paceville	17
Patrol with Mobile Squad	25
Reinforcement duties	16
Total	575

DOGS' SECTION

The protection duty dogs of the Dogs Section performed patrol duties 232 times at Paceville during weekends and public holidays. Also they carried out 348 patrols at areas considered of high importance, at the Yacht Marina and also the summer beach patrols.

As part of the security measures taken at the Malta International Airport, both the drugs and the explosives duty dogs executed 807 searches throughout the said period. Also, the drugs duty dogs assisted the Drugs Squad six times during searches held by the latter in connection with drug abuse.

The explosives duty dogs were requested by EOD AFM to carry out searches at venues of high importance such as part of foreign dignitary visits to Malta. In total, the explosives duty dogs assisted the AFM on 87 occasions.

The Dogs Section members were called on 271 occasions for reinforcement duties in connection with local or national commitments.

Furthermore, the Dogs Section took part in 49 displays performed to numerous schools and local councils. These include visits to the Dogs Section by groups of schoolchildren and other displays held by the Malta Police Force. There were 80 occasions where personnel from the Dogs Section who are also musicians were called for duties with the Police Band.

Dog Section Duties	No of Performances
Duties at Paceville	232
Patrols	348
Searches by Drugs & Explosives Teams at the MIA	807
Assistance to Drug Squad during searches	6
Searches by Explosives team with EOD AFM	87
Reinforcement Duties	271
Displays to schools & local councils	49
Police Band Duties	80
Total	1,880

MOTOR VEHICLE TRANSPORT SECTION (MT)

The Motor Vehicle Transport Section (MT) provides vehicular transport to the Police Department and maintains the police fleet in the best condition possible. The MT is comprised of two sections, the Drivers' Section and the MT Garage Workshop (Mechanics) Section.

The Drivers Section is responsible for the transport of all officers stationed at the GHQ. Apart from the conveyance of officers and other ranks, the MT Section also caters for the transportation of vehicles under investigations, derelict vehicles and of stranded police vehicles. This section also provides bus transport for police needs, ranging from police reinforcements, band duties, or for the transportation of irregular immigrants. The section also caters for the distribution of police barriers to various activities and the conveyance of corpses undergoing magisterial enquiries.

The police fuel pump supplies fuel for police service vehicles, the CPD and cars hired by special branches. The St Andrew's Police Compound houses vehicles under investigation by the Police and by the duty magistrates. .

MT Garage (Workshop/MT Stores) Section

The MT Garage Section is composed of the Workshop section and the MT Stores section.

The Stores Section is responsible for the procurement and issue of vehicle spare parts. The MT Stores supplies spares and material for servicing the police fleet and procures spares from local agents and retailers after due authorisation from HQ.

The Workshop section is responsible for maintaining and servicing the police vehicle fleet, as well as second-hand vehicles acquired from other departments. Services carried out at the MT Workshop section are automotive/motorcycle repairs, auto-electrical, vulcanising, panel beating and spray painting.

During the year, 22 new cars and three motorcycles were procured.

In 2011, the MT Section handled 3,004 job cards for repair works on police vehicles. These varied from routine maintenance, to major engine and/or body repairs. The amount of €324,170 was spent on the purchase of both proprietary and non-proprietary parts, materials, oils and other services.

The fuel consumption for unleaded petrol, diesel and bi-diesel purchased from Enemalta Corporation amounted to a total of 562,539 litres, at a total amount of €766,948.

SPECIAL BRANCH

IMMIGRATION

The main task of the Immigration Branch is to control the island's points of entry, which include checks to prevent illegal entry of foreigners and detection of forged documents. It has entry points at the Airport, Seaport and Yacht Marina, as well as a seasonal port at Mgarr, Gozo. Police and civilian personnel man the entry point at the airport. Police officers carry out border control at the other points of entry.

During the year, the number of persons who arrived in or left Malta by air, was as follows:

Arrivals	1,744,873
Departures	1,761,644

Source: Malta International Airport

The number of ferry and ro-ro passengers, excluding cruise liner passengers for 2011, was the following:

Arrivals	124,332
Departures	117,440

The number of arrival and departures of cruise liner passengers for the same year was as follows:

Arrivals	55,927
Departures	55,806
Transit	445,852

Source: Transport Malta

The visa-online system requires the daily input of the Immigration Police in order to assure the proper processing of applicants for uniform visas in line with EU regulations. This branch also houses an ad hoc office that deals with visa issues.

Another office is responsible for matters relating to foreigners' administrative issues, and includes the processing of requests for acquisition of immovable property, extensions of stay, residence permits, nationality request, and work permits. 95 foreigners, who did not satisfy the conditions for entry, were refused entry into the island, an activity aimed at suppressing illegal immigration.

The Immigration Branch is a section where a lot of changes are taking place and are always ongoing, especially in view of the requirements relating to the movement of persons by the European Union. To

secure the best possible processing for issues relating to residence permits, work permits, and other permits for permission for aliens to remain in Malta, constant liaison with the Department of Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs and the Employment and Training Corporation is secured.

Immigration Field Duties

Insofar as field duties are concerned, 1,728 removal orders were issued by Immigration Officers. These include removal orders issued in respect of foreigners arriving in Malta or intercepted on boats. Immigration officers deployed on field duties also had to cater for nine boats which were rescued or entered Maltese water illegally. The boats carried a total of 1,579 migrants. These all had to be medically checked, photographed, fingerprinted and accommodated. They were also interviewed in order to establish their identity and wherever possible effect repatriations.

Court arraignments during 2011 continued to increase over previous years. Several cases were brought before the courts with charges varying from the illegal possession and use of documents to smuggling of human beings. Charges relating to escaping from custody and leaving Malta unauthorised were also frequent.

Coordination with the Office for the Welfare and Integration of Asylum Seekers (OIWAS) was required and kept constant, due to the arrivals of family units and minors who are only kept in detention for the minimum period necessary to have them cleared medically. Dubious cases of minors are also referred for further age examination and results of these are communicated to the MFSS. The nationalities of the boat people arriving were as follows:

Nationality	Amount
Somali	455
Eritrean	280
Nigerian	239
Ivoirian	114
Ethiopian	103
Others	388
Total	1,579

A number of the above, opted to apply for refugee status locally and all relative documentation that was referred to the migrants from the Refugee Commission, relating to the approval or rejection of their claim, was delivered by Immigration personnel. The same applies to correspondence exchanged with the Refugee Appeals Board. All communications from REFCOM and the Appeals Board that are addressed to the immigrants are also distributed by this section. Records of these documents are also kept.

A total of 128 foreigners were repatriated in line with immigration procedures. The Police were responsible to acquire the relative documentation and return tickets in order to secure smooth repatriations. Requests for documents continued to be forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in an effort to be in a position to repatriate failed asylum seekers. In a number of cases, action was also taken to organise repatriation procedures with accompanying escorts. During the year, all joint repatriation flights organised by EU and Frontex were monitored with a view to participating in those which were valid for Malta. In fact, the Branch managed to participate in five joint repatriation flights, all to Nigeria.

NCOs from Immigration were also deployed for duties in Greece in Operation Poseidon. Other non-commissioned officers in different branches of the Immigration Branch participated in various seminars and training activities organised by Frontex during the same period.

Immigration gazetted officers actively participate in a number of meetings, seminars, working groups and other activities, held both at EU level and by Frontex. 2011 saw the continued active implementation of project MELITA by which Malta managed to invite a number of ambassadors and consular officers of

countries of interest for initial talks with a view to enhancing cooperation especially in the field of document procurement. Council meetings related to immigration and frontiers issues were also covered and these included the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum, the Schengen Evaluation Working Group and Frontiers. Participation in such meetings was active last year, due to the continued discussions on the new Frontex Regulation which was adopted later in the year. In addition to this, very close liaison was kept with MJHA and several meetings were attended especially in relation to the transposition of EU legislation. Several meetings were specifically held on the Return Directive and action on the Carrier Sanctions Directive also continued.

Eurodac Office

The Immigration Police are also responsible for the running of the Eurodac Office. As such, they are responsible to store and disseminate fingerprints of all asylum seekers and illegal immigrants to the central data bank, which is shared by all EU states. The same Office is also responsible for the responses to requests to check or take back immigrants who may be discovered in other EU Member States or vice versa. This Office received a number of requests to take back and these continue to be processed regularly.

Very close relation is kept with the Refugee Commissioner, who is technically responsible for the Dublin activities. All action is being taken to ensure that from our end, all data is entered in good time in the Eurodac system. The officers posted there have also gained very good experience of the way the Office operates and the procedures required. During the period under review, a total of 955 new requests were filed to this Office and 350 migrants were accepted and sent back to Malta following the required checks and verification.

Duties at Open and Closed Accommodation Centres

Figures of illegal immigrants kept in detention centres during the year under study increased drastically over the previous year. In December 2011, there were 1,171 persons recorded to be in the two detention centres, at Safi and Lyster. Such premises are guarded by the Detention Service officers and other AFM officers. A Police Sergeant-Major from the Special Branch has also been deployed in order to assist in such duties. The Immigration Police kept assisting in the housing of foreigners who had entered Malta by boat or had been rescued by the Maritime Squadron or those who were found in breach of their immigration position in Malta.

This section is also responsible to ensure that all immigrants are released from custody according to government policy. During the year, 1,023 immigrants were brought over to GHQ for release which obviously entails a lot of administrative duties apart from issuing them with an Immigration document for identification purposes, obviously subject to the identity declared by them on arrival or during interviews.

Private Guards and Local Wardens

Another duty entrusted to the Special Branch is the processing of applications and licensing of applicants for the position of Private Guard or Local Warden and for the registration and licensing of the agencies which employ such guards and wardens. The following applications were received and processed during 2011:

Type	Applications				Licences
	<i>Received</i>	<i>Refused</i>	<i>Withdrawn</i>	<i>Pending</i>	<i>Issued</i>
Private Guards	747	18	2	118	609
Local Wardens	48	4	0	5	39
Private Guard Agencies	1	0	0	0	1
Local Warden Agencies	0	0	0	0	0

WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES

The Special Branch is also entrusted with issues relating to weapons and explosives. The Branch is responsible for approving import of weapons and the temporary approvals for import/export of weapons for sporting purposes. In view of this activity, action was also taken to comply with EU requirements for the movement of firearms within the Union which requirements are also embodied in our laws. The Special Branch is the designated contact point with other European Police services dealing with the movement of weapons.

During the period under review, weapons licences, as indicated in the table below, were processed from the different district offices throughout Malta which have access to a main weapons database. The system is enhanced continuously to meet the requirements of the Police department.

This Office is also responsible to ensure that correct amounts of explosive materials are used at hard stone quarries. To ensure that this activity is well carried out, regular consultation is kept with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority. Officers from this department are present during all blasting operations carried out in local hard stone quarries or on construction projects requiring the blasting of rocks. They are responsible to escort and control the issue and use of explosives when such operations take place.

The Explosives Committee was recomposed during 2011 and now consists of a member of the Armed Forces who serves as chairman, a member of the Civil Protection Department and a member from the Police. The Committee also met on several occasions to deal with issues of fireworks and blasting operations during the same period.

Weekly inspections at fireworks factories are organised whenever possible, in order to ensure that persons on sites of fireworks factories are duly licensed by the Police according to law. These inspections are also carried out by officers posted at the Immigration Branch.

	New	Renewed	Total
To carry harpoons	461	2,116	2,577
To carry firearms for hunting sport on land	270	10,596	10,866
To carry firearms for hunting from aboard a sea craft	29	218	247
To carry firearms for the hunting of wild rabbits	239	2,085	2,324
To take wild rabbits	0	26	26
To take birds	0	2,798	2,798
Bird ringers	N/A	17	17
Renewal to keep a firearm	N/A	9,234	9,234
Request for purchase of firearms	3,437	N/A	3,437
Target shooter licence A	320	964	1,284
Target shooter licence B	627	2,675	3,302
Collector licence A	193	265	458
Collector licence B	2	10,526	10,528

Transfer of firearms		3,933
Person to Person	1,343	
Dealer to Person	2,590	
Number of firearms		112,481
<i>Schedule I</i>	684	
<i>Schedule II</i>	87,890	
<i>Schedule II WB</i>	2,354	
<i>Schedule III</i>	13,977	
<i>Section 22</i>	7,576	
Fireworks licences 2011		1,558
<i>Fireworks licence A</i>	189	
<i>Fireworks licence B</i>	785	

<i>Fireworks licence C</i>	45	
<i>Fireworks licence D</i>	539	
Fireworks factories		35
Quarries		24
Blasting clearances (Quarries)		77
Firearm passes <i>New - 193</i>		902
Hunting trips issued for 2011		34
Fireworks Licences Courses 2011		
<i>Fireworks licence A</i>		1
<i>Fireworks licence B</i>		4

PROTECTIVE SERVICE PLANNING AND COORDINATION

The Special Branch is also the designated body to coordinate protective measures of visiting VIPs or to organise security during certain conferences and other meetings. For this purpose, close liaison is ensured with the District Police, the Traffic Branch and the Special Assignment Group.

As in former years, during 2011, various VIPs travelled to Malta. On all occasions, action was taken by this branch to ensure that through a combination of measures and capabilities, appropriate steps were taken to protect such visitors and organise security at specific meetings. Action had in all cases been taken to have a proper security and risk assessments and visits on sites to be visited for such purpose were ensured every time. Close liaison was also kept with other appropriate departments to secure the success of these visits, and these included the MFA, OPM, AFM, Health, MIA and OMAS.

AIRPORT POLICE STATION

The Special Branch is also responsible for the public areas at the Malta International Airport. It is also responsible for all investigations of incidents reported within the airport area.

Duties at the station concern normal public order duties, prevention of crime and investigation of offences. For this purpose, several inspections and various road blocks were organised. The airport police are also responsible for the running of the custody centre at the MIA.

Various offences relating to traffic contraventions were dealt with and regular patrol is secured at the airport. A number of traffic offence tickets were issued by the airport police.

The officers at the airport are also deployed on duties where special skills are needed to cover protective security measures during the use of the airport by distinctive visitors leaving or arriving in Malta.

The following are the figures of activities carried out by the MIA Police Station in 2011:

		Total
Traffic offence tickets		344
False documents detected at MIA and Seaport		
<i>Visas/stamps</i>	0	
<i>Passports</i>	31	
<i>Others</i>	34	65
Inspections/roadblocks at MIA		
<i>Inspections</i>	214	
<i>Roadblocks</i>	97	311
Inspections carried out at Gates		539
Damaged/stolen mail reported at MIA		11
Escorts of valuable cargo		260

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS UNIT

The functions of the International Relations Unit (IRU) are to coordinate cooperation with international law enforcement agencies, in particular in the field of criminal matters. This cooperation is handled through three channels namely, Interpol, Europol and the Sirene Office. The IRU also coordinates all requests for assistance (*letters rogatoire*) received from foreign services.

Officers from the IRU represent the Police Force in the Council DAPIX Working Group and the SIS/SIRENE Working Group. This unit played a pivotal role in the extraordinary events surrounding the Libyan crisis, especially in the early stages where thousands of third country nationals were evacuated through Malta. Besides being directly assigned duties related to border control, the Unit also carried out the necessary checks against respective databases and where necessary coordinated the necessary action.

A Superintendent attached to the Unit acts as the National Liaison Officer at Europol Headquarters at the Hague, the Netherlands.

Europol National Unit

Cooperation with other Europol Member States continued to increase during 2011. Malta's European Liaison Officer attended various seminars and meetings organised by Europol and other EU agencies.

Action is being taken to enhance the administrative capacity of this Office. The Malta Police Force is now responsible for the procurement, maintenance and security of equipment installed at the national unit. These changes make it possible for Europol applications to be extended to those specialised branches with which there is special liaison and which participate in Analytical Work Files (AWFs), namely the Counter-Terrorism Unit, the CID, the Drugs Squad, the Economic Crimes Squad, the Vice Squad, the Immigration Section and the Cybercrime Unit. Also in view of the Schengen evaluation scheduled for 2012, programmes were devised for awareness seminars and training for senior officers from the Police and Customs which training is to be held early in 2012.

During the year, 56 incoming requests for mutual assistance in criminal matters were coordinated by officers from this unit and executed by or with the assistance of officers from other specialised branches of the Police. The requests related to various serious crimes and included the delivery of judicial documents. This Office also assisted other units with the compilation of outgoing requests for mutual assistance in criminal matters especially in the area of fraud over the internet.

During the same period, the Europol National Unit processed 841 new Europol case files and another 97 files in relation to meetings and conferences attended. Prompt relaying of information through this channel was instrumental in a number of high-profile police operations both locally and abroad including drug offences investigations.

Cases initiated by MT	Transactions made by MT	Requests sent by MT	Requests received by MT
38	2,506	68	868

SIRENE Office

During 2011, SIRENE staff continued to support District personnel with problems they encounter, while entering reports and hits on alerts in the SIS to ensure these comply with data quality criteria. The SIRENE Office participates in the Council SIS/SIRENE Working Party/Mixed Committee as well as the Commission SISVIS Committee (SIRENE formation), Sirene Manual Committee and the SIRENE Training Committee.

The SIRENE Office continued contributing to the preparations for the entry in force of the SIS II and the consequent migration from SISone4ALL with regular reviewing of SIS data cleansing and mapping. This ongoing exercise is now up to date and is being updated regularly and proactively on a monthly basis.

As regards requests for extradition received via the SIS, the SIRENE Office coordinated the arrest and surrender of four wanted persons. Further to these, three wanted persons were returned to Malta through this channel.

The SIRENE Office also carries out checks in respect of newly registered motor vehicles in application of article 102A of the Schengen Convention. The SIRENE Bureau effected over 22,000 checks on vehicles, VIN and licence plates and registration documents pursuant to Article 102A. This resulted in 12 hits on VINs (chassis numbers) and three hits on VRNs (plates).

But the most demanding task the SIRENE Bureau undoubtedly undertook in 2011 was the organisation in conjunction with CEPOL of a Sirene seminar related to stolen vehicles. The seminar was attended by 23 participants from 17 different EU Member States and entailed huge administrative and logistical preparations. The outcome was a huge success on all counts.

Statistics

Police Cooperation (including cooperation under the Swedish Initiative)

Forms sent and received via SISNET mail (Police Cooperation under article 39 – 46 CISA)					
Received		1,494		Sent	Jan - Dec 1,290

Related to the Schengen Information System

Common template for hit statistics in SIS and exchanged SIRENE forms				Country Code	MT	Reporting Period	2011
HITS							
CISA article	no. of all hits on foreign alerts	no. of all hits abroad on own alerts	Outgoing forms		Incoming forms		Remarks
			G	H	G	H	
95	4	3	4	0	3	0	Provision of data on hits is compulsory (Chapter 9, SIRENE Manual) Provision of data on consultation procedure, flagging and numbers of all forms is recommended.
96	12	50	8	4	36	14	
97	1	13	1	0	13	0	
98	5	18	5	0	18	0	
99 persons	4	3	4	0	3	0	
99 vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0	
100 vehicles	2	1	2	0	1	0	
100 firearms	0	0	0	0	0	0	
100 blank documents	0	0	0	0	0	0	
100 issued documents	3	21	3	1	13	8	
100 banknotes	0	0	0	0	0	0	
CONSULTATION PROCEDURE							
			Outgoing		Incoming		Count only first form in file/case/person (the aim is to count number of new consultation procedures).
			3		38		
FLAGGING							
Number of own alerts with at least one flag			Outgoing		Incoming		Count all forms that you sent to other SIRENEs or received.
flags Art. 95			7		2		
flags Art. 97			0		0		
flags Art. 99			0		1		
EXCHANGE OF SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION – SIRENE FORMS							
Total number of SIRENE forms			Outgoing		Incoming		
A			15		17,390		
E			0		0		

F	1	8	Sum up data given above.
G	27	87	Sum up data given above.
H	5	22	Sum up data given above.
I	0	1	
J	0	2	
K	2	5	
L	16	43	
M	444	29,863	
N	2	33	Count all N forms
O	1	8	Count all O forms
P	0	10	
Q	0	86	
Total	513	47,558	

Interpol Office

The following were the activities for the Interpol Office for the year 2011:

- *Extradition*: The NCB dealt with two cases of extradition to the UK in relation to economic crime and sexual offences. Five wanted persons were returned to Malta through Interpol. These were in connection with drug-related offences (two), economic crime (two) and one case of perjury.
- *National Central Bureau, Malta files*: In 2011, a total of 232 IP/FLOR files (directly related to Malta) were opened. Most of these were incoming requests, varying from simple requests on whether a person is criminally known, on the existence of a company or location, to requests for information on investigations being conducted by the Malta Police Force. One type of such requests consists of warnings on convicted paedophiles who will be visiting Malta for holiday. Apart from the usual reference of such papers to the Vice Squad, the particulars of these subjects are being entered in the National Stop List by the Interpol staff for discreet surveillance. This is being done to keep track of these subjects. Moreover as a result of direct access to the Registry of Companies at the IP Office, requests for information on companies are being dealt with in a shorter time. Efforts are being made so that other requests take a shorter time, such as those on telephone numbers. The NCB also opened a total of 2,329 IP/MAL files (general files not directly related to Malta). Another 191 files in relation to stolen works of art were also opened as well as 47 files in relation to stolen or missing boats/vessels.
- *Notices*: The Floriana NCB has a total of 52 Notices still active, 21 of which are Red (wanted persons).
- *Entries into National Stop List*: The NCB continued with insertion of wanted for arrest/location and missing subjects into the national stop list. A total of 9,139 person alerts were entered on the NSL by Interpol staff (a staggering 30% increase over the previous year). Apart from that, the files from 1991 up to this day are being checked and updated. If subjects mentioned are positive and wanted by a non-SIS country, the appropriate instructions are issued. Besides the above, NCB Floriana has entered 829 Maltese passports on the e-ASF.
- *40th Interpol European Regional Conference*: Undoubtedly the major achievement for NCB in 2011 was the hosting of the 40th Interpol European Regional Conference held in a leading local hotel in May. Needless to say, this conference, the second most important Interpol activity of the year, posed a massive organisational challenge. With the assistance of other MPF sections, all aspects from logistics to administrative as well as technical and hospitality ones were excellently taken care of. This drew praise not only from the Interpol President and the Secretary General as well as the General Secretariat of Interpol, but also from all of the 150 different participants from 50 different European and other states.

Europol Liaison Officer (ELO)

In 2011, Malta fielded one liaison officer at EPOL in the Hague, with the overall responsibility for running the national liaison bureau there. This function entails coverage of various strategic, operational and administrative tasks.

From a strategic point of view, the liaison officer was nominated to represent Malta on various boards and in a number of meetings throughout the year. This requires the preparation of national positions, so that

Malta's interests are safeguarded, whilst also ensuring that the country can provide a valid contribution to the European law enforcement scene. The undersigned thus prepared for, attended and reported upon the meetings of the EPOL Management Board, the HENU (Heads of EPOL National Unit) Group, the Working Groups in ICT and Corporate Matters, the Security Committee, as well as a whole range of other expert or working groups associated with the various criminal phenomena targeted at EPOL.

During 2011, the ELO attended 78 meetings.

In operational terms, various information exchanges between EPOL, Malta, AWFs and other MS took place on an ongoing basis. Apart from the daily exchange of information (vide statistics below), the undersigned was also responsible for coordinating two operational meetings (Operation DIENER with DE Customs, and Operation PFIZER with BE police) together with the Malta Police Drug Squad. Funding for these meetings was secured through EPOL, and coordination activities were held at EPOL in the Hague with attendance by all parties concerned.

Additional operational work was also undertaken in relation to the EIS (EPOL Information System), with entities being updated and queried over the year. In 2011, the ELO initiated 54 cases in SIENA (Secure Information Exchange Network Application) on behalf of Malta (i.e. based on requests emanating from Malta), sent or received 912 additional requests, and processed 2,725 exchange messages

Apart from the strategic and operational functions described above, the Maltese liaison officer at EPOL also had to assure the normal office administration of the bureau. Among other tasks, this included filing, electronic system back-up, meeting preparation, collation of documents, and electronic drive administration.

DISTRICT POLICING (REGIONS 'A' & 'B')

REGION 'A'

During the year, the divisional Police in Region 'A' effected:

- 613 searches and arrested 580 suspects in connection with crimes committed in Region 'A' or elsewhere;
- 360 roadblocks and road checks along major roads and traffic arteries;
- 24,910 TOTs;
- 43 breathalyser charges;
- 374 for breaches of Smoking Regulations;
- 226 charges in connection with prostitution, of which 54 were males - 172 females;
- 28 charges in connection with auto dealers;
- 10 charges for licences of shops for permitting minors inside their premises;
- 3 charges for licences of shops for selling alcohol to minors;
- 19 minors were detected consuming alcohol;
- 21 minors were detected inside places of entertainment;
- 1 charge for illegal hunting;
- 28 charges in connection with unlicensed auto dealers;
- 54 vehicles have been towed;
- 1,081 charges for breach of the Litter Act.

Inspections in places of entertainment and Wines, Beer and Spirit Regulations reached the figure of 6,311 for the year, and 145 charges have been issued for breaches of these regulations.

Night patrols by gazetted officers reached 224 in Region 'A'. Usually these patrols are carried out on a period of four hours and these differ in times between 9pm and 4am.

There were 473 major commitments in Region 'A', such as village feasts, football grounds, water polo games, horse races, parliament and political commitments, etc. 670 police personnel from this region were detailed for soccer games during the past year, whilst another 223 police personnel were also detailed for public order at Paceville, while a further 5,854 were detailed for other major commitments.

As regards court sittings, the Police at Region 'A' held 97 sittings. A great number of police personnel are always detailed to cover these sittings in court apart from police personnel who attended tribunal sittings. In fact, the number of affidavits presented by Region 'A' personnel during 2011 rose to 14,027. Court affidavits amount to 4,683, plus 9,344 tribunal affidavits, which brings the total to 14,027.

The district police detailed 11,949 police personnel for shepherding of school children.

During 2011, Region 'A' detailed 8,032 fixed point duties, as shown in the following breakdown:

President's residence	1,095	Embassies/Residences	1,421
Prime Minister's residence	1,095	Castille Place	1,095
Mater Dei Hospital (illegal immigrants)	318	Attorney General's residence	365
Mt Carmel Hospital (illegal immigrants)	163	Transport Malta official	545
1st District (warships, juries, EuroMed mtgs etc)	1,189	Residence of police official	725
Others	21		

The following table shows the number of articles found/delivered to the Police; reported lost/restored to owners; TOTs issued, and number of persons prosecuted during the divisional sittings. Cases are classified as either contraventions or crimes (under six month's punishment), for the year under review:

Police Districts	Articles found and delivered to the Police	Articles reported Lost	Articles Restored to Owners	TOT's	Persons Prosecuted	
					Contraventions	Crimes
1 st	90	5,184	68	5,624	386	159
2 nd	46	559	38	3,517	1,339	478
3 rd	24	912	6	4,377	799	468
4 th	27	821	11	7,485	1,294	268
5 th	22	1,516	50	3,907	232	261
Total	209	8,992	173	24,910	4,050	1,634

Arraignments of Offences Liable to Imprisonment over six months in 2011 – Region 'A'

Offence	Cases	Male	Female	Minors under 18 yrs	
				Male	Female
Accomplice to Drug Possession	1	1	-	-	-
Aggravated Theft	33	28	8	1	-
Arms Ordinance	14	14	-	-	-
Arrest	25	22	1	2	-
Arson	2	2	-	-	-
Attempted Bodily Harm	6	6	-	-	-
Attempted Escape from Custody	1	2	-	-	-
Attempted Homicide	8	6	1	-	3
Attempted Theft	5	4	-	2	-
Attempted Violence against Police Officer	1	1	-	-	-
Attempted Violence against Public Officer	2	2	-	-	-
Attempted Wilful Damage	1	-	1	-	-
Bail Conditions	8	7	1	-	-
Blackmail	1	1	-	-	-
Bodily Harm	29	22	4	4	-
Bodily Harm against Police Officer	3	3	-	-	-
Bodily Harm against Public Officer	22	19	1	2	-
Breaches of Bail Conditions	8	7	-	1	-
Calumnious Accusations	1	1	-	-	-
Computer Misuse	10	10	-	-	-
Corruption of Minor	2	2	-	-	-

Corruption of Public Officer	1	-	1	-	-
Cruelty to animals	4	4		-	-
Damages Involuntary	12	9	2	2	-
Damages Willful / Voluntary	35	51	6	-	-
Defilement of Minor	5	5	-	-	-
Domestic Violence	30	30		-	-
Drugs Possession	75	73	8	1	-
Drugs Trafficking	11	10	1	-	-
False Report	5	5	1	-	-
Falsification of Documents	17	14	3	2	-
Fraud	12	10	2	-	-
Grievous Bodily Harm	58	52	8	4	-
Illegal Arrest	10	10	-	-	-
Infringement of IPR	1	1	-	-	-
Insults & Threats	23	23	2	-	-
Involuntary Grievous Injuries	14	14	1	-	-
Involuntary Homicide	5	5	-	-	-
Manslaughter in Traffic Accident	1	1	-	-	-
Manslaughter on Work	1	1	-	-	-
Misappropriation	2	2	-	-	-
Offences against Public Officer	35	37	1	2	-
Offences against the Religious Sentiment	1	1	-	-	-
Perjury	6	4	2	2	-
Pornography	3	3	-	-	-
Possession of Stolen Art	8	8	-	-	-
Postal Act	1	1	-	-	-
Received Stolen Goods	20	19	1	1	-
Relapser	33	33	-	-	-
Sexual Offence	3	3	-	-	-
Slight Injuries	4	4	-	-	-
Suppression, destruction or alteration of traces of crime	2	2	-	-	-
Telecommunications Act	35	25	10	-	-
Theft	87	80	12	6	-
Theft from Elderly Persons	1	-	-	1	-
Threats with Firearm	4	4	-	-	-
Traffic - Driving	9	8	-	1	-
Violation of Places of Confinement	51	51	-	1	-
Voluntary Damages	12	6	6	-	-
Total	820	769	84	35	3

Solved Offences (liable to over six months Imprisonments) in 2011

Type of Offence	No. Of Cases
Accomplice to Drug Possession	1
Aggravated Theft	39
Arms Ordinance	16
Arrest	4
Arson	2
Attempted Bodily Harm	6
Attempted Arrest from Custody	1
Attempted Homicide	8
Attempted Theft	5
Attempted Violence against Police Officer	1
Attempted Violence against Public Officer	2
Attempted Wilful Damage	1
Bail Conditions	8
Blackmail	1
Bodily Harm	37
Bodily Harm against Police Officer	6

Bodily Harm against Public Officer	21
Breaches of Bail Conditions	14
Calumnious Accusations	1
Computer Misuse	10
Corruption of Minor	2
Corruption of Public Officer	1
Cruelty to Animals	7
Damages Involuntary	12
Damages Wilful/Voluntary	45
Defilement of Minor	3
Domestic Violence	26
Drugs Possession	100
Drugs Trafficking	11
False Report	5
Falsification of Documents	17
Forgery	1
Fraud	13
Grievous Bodily Harm	63
Illegal Arrest	10
Illegal Gambling	4
Insults & Threats	25
Involuntary Grievous Injuries	17
Involuntary Homicide	5
Infringement of IPR	1
Manslaughter on Work	1
Misappropriation	2
Offences against Public Officer	35
Offences against Religious Sentiments	1
Perjury	10
Pornography	3
Possession of Stolen Art	8
Postal Act	1
Received stolen goods	28
Relapser	33
Slight Injuries	4
Suppression, destruction or alteration of traces of Crime	2
Sexual Offence	4
Theft from Elderly Persons	1
Theft	95
Traffic - Driving	33
Theft with Firearm	4
Violation of Places of Confinement	51
Violence against Public Officer	1
Voluntary Damages	14
Total	883 Cases

Other Arraignments

Districts	Sittings	Cases	Persons	Crimes under six months imprisonment	Contraventions
1 PD	10	455	395	303	775
2 PD	18	979	610	478	1,339
3 PD	17	632	657	468	799
4 PD	22	1,393	1,319	80	1,338
5 PD	30	656	672	427	238
Total	97	4,115	3,653	1,756	4,489

REGION 'B'

The Divisional Police posted in Region 'B' performed the following duties:

- 186 searches and 565 arrests of suspects in connection with various crimes committed throughout the whole region;
- 320 roadblocks were effected in major roads and traffic thoroughfares;
- 32,308 TOTs were issued;
- 69 charges were issued following positive breathalyser tests made;
- 945 offenders were brought to book for infringements of the smoking regulations;
- 458 charges were issued in connection with prostitution;
- 27 auto dealers were booked for breaches of their licences;
- 78 shop licensees were charged for permitting minors inside their business outlets;
- ten charges were issued for illegal hunting;
- 268 vehicles were towed by the Police in contravention of tow zones, clearly indicated by appropriate signs, for the year 2011.

A total of 6,316 inspections were made in places of entertainment during 2011, where charges were pressed against offenders for breaching of regulations. Further, other charges were also issued for other breaches in respect Wines and Spirits Regulations.

The number of night patrols performed by gazetted officers in Region B reached 316. These patrols are usually performed between 10pm and 3am on a five-hour shift. This does not include the number of night shifts performed by gazetted officers posted in districts 6 and 6A every weekend in Paceville which tallies to another 80 night shifts. This also includes as additional the Swieqi and Pembroke areas where public disturbance was reported. Besides, each Sergeant-Major posted in districts 6, 6A, 7, 8 and 9 are also deployed to cover night patrols, which results in 120 performances. In addition to the above, 96 night patrols within district 10 – Gozo are shared between three gazetted officers and the Sergeant-Major.

There were 256 commitments in Region 'B', which covered village feasts, football, water polo games, horse races, political commitments and others which demanded police presence. To cater for these commitments, a total of 4,265 police officers were detailed for soccer competitions, whilst another 3,033 were detailed for various commitments. A total of 213 court divisional sittings, dealing with summary cases throughout the Region, were held, for which a number of police officers had to attend. This does not include another 167 police officers which were detailed to attend tribunal sittings. Since the introduction of sworn affidavits, the number of police officers attending for court and tribunal sittings, decreased substantially. During the year, 13,864 affidavits were presented during tribunal sittings, whilst another 4,567 affidavits were presented during divisional court sittings.

Another aspect in which the police were highly involved was the shepherding of school children. This amounted to 12,884 officers. Moreover, 7,182 officers were deployed to perform fixed point duties with embassies and VIPs. Another 165 officers were detailed to cater for fixed points during foreign VIPs visiting Malta.

The following table shows the number of articles found and delivered to the Police, articles reported lost, those restored to owners, TOTs issued, vehicles towed, and persons prosecuted during the divisional sittings. Cases are classified as either contraventions or crimes (under six month's punishment):

Police Districts	Articles found and delivered to the Police	Articles reported Lost	Articles Restored to Owners	TOT's	Vehicles Towed	Persons Prosecuted	
						Contraventions	Crimes
6 PD	55	947	58	3,975	48	973	38
6A PD	62	2,303	38	8,216	78	1,304	1,106
7 PD	72	1,057	75	6,849	0	980	781
8 PD	59	810	18	4,509	17	670	110
9 PD	158	1,513	53	5,978	39	1,533	121
10 PD	191	1,112	156	2,781	86	1,203	111
Total	597	7,742	398	32,308	268	6,653	2,267

Arrestment of Offences liable to Imprisonment over six months in 2011

Offence	Cases	Persons	Male	Female	Minors under 18 yrs	
					Male	Female
Attempted Homicide	5	6	6	-	-	-
Attempted Theft	9	7	7	-	-	-
Bodily Harm	29	26	21	2	1	2
Bodily Harm/F/Arm w/o Licence	8	8	8	-	-	-
Attempted Bodily Harm with arms improper	1	1	1	-	-	-
Borehole without Licence	-	-	-	-	-	-
Breach of Bail	7	7	6	1	-	-
Cruelty to Animals	6	7	5	2	-	-
Defilement of Minor	6	6	5	1	-	-
Disturbing Public Peace	19	21	17	3	1	-
Domestic Violence	14	14	14	-	-	-
Drug Possession	54	54	47	6	1	-
Drugs/Trafficking	6	6	5	1	-	-
Failed to Obey Police Orders	15	15	14	1	-	-
False Report	14	13	8	5	-	-
Falsification	16	20	16	4	-	-
F/Arms w/o Licence	5	5	4	1	-	-
Fraud/Forgery	15	15	14	1	-	-
Grievous Bodily Harm	55	69	63	4	2	-
Grievous Bodily Harm followed by Death	2	2	2	-	-	-
Grievous Bodily Harm/Negligent Driving	5	5	5	-	-	-
Grievous Bodily Harm/Wilful Damages	7	7	7	-	-	-
Illegal Arrest	4	4	4	-	-	-
Illegal Hunting	2	2	2	-	-	-
Indecent & Immoral Acts in Public	10	11	8	2	1	-
Instigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insults & Threats	7	8	7	1	-	-
Involuntary Damages	17	17	16	1	-	-
Involuntary Grievous Bodily Harm	8	8	8	-	-	-
Involuntary Grievous Bodily Harm/Neg. Driving	7	7	6	1	-	-
Misappropriation	1	1	1	-	-	-
Murder involuntary	1	1	1	-	-	-
Negligent Driving/W/O Ins.	7	7	7	-	-	-
Offence Against Public Officer	14	17	15	-	2	-
Pornography	-	-	-	-	-	-
Possession of Explosive Material	-	-	-	-	-	-
Possession of Petroleum	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pretended Rights	2	2	2	-	-	-
Health & Safety	1	1	1	-	-	-
Protected Species	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rape	1	3	3	-	-	-
Receiving Stolen Property	9	14	12	1	1	-
Recidivist	10	10	10	-	-	-
Sexual Offence	5	5	5	-	-	-
Sexual Offence - Gang Rape	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slight Injuries	8	9	8	1	-	-
Subornation of Witness	-	-	-	-	-	-
Theft	158	190	143	30	15	2
Theft/Fraud	29	37	25	8	4	-
Theft/Involuntary Damage	8	8	8	-	-	-
Theft/Voluntary Damages	9	11	10	1	-	-
Violence against Public Officer	36	51	41	7	3	-
Trafficking of persons	1	4	4	-	-	-
Total	653	742	622	85	31	4

Solved Offences (Liable to over six months Imprisonment)

Type of Offence	Cases
Arms Ordinance	2
Attempted Grievous Bodily Harm	4
Attempted Homicide	5
Attempted Theft	5
Bodily Harm	20
Bore Hole without Licence	-
Breach of Bails	7
Defilement of minor	7
Disobeyed Police Orders	15
Disturbing Public Peace	15
Drug Offence	59
False report	06
Falsification	17
Fraud	18
Grievous Bodily Harm	64
Indecent Assault	-
Insults and Threats	4
Involuntary Damage	17
Involuntary Grievous Bodily Harm	15
Involuntary Homicide	3
Misappropriation	1
Motor Vehicle Accident	5
Offence against Public Officer	42
Pornography	-
Possession of Explosive material	4
Pretended Rights	1
Arson	1
Protected Species	-
Rape	1
Receiving Stolen Property	8
Seizure	-
Selling Counterfeit Items	-
Sexual Offence	22
Theft	102
Theft of Electricity	-
Theft of Vehicle	-
Voluntary Damage	30
Wilful Damage	5
Total	506

Other Arraignments

Districts	Sittings	Cases	Persons	Crimes under six months	Contraventions
6PD	21	874	1,113	297	1,197
6A PD	21	903	1,011	758	1,304
7PD	50	1,158	1,421	735	1,045
8PD	40	537	670	268	995
9PD	42	1,455	1,591	1,383	1,804
10PD	53	1,287	1,314	111	1,203
Total	227	6,214	7,120	3,552	7,548

Projects/Evaluations

A number of issues commenced in past years continued to be given attention and to be continuously monitored. Such issues included the organising of more meetings to address victims of crime, especially the elderly, in order to direct them on how to better reach the police to pass information on crime witnessed. Another issue dealt with was the importance of having foot patrols. Superintendents in charge of all districts were directed to increase foot patrol in districts and to monitor same on a 24x7 basis.

Another step taken during the year was aimed and focused on better evaluation of all crimes reported. In reaching this aim, periodic meetings were held with all Superintendents and Inspectors, where crimes reported to the police, investigations held, and results obtained were discussed.

Further measures taken in strengthening supervision and better hands-on in districts was in having gazetted officers deployed during night time. Following each and every patrol, a detailed report of patrol reached is also being followed. With Sergeant Majors posted in all districts being deployed to assist and with the recent increase of Inspectors in each police district, better night patrol was effected.

Considering that Gozo district also falls under the same region, particular attention is being given to this district, where gazetted officers in charge are being directed how to increase efforts in community policing, together with how to direct their subordinates in increasing their self-esteem.

During 2011, better monitoring of football grounds was also registered.

Respite Warrants executed by the District Police

The Districts executed the following respite warrants throughout the period under review and collected the sum of €389,328, as shown hereunder:

District	No of Respite Warrants	Amount in €
1	113	23,429.00
2	144	51,454.86
3	119	35,213.44
4	148	32,029.92
5	67	33,440.87
6	118	48,041.19
6A	145	49,722.89
7	153	39,568.96
8	10	4,118.47
9	223	59,232.75
10	87	13,075.65
Total	1,327	€389,328.00

The following list indicates the number of fines not paid and the execution of the relative warrant:

District	Respite Warrants
1	32
2	10
3	12
4	24
5	18
6	20
6A	9
7	12
8	9
9	34
10	2
Total	182

During 2011, a total of 347 meetings were held with representatives from all local councils by officers from all Police Districts and Specialised Branches.

General Performance Report

Appendices A to E illustrate:

- A Cases subject to over six months' imprisonment
- B Solved Offences - 2011
- C Solved Crime offenders 2011 - By Gender, Crime category and Dist/Branch
- D Solved Crime Offenders 2011
- E General Police Statistics Return – All Districts and Branches

JOHN RIZZO
Commissioner of Police

APPENDIX A

Cases subject to over six months imprisonment

	Cases	Offenders
District 1	74	90
District 2	109	115
District 3	104	123
District 4	75	105
District 5	74	152
District 6	24	31
District 6A	98	123
District 7	49	70
District 8	54	65
District 9	6	8
District 10	89	108
ALE	8	11
CID	439	665
Drugs	318	323
ECU	164	164
IRU	0	0
MIA	2	2
MOBILE SQD	1	1
SB	67	67
VSQ	81	84
Total	1,836	2,307

Note: 1) 251 persons could not be classified as being subject to over six months imprisonment or otherwise due to insufficient data provided to the Statistics Office.

2) The number of cases is based on uniqueness of PIRS reference numbers. Other information where a PIRS number was not available is being considered as a separate case.

APPENDIX B

Solved Offences - 2011

This list includes all cases arraigned, pending arraignment, or waived off, and is based on uniqueness of PIRS reference numbers. Other information where a PIRS number was not available is being considered as a separate case.

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				Total
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	
Abuse of Public Authority	Bribery	7				7
	Disclosure of Official Information		1			1
	Exaction		1			1
	Extortion	1				1
	N/A	1				1
	Trading in Influence	17				17
Total		26	2			28
Anonymous Letters		3				3
Anonymous Telephone Calls		2				2
Arms Ordinance	Illegal Use	1				1
	N/A	1	1			2
	Possession of Ammunition	3	1			4
	Possession of Firearms w/o Licence	11	1			12
	Sales or Transfer w/o Authority	1	1			2
Total		17	4			21
Arson	Commercial Entities	1				1
	Other Property	2				2
	Private Buildings	1				1
	Vehicles	1				1
Total		6	1			7
Attempted Offences	Bodily Harm with Physical Force				1	1
	Bodily harm with Arms Improper	2	2	2		6
	Bodily Harm with Arms Proper	2				2
	Homicide Involuntary	1				1
	Homicide - Wilful	10			2	12
	N/A		2			2
	Theft – Armed Robbery	1				1
	Theft – Bars/Restaurants	1				1
	Theft – Beaches	1				1
	Theft – Building Sites		1			1
	Theft – From Vehicle	1	1			2
	Theft - Other	1				1
	Theft – Pick-pocketing	2				2
	Theft - Residence		2			2
	Theft – Retail Outlets	2				2
	Theft – Snatch and Grab	6				6
	Theft – Public Areas	2				2
	Theft - Vehicle	1				1
	Violence against Pub. Officer	1				1
	Total		39	8		5
Bodily Harm	GBH By Physical Force	62	11		4	77
	GBH Followed by Death	1			2	1
	GBH with Arms Improper	23	2	1	1	27
	GBH with Arms Proper	11				11
	Involuntary	1				1
	N/A	15	2			17
	SBH by Physical Force	13	3			16

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	Total
	SBH with Arms Improper	3				5
	SBH with Arms Proper	6	1			7
Total		157	19	1	7	162
Computer Misuse	N/A	1				1
	Unauthorised Access		2			2
	Unauthorised copying of Info	1				1
Total		2	2			4
Crimes – Religious Sentiment - Total		1				1
Crimes against Public Peace - Total		22		1		23
Crimes against Public Safety - Total		7				7
Crimes vs Admin of Justice etc - Total		1				1
Cruelty to Animals	Cruelty	6	1			7
	Other		1			1
Total		6	2			8
Damage	Inv. Damage by Hit and Run	1				1
	Inv. Damage by other	4				4
	Wilful damage by other	53	14	1	4	72
	Wilful damage by Paint	2				2
Total		60	14	1	4	79
Domestic Violence	GBH with Physical Force				1	1
	GBH with Arms Improper	1				1
	N/A	2			7	9
	Psychological Harm	7	1			8
	SBH with physical force	4			1	5
	Stalking	3				3
Total		17	1		9	27
Drugs	Conspiracy	22	2			24
	Cultivation	6	4			10
	Importation	10	1			11
	N/A		3			3
	Poss. with Intent to Supply	9	8			17
	Possession	130	204		5	339
	Trafficking	39	25			64
Total		216	247		5	468
Environmental Law	Hunting	2	1			3
Evidence	Tampering	1				1
Total		3	1			4
Forgery	Poss. of local currency	1				1
	Private Documents	7			1	8
	Public Documents	11	1			12
	Use of local currency	2				2
Total		21	1		1	23
Fraud	Commercial	5	1			6
	Counterfeit	10			1	11
	Customs Ordinance	5	2			7
	Financial Institution Act	1				1
	Fraudulent Gains	38	8			46
	Insurance	5				5
	Intellectual Property Rights	78	22		1	101
	Misappropriation	2				2
	N/A	1				1
	Usury	5	1			6
	VAT	10			1	11
Total		162	36		3	201
Homicide	Involuntary	4				4
	Wilful	4				4
Total		8				8
Immigration	Employment	3				3
	Harbouring	24				24
	N/A	33				33

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	Total
	Trafficking	3				3
Total		63				63
Other		202	41		7	250
Other - Total		202	41		7	250
Perjury & False Swearing	Calumnious Accusations		1	1		2
	Fabrications of False Evidence	1				1
	False Swearing	4	1			5
	N/A		1			1
	Perjury - Civil	16				16
	Prep/Production of False Docs		1	1		2
	Simulation of Offence	1				1
Total		52	4	1	1	58
Pornography	Child Related	3			3	6
Total		3			3	6
Prostitution	Living Off	2				2
	Loitering	111				111
	N/A				36	36
Total		113			36	149
Sexual Offence	Defilement of Minors	19	1		2	22
	Indecent Exposure	2			2	4
	Rape	4			2	6
	Violent Indecent Assault	6	1		2	9
	N/A	1			4	5
Total		32	2		12	46
Theft	Armed Robbery	18				18
	Bar/Restaurant Customers	10	3			13
	Bar/Restaurant Employees	1				1
	Bar/Restaurant Premises	9	1			10
	Building Sites	9				9
	Factories - Premises	42	1		1	44
	Farms and Fields	25				25
	Hotel - Customers	4	3		7	14
	Hotel - Premises	2				2
	Mugging	5				5
	N/A	54	7		2	63
	Offices - Employees	15			1	16
	Offices - Premises	2	1			3
	Other Theft	2				2
	Pick-Pocketing	56	1		1	58
	Religious Temples - Premises	14				14
	Residence - Exterior	8	3			11
	Residence - Occupied	4				4
	Residence - Vacant	22	1		2	25
	Retail Outlets - Customers	13	2		6	21
	Retail Outlets - Employees	23	2		4	29
	Retail Outlets - Premises	3	2		1	6
	Retail Outlets - Shoplifting	1				1
	Snatch and Grab	24			3	27
	Streets and Public Areas	6				6
	Theft Streets/Public Areas	7				7
	Theft from Beaches	49	2		2	53
	Theft from Seacraft	19				19
	Theft from Vehicle - Exterior	18				18
	Theft from Vehicle - Interior	10	3			13
	Theft of Vehicle	1				1
Total		503	29		30	562
Threat and Private	Blackmail	3				3

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				Total
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	
Violence	Defamation	1				1
	Harassment	8				8
	N/A	5			4	9
	Private Violence	2				2
	Threats by means of Writing	1			1	2
Total		20			5	25
Trafficking of Persons	N/A	1				1
	Sexual Exploitation	4				4
Total		5				5
Violations of Places of Confine	Simple	3				3
	Aggravated	2				2
	N/A	1				1
Total		6				6
Violence vs. Public Officer	N/A	2	2		6	10
	Resisting	11	1		1	13
	Reviled and Threatened	14	2			16
	Vilification	3				3
	Violence against	32	1		3	36
	Unspecified				1	1
Total		62	6		11	79
Grand Total		3,172	640	4	35	3,851

Source: Information was collected from each individual police inspector and is based on cases solved during 2011.

Each case has been designated according to the principal crime category as identified by the reporting inspector. The table does not represent the number of persons arraigned.

Note: Unspecified category - This represents data submitted that fails to indicate whether a case involved an arraignment, is still pending an arraignment or was waived off.

APPENDIX C

District/ Branch	Over 6 mths imprisonment		Total	Under 6 mths imprisonment		Total	Unspecified		Total	Grand Total
	Female	Male		Female	Male		Female	Male		
District 1	15	75	90	2	8	10	1	2	3	103
District 2	11	104	115	1	4	5	0	1	1	121
District 3	10	113	123	0	0	0	0	0	0	123
District 4	17	88	105	1	54	55	2	1	3	163
District 5	15	137	152	1	3	4	0	2	2	158
District 6	4	27	31	0	2	2	19	46	65	98
District 6A	8	115	123	6	13	19	0	0	0	142
District 7	3	67	70	0	3	3	0	1	1	74
District 8	5	60	65	0	3	3	0	32	32	100
District 9	0	8	8	0	3	3	5	31	36	47
District 10	21	87	108	7	15	22	0	0	0	130
ALE	1	10	11	1	2	3	0	0	0	14
CID	79	586	665	8	65	73	0	1	1	739
Drugs	49	274	323	0	2	2	0	0	0	325
ECU	12	152	164	0	6	6	3	48	51	221
IRA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
MIA	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
MOBILE	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
SB	2	65	67	1	24	25	0	1	1	93
VSQ	13	71	84	127	27	154	32	22	54	292
Total	266	2,041	2,307	156	234	390	62	189	251	2,948

Source: Information was collected from each individual police inspector and is based on cases solved during 2011. Each case has been designated according to the principle crime category as identified by the reporting inspector.

Note: Unspecified – This represents data submitted that fails to indicate whether a person is subject to over six months' imprisonment or otherwise.

The above table does not represent the total of solved cases but persons identified in relation to an offence. This implies that multiple persons may be attributed to a single offence.

APPENDIX D

Solved Crime Offenders 2011

This list includes all persons arraigned, pending arraignment or waived off.

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				Total
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	
ABUSE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY	BRIBERY	7	0	0	0	7
	DISCLOSURE OF OFF INFORMATION	0	1	0	0	1
	EXACTION	1	0	0	0	1
	EXORTION	17	0	0	0	17
	TRADING IN INFLUENCE	1	0	0	0	1
	N/A	7	0	0	0	7
Total		26	2	0	0	28
ABUSE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY	TOTAL	26	2	0	0	28
ANONYMOUS LETTERS	LETTERS	3	0	0	0	3
ANONYMOUS LETTERS	TOTAL	3	0	0	0	3
ANONYMOUS TELEPHONE CALLS	PHONE CALLS	2	0	0	0	2
ARMS ORDINANCE	ILLEGAL USE	2	0	0	0	2
	POSSESSION OF AMMUNITION	3	1	0	0	4
	POSSESSION OF FIREARMS W/O LICENCE	12	2	0	0	14
	SALES OR TRANSFER W/O AUTHORITY	1	1	0	0	2
	N/A	2	1	0	0	3
Total		20	5			25
ARSON	COMMERCIAL ENTITIES	2	0	0	0	2
	OTHER PROPERTY	2	0	0	0	2
	PRIVATE BUILDINGS	2	0	0	0	2
	VEHICLES	2	1	0	0	3
Total		8	1			9
ATTEMPTED OFFENCES	BODILY HARM WITH ARMS IMPROPER	2	2	0	3	7
	BODILY HARM WITH ARMS PROPER	2	0	0	0	2
	BODILY HARM BY PHYSICAL SOURCE	0	0	0	2	2
	HOMICIDE - INVOLUNTARY	1	0	0	0	1
	HOMICIDE - WILFUL	15	0	0	2	17
	THEFT - ARMED ROBBERY	1	0	0	0	1
	THEFT - BARS/RESTUARANTS	3	0	0	0	3
	THEFT - BEACHES	2	0	0	0	2
	THEFT - BUILDING SITES	0	1	0	0	1
	THEFT - FARMS/FIELDS	1	0	0	0	1
	THEFT - FROM VEHICLE	1	1	0	0	2
	THEFT - OTHER	4	0	0	0	4
	THEFT - PICK-POCKETING	1	0	0	0	1
	THEFT - RESIDENCE	3	0	0	0	3

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				Total
		Arrested	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	
	THEFT - RETAIL OUTLETS	0	2	0	0	2
	THEFT - SNATCH AND GRAB	2	0	0	0	2
	THEFT - STREETS/ PUBLIC AREAS	7	0	0	0	7
	-VIOLENCE VS PUBLIC OFFICER	2	0	0	0	2
	N/A	2	0	0	0	2
Total		54	9		7	70
BODILY HARM	GBH BY PHYSICAL FORCE	74	13	0	5	92
	GBH FOLLOWED BY DEATH	2	0	0	0	2
	GBH WITH ARMS IMPROPER	25	2	0	4	31
	GBH WITH ARMS PROPER	15	0	0	0	15
	INVOLUNTARY	6	0	0	0	6
	SBH BY PHYSICAL FORCE	19	4	0	0	23
	SBH WITH ARMS IMPROPER	7	0	2	1	10
	SBH WITH ARMS PROPER	6	1	0	0	7
	N/A	15	2	0	0	17
Total		169	22	2	10	203
COMPUTER MISUSE	UNAUTHORISED ACCESS	0	2	0	0	2
	UNAUTHORISED COPYING OF INFO.	1	0	0	0	1
	N/A	0	2	0	0	2
Total		2	2	0	0	4
	CRIMES - RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT	1	0	0	0	1
	CRIMES AGAINST PUBLIC SAFETY	8	0	0	0	8
	CRIMES AGAINST PUBLIC PEACE	22	0	1	0	23
	CRIMES VS ADMIN OF JUSTICE ETC	1	0	0	0	1
CRUELTY TO ANIMALS	CRUELTY	7	1	0	0	8
	OTHER	0	3	0	0	3
CRUELTY TO ANIMALS		7	4	0	0	11
DAMAGE	INV. DAMAGE BY HIT AND RUN	1	0	0	0	1
	INVOLUNTARY DAMAGE BY OTHER	4	0	0	0	4
	WILFUL DAMAGE BY OTHER	64	15	1	4	84
	WILFUL DAMAGE BY PAINT	3	0	0	0	3
Total		72	15	1	4	92
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	GBH WITH PHYSICAL FORCE	1	0	0	1	2
	GBH WITH ARMS IMPROPER	1	0	0	0	1
	PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM	7	1	0	0	8
	SBH WITH PHYSICAL FORCE	5	0	0	1	6
	STALKING	3	0	0	0	3
	N/A	2	0	0	7	9
Total		19	1		9	29
DRUGS	CONSPIRACY	22	2	0	0	24
	CULTIVATION	6	4	0	0	10

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				Total
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	
	IMPORTATION	10	1	0	0	11
	POSS WITH INTENT TO SUPPLY	9	11	0	0	20
	POSSESSION	145	223	0	7	375
	TRAFFICKING	43	28	0	1	72
	N/A	0	3	0	0	3
Total		235	272	0	8	515
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW	HUNTING	2	1	0	0	3
EVIDENCE	TAMPERING	1	0	0	0	1
FORGERY	POSSESSION OF LOCAL CURRENCY	1	0	0	0	1
	PRIVATE DOCUMENTS	7	0	0	1	8
	PUBLIC DOCUMENTS	12	1	0	0	13
	USE OF LOCAL CURRENCY	7	0	0	0	7
Total		27	1	0	1	29
FRAUD	COMMERCIAL	5	1	0	0	6
	COUNTERFEIT	11	0	0	2	13
	CUSTOMS ORDINANCE	5	2	0	0	7
	FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT	1	0	0	0	1
	FRAUDULENT GAINS	66	8	0	0	74
	INSURANCE	5	0	0	0	5
	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS	78	22	0	1	101
	MISAPPROPRIATION	1	0	0	0	1
	USURY	12	2	0	1	15
	VAT	196	36	0	4	236
	N/A	5	1	0	0	6
Total		5	2	0	0	7
HOMICIDE	INVOLUNTARY	4	0	0	0	4
	WILFUL	5	0	0	0	5
Total		9	0	0	0	9
IMMIGRATION	EMPLOYMENT	3	0	0	0	3
	HARBOURING	24	0	0	0	24
	TRAFFICKING	3	0	0	0	3
	N/A	33	0	0	0	33
Total		63	0	0	0	63
OTHER	N/A	229	49	0	7	285
PERJURY & FALSE SWEARING	CALUMNOIUS ACCUSATIONS	0	2	1	0	3
	FABRICATION OF FALSE EVIDENCE	3	0	0	0	3
	FALSE SWEARING	31	1	0	1	33
	PERJURY - CIVIL	0	1	0	0	1
	PREP/PRODUCTION OF FALSE DOCS	16	1	0	0	17
	SIMULATION OF OFFENCE	3	0	0	0	3
	N/A	4	1	0	0	5
Total		57	6	1	1	65
PORNOGRAPHY	CHILD RELATED	3	0	0	3	6
PROSTITUTION *	LIVING OF	2	0	0	0	2
	LOITERING	138	0	0	0	138
	N/A	0	0	0	40	40
Total		140	0	0	40	180
SEXUAL OFFENCE	DEFILEMENT OF MINORS	19	1	0	2	22
	INDECENT EXPOSURE	5	0	0	2	7
	RAPE	6	0	0	2	8

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				Total
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	
	VIOLENT INDECENT ASSAULT	7	1	0	2	10
	N/A	1	0	0	4	5
Total		38	2	0	12	52
THEFT	ARMED ROBBERY	22	0	0	0	22
	BAR/RESTAURANT - CUSTOMERS	12	4	0	0	16
	BAR/RESTAURANT - EMPLOYEES	1	0	0	0	1
	BAR/RESTAURANT - PREMISES	16	3	0	0	19
	BUILDING SITES	8	0	0	0	8
	FACTORIES - PREMISES	17	0	0	0	17
	FARMS AND FIELDS	14	0	0	0	14
	HOTEL - CUSTOMERS	55	1	0	1	57
	HOTEL - PREMISES	49	0	0	0	49
	MUGGING	35	0	0	0	35
	OFFICES - EMPLOYEES	7	0	0	0	7
	OFFICES - PREMISES	6	0	0	0	6
	OTHER THEFT	94	11	0	4	109
	PICK-POCKETING	18	0	0	1	19
	RELIGIOUS TEMPLES - PREMISES	3	1	0	0	4
	RESIDENCE - EXTERIOR	2	0	0	0	2
	RESIDENCE - OCCUPIED	77	1	0	1	79
	RESIDENCE - VACANT	22	0	0	0	22
	RETAIL OUTLETS - CUSTOMERS	9	4	0	0	13
	RETAIL OUTLETS - EMPLOYEES	5	0	0	0	5
	RETAIL OUTLETS - PREMISES	28	1	0	3	32
	RETAIL OUTLETS - SHOP LIFTING	24	4	0	6	34
	SNATCH AND GRAB	37	2	0	4	43
	STREETS AND PUBLIC AREAS	5	3	0	1	9
	THEFT - STREETS/PUBLIC AREAS	2	0	0	0	2
	THEFT FROM BEACHES	49	0	0	4	53
	THEFT FROM SEACRAFT	6	0	0	0	6
	THEFT FROM VEHICLE - EXTERIOR	7	0	0	0	7
	THEFT FROM VEHICLE - INTERIOR	54	2	0	2	58
	THEFT OF VEHICLE	28	0	0	0	28
	N/A	5	4	0	11	20
Total		717	41	0	38	796
THREATS AND PRIVATE VIOLENCE	BLACKMAIL	3	0	0	0	3
	DEFAMATION	1	0	0	0	1
	HARASSMENT	3	0	0	0	3
	PRIVATE VIOLENCE	1	0	0	1	2
	THREATS BY MEANS OF WRITING	5	0	0	4	9
	N/A	3	0	0	0	3

Crime Classification	Sub Classification	Category				Total
		Arraigned	Pending Arraignment	Waived Off	Unspecified	
Total		22	0	0	5	27
TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS	SEXUAL EXPLOITATION	4	0	0	0	4
	N/A	1	0	0	0	1
Total		5	0	0	0	5
VIOLETION OF PLACES OF CONFINENT	SIMPLE	27	0	0	0	27
	AGGRAVATED	7	0	0	0	7
	N/A	1	0	0	0	1
Total		35	0	0	0	35
VIOLENCE AGAINST PUBLIC OFFICER	RESISTING	23	1	0	1	25
	REVILED AND THREATENED	16	2	0	0	18
	VILIFICATION	4	0	0	0	4
	VIOLENCE AGAINST	63	1	0	9	73
	N/A	0	0	0	1	1
Total		108	6	0	18	132
Total	2301	475	5	167	2948	4,508
<i>Source: Information was collected from each individual police inspector and is based on cases solved during year 2011</i>						
<i>Each case has been designated according to the principal crime category as identified by the reporting inspector</i>						
<i>Note: (1) Unspecified - This represents data submitted that fails to indicate whether a person was arraigned etc.</i>						
<i>(2) The above table does not represent the total of solved cases but persons identified in relation to an offence_This implies that multiple persons may be attributed to a single offence</i>						

APPENDIX E

General Police Statistics Return – All Districts & Branches

Year 2011	1 PD	2 PD	3 PD	4 PD	5 PD	6 PD	6A PD	7 PD	8 PD	9 PD	10 PD	SAG	Traffic	ALE	Mount. Dogs	CID	Mobile Squad	Drugs Squad	ECU	Vice Squad	Immig.	MIA	Total	
Roadblocks	179	18	28	48	87	13	8	115	124	50	40	0	385	0	0	0	66	0	0	0	0	76	1,237	
Fixed point duties	2,967	1,344	139	2,190	951	1,256	819	1,808	1,884	189	341	1,334	3,305	0	181	0	12	0	0	0	0	80	18,800	
TOTs issued	5,624	3,517	4,377	7,485	3,907	3,713	8,216	6,849	4,509	5,978	2,781	0	33,149	709	0	0	188	0	0	0	0	305	91,307	
Clamped vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Towed vehicles	32	9	0	5	8	45	81	0	17	39	83	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	320	
Court affidavits	364	818	1,653	1,038	810	290	554	1,127	642	1,593	813	4	177	0	0	0	99	0	0	0	0	1	9,983	
Tribunal affidavits	767	3,020	1,877	2,691	986	2,094	1,774	4,446	3,489	1,978	1,063	2	14,465	0	0	0	86	0	0	0	0	305	39,043	
Searches	330	48	83	93	59	28	18	71	40	0	28	0	0	0	435	276	614	325	59	72	849	0	3,428	
Inspections at places of entertainment / W&S	4,925	752	72	323	339	264	4,235	575	488	1,110	90	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,188
(i) No. of underage persons found inside	6	1	1	2	11	7	68	1	0	4	5	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	136
(ii) Licensees booked for loud music	21	12	5	22	41	18	233	11	1	60	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	434
(iii) Licensees booked re. alcohol for underage people	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
(iv) Licensees booked re: allowing underage persons inside	5	1	1	1	2	15	57	1	0	3	4	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	107
Charges re: selling of alcohol after 9pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Minors (under 17 years) consuming alcohol	16	0	0	1	2	1	5	1	0	0	4	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
Charges re: Litter Act	314	245	111	342	69	283	237	109	70	169	25	0	92	41	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,108
Charges re. smoking in public places	133	141	18	27	50	67	696	180	6	57	7	0	0	586	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,968
Charges i/c/w unlicensed auto dealers	1	17	0	1	9	0	0	2	18	0	8	0	14	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79
Charges i/c/w unlicensed street	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5

Year 2011	1PD	2PD	3PD	4PD	5PD	6PD	6A PD	7PD	8PD	9PD	10 PD	SAG	Traffic	ALE	Mount. Dogs	CTD	Mobile Squad	Drugs Squad	ECU	Vice Squad	Immig.	MIA	Total
vendors																							
Charges i/c/w breaches of copyright	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charges i/c/w illegal hunting	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	9	0	0	149	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	160
Charges i/c/w illegal trapping	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	180	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	194
Shotguns seized	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	1	0	16	0	0	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	66
Night patrols effected by officers	27	63	54	27	53	25	74	73	58	12	91	291	0	0	0	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	879
New licences issued by office	154	5,011	338	3,430	909	204	371	530	807	640	740	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,134
Major commitments in district	226	11	101	20	116	1	162	19	43	29	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	731
Personnel detailed for such commitments	3,218	190	1,244	841	362	45	770	1,117	395	581	125	0	29	0	0	0	33	0	0	0	2	1	8,953
Police personnel who attended tribunals	0	5	9	4	36	22	0	104	8	2	31	1	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	259
Persons detailed for Paceville	20	18	60	40	84	153	770	175	94	122	0	547	207	0	278	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2,570
Persons detailed to attend football matches	56	26	331	57	200	262	211	2,335	167	255	1,027	43	0	0	267	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5237
Personnel detailed to attend waterpolo matches	0	0	0	0	0	34	31	0	0	0	0	0	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	120

Directorate General (Strategy & Support)

The Directorate General (Strategy and Support) plays an effective coordinating role on matters between the Ministry's departments and the central authorities, mainly the Office of the Prime Minister, PAHRO and the Ministry of Finance. Up to the end of the year, the Department handled all finance and human resource requirements and the processing of payroll of the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees, the Justice Unit, the Office of the Manager Airport Security and the Detention Services.

HUMAN RESOURCES

During the year under review, the Human Resource section strived to continue providing support to meet the demands made by the Ministry and its line departments/units/agencies as they consider appropriate. The section focused more closely on personal matters with a view to promoting awareness among employees concerning the psycho-social and disability issues being encountered by management and employees within the Public Administration.

Employee Support Programme Information Seminar

As part of an ESF project being implemented by PAHRO, an information seminar was held in February 2011 aimed at informing MJHA top management about the scope of the project and the services being offered under the Employee Support Programme. Subsequently, an ad hoc meeting was held on 25 March between PAHRO (Client Support Unit) and DG Strategy & Support, MJHA and the Assistant Directors HR of the line departments, so as to kick start a study of the Employee Support Programme (ESP) for public employees in MJHA.

On behalf of the Director General S&S, the Assistant Director HR was actively involved in coordinating several meetings between PAHRO officials and line departments to identify individuals who are in need of support. In this regard, a set of questionnaires were distributed to line departments' managers who in turn handed them to employees for their input.

The work load within the Human Resource Management continued to increase substantially during 2011. The HRM, although with a minimal staff complement, ensured to keep pace with the increased exigencies and demands put forward by the Ministry, PAHRO, line departments and agencies under the remit of the Ministry. This Office sought to introduce measures, amongst them, the Central Database and Human Resource Information Management System – HRIMS, in order to facilitate information directly related to HR matters.

Capacity Building Exercise: 2011 – 2012

Throughout the year under review, particular emphasis was made on the Capacity Building Exercise leading to identify any vacant posts/positions within the line departments, in order to satisfy the requirements of their organisational structures. This exercise also included the creation of new posts/positions, so as to specifically reflect the desired staff complement and therefore fulfil their upcoming challenges taking into account the established budgetary parameters and recent policy development.

Call for Applications

During 2011, the HRM was actively engaged chiefly in drafting of quite a good number of calls for applications, amongst them PAHRO Calls, public calls, departmental calls and those of Assistant Director positions.

Following the legislation on Restorative Justice at CCF, the HR initiated and subsequently issued a call for applications to appoint three managers responsible for care and re-integration, security, and operations. Moreover, with the establishment of the newly Directorate for Probation and Parole within this Ministry, a Director was specifically appointed to implement the measures designed to strengthen the Probation Services in view of the amendments to the Probation Act in 2010.

As a result, this Office processed the calls for applications as approved during the Capacity Building Exercise meeting to cater for the posts at CCF and Probation Services as follows: two Senior Probation Officer, four Probation Officer/Trainee Probation Officer, one Senior Psychologist at CCF, one Psychologist (Probation Services), two Psychologist at CCF, 11 Senior Correctional Officers, eight Correctional Supervisors, one Asst Correctional Manager Operations, two Social Worker at CCF, and a Trainee Psychologist at CCF.

In addition, the section processed calls for applications for 25 other posts/positions across the Ministry.

Other Tasks

- The HR Office assisted employees to varying degrees by providing support and updated information with regard to personal matters. It continued to further promote development, motivate and encourage staff to receive specific or technical training directly related to their sphere of work.
- Issues related to gender discrimination, discipline, social behaviour and equal opportunities were at the core of many discussions held between all stakeholders aimed at building harmonious work environments as far as humanly possible.
- Members of the HR Office participated in various seminars during the HR Forum and at the CDRT.
- Monthly statistics of all work done by the Human Resources Section are recorded so that any information requested by the management about any aspect of the Human Resources Section will be available at any point in time.
- The Office processed five charges in terms of the Public Service Commission Disciplinary Regulations.
- The HR Office continued to encourage more employees to attend courses in connection with health and safety as offered on regular basis by OHSA. The Health and Safety Representative of the Ministry assisted this Office on OHS issues.
- Other duties performed by the HR Section within the Directorate General involve maintenance of attendance records, preparation of watchmen rosters, PMPs, processing of progressions/promotions/pensions, the recording of all changes in the personal record sheets, compilation of returns, updating of personal files, and other HR-related administrative work.

FINANCE AND OFFICE MANAGEMENT

The Directorate General handles all financial and procurement matters related to the Minister's Secretariat, the Office of the Permanent Secretary, EU Affairs Directorate, Programme Implementation Directorate, Policy Development Directorate, Manager Airport Security, Justice Unit, Detention Services Unit, Commissioner for Refugees and the Third Country Nationals Unit.

The financial management aspect was given utmost importance, to ensure good governance. Monthly Revised Estimates were drawn up for the Ministry's vote, its Cost Centres, and Responsibility Centres, whilst the monthly financial returns of the other departments which form part of this Ministry were also evaluated and monitored prior to onward transmission to the Ministry of Finance. Drafting and

consolidation of the 2011 Financial Estimates in respect of the departments which fall under the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, were also carried out.

The Ministry's Votes of recurrent and capital expenditure for 2011 were continuously monitored for the best utilisation of financial resources and for corrective action to be taken in cases where the amount allocated in the financial estimates appeared to be insufficient. Therefore, it was ensured that any excess expenditure was offset under other items of expenditure within the Ministry's Votes. During this process, the Minister and the Permanent Secretary were continuously updated of envisaged financial requirements in view of the discussions which were eventually held with the Ministry of Finance in connection with the Financial Estimates 2011.

The Finance and Administration Section performed the following functions during the year under review:

- drawing up the relative payrolls of personnel deployed at the various cost centres and units falling under the Ministry, after taking into account adjustments, increases, allowances and overtime;
- receiving requisitions for works and services, drawing up the necessary purchase orders, carrying out purchase and then processing requests for payment by creditors;
- taking care of transport - recording and issuing of fuel requisitions to government owned vehicles while keeping a proper records of vehicle maintenance through the Fleet Management System;
- approving advance payments made by the various departments falling under the Ministry;
- keeping of inventory records of all fixed assets procured by this Office and making the necessary information available to the departments in order to update their respective assets records;
- drawing up of quarterly returns of suppliers who do not provide the Office with a fiscal receipt;
- processing a number of payments in respect of EU related projects mainly: European Refugee Funds, European Border Funds, European Return Funds, European Migration Network; European Asylum Support Office, and EUREMA.
- keeping records of bank accounts related to the above projects and reconciling these with the relevant bank statements. These are reported annually to the Treasury Department.
- compiling and monitoring of financial returns as requested by the Ministry of Finance;
- drawing up on a quarterly basis the financial statements regarding accrual accounting;
- compiling information related to replies to parliamentary questions. In various instances, this involved the collection of information from other line departments and the related consolidation of replies;
- compiling and consolidating the Ministry's and line departments' annual returns regarding: bank accounts, cash losses & stores written off and arrears of revenue;
- preparing the necessary documentation and closing of advances related to delegations proceeding abroad on official duties.

During the year under review, the Finance and Administration section processed 181 advances made to officers proceeding abroad on official duties and other Ministerial missions, mainly on EU related matters. Statements of expenditure submitted by officers from departments falling under this Ministry to cover advances issued in connection with travel abroad were examined and certified correct before being submitted to the Auditor General and Accountant General in terms of standing Finance circulars and the Public Service Management Code. Claims were submitted to the Ministry of Finance for reimbursement of expenditure incurred in connection with travel related to attendance during EU Commission and Council meetings.

The numbers of advances certified correct during the year under review were as follows:

Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs	181
Attorney General's Office	152
Police	421
Civil Protection Department	22
Malta Security Services	47
Courts of Justice Division	41

JOHN SANT

Director General (Strategy and Support)

Third Country Nationals Unit

RE-SETTLEMENT/RELOCATION

Several developments took place in this area during 2011.

During the first months, a number of persons selected by Germany under the pilot project for Malta (EUREMA) were relocated marking the completion of the exercise which had started in 2010. Under the same project, several efforts were made in coordination with the UNHCR and the International Organisation for Migration on other relocation exercises.

As a result of the conflict in Libya and the number of migrants arriving in Malta between March and April, Germany once again offered to relocate 150 persons. The Unit immediately initiated the referral exercise in coordination with several Government entities and the International Organisation for Migration. With the collaboration of the German authorities, the departure of 147 persons was effected in November.

In view of the situation, a Ministerial pledging conference was held by the European Commission in May encouraging Member States to relocate persons from Malta. This resulted, ultimately, in pledges from 15 Member States and Associated countries (including Germany). Several of these requested that the exercise be bilateral. In that respect, in coordination with several government agencies and together with the UNHCR and the IOM, selection missions from The Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Switzerland together with Liechtenstein were facilitated. Exercises conducted by Denmark and Ireland, which excluded the need for a mission to Malta, were also monitored. By the end of the year, Ireland effected the departure of ten persons. Measures to facilitate the travel of persons selected by Norway were also initiated, with the departure of the first group of beneficiaries expected to take place in the beginning of 2012.

The EUREMA Pilot Project was, for EU project purposes, concluded in August 2011. A final conference was held in June, which presented the opportunity to review the lessons learnt and identify best practices both for the benefit with the Member States that had taken part, as well as for representatives of countries that were also committing themselves for the extension of this project or taking part in bilateral exercises.

In October, a project proposal was submitted to the European Commission for the continuation of the Pilot Project on Relocation from Malta under EUREMA II, starting from 2012 with financing under the European Refugee Fund Community Actions. Partnering the Ministry are seven Member States, as well as the UNHCR, the IOM and the Malta Emigrants Commission, with a view to relocate over 90 persons. The total value of the project was budgeted at €771,000 of which 90% are expected to be financed by the European Union.

An exercise being held with Australian authorities was facilitated through two missions conducted during the year. In total four persons departed to Australia while the outcome of other persons interviewed is yet to be concluded.

The Unit liaises and collaborates with the IOM and UNHCR on an ongoing basis in relation to the United States Resettlement Programme. A total of 176 persons enjoying protection in Malta were transferred to the USA during 2011.

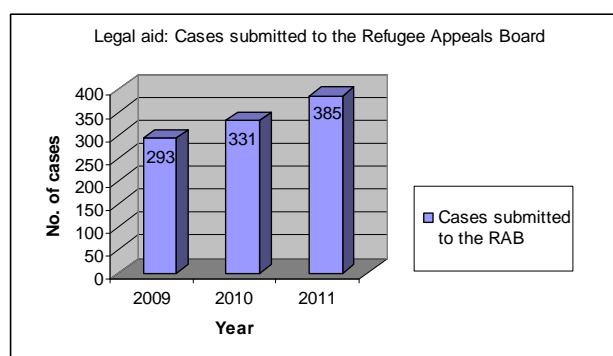
A total of 344 immigrants were resettled/relocated in 2011.

LEGAL AID TO ASYLUM SEEKERS

The Unit is responsible for the administration of legal aid provision to asylum appellants. In the execution of this task, the Office liaises continuously with the Refugee Appeals Board, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner, the appellant, the Accommodation Centres, Immigration authorities and relevant NGOs.

During 2011, the Office continued to progress in the management of new legal aid requests and the backlog of pending cases. This was done through various measures initiated during this year, including an exercise during the first quarter of the year wherein all appellants indicated to be in Malta were given an appointment over two days in April. For this particular exercise, all lawyers on the legal aid pool were asked to be available.

During the same period, several hundreds of asylum seekers reached Malta's shores in the wake of the turmoil in Libya. Asylum seekers whose application failed at first instance were noted to start appealing in the summer months, as the asylum determination processes started being concluded round that time. In this respect, focus previously afforded to appellants living in the community and the open centres was shifted to the closed centres where most of the pending appellants reside. In this case also, multiple appointments were given on a set date to ensure that lawyers are quickly assigned for the benefit of the appellants. Through these approaches to managing the provision of legal aid and with the collaboration of the lawyers involved, progress attained in recent years with respect to the number of cases submitted to the Refugee Appeals Board continued to improve, essentially through efficiency gains with the methods adopted and without increasing the number of lawyers or personnel devoted to the task.



Efforts were also made to reduce the backlog currently in place, with cases of appellants no longer found to be traceable being addressed and cases concluded. Legal aids were roped in to better coordinate this exercise. Moreover, during the year, lawyers were also invited to attend several sessions organised by UNHCR and other NGOs aimed at improving the provision of legal aid to asylum seekers.

ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND RE-INTEGRATION

The Unit liaised with the International Organisation for Migration on assisted voluntary return for third country nationals in Malta, mainly through the Restart II project, funded under the European Refugee Fund. During 2011, a total of 31 persons were assisted to varying degrees to voluntarily return to their country of origin. Of these, 29 benefited from the Restart project to return to their homeland with support for reintegration. In conjunction with the International Organisation for Migration, the Ministry also assists Third Country Nationals wishing to voluntary return but not taking the reintegration package.

Several initiatives were undertaken in this respect, namely with assisting IOM with the production of promotional material as well as preparations for the implementation of the third Restart project pending approval for EU funds for this project. This project will also provide the option for applicants to undertake

short-term vocational training in skills which would enhance their reintegration prospects in their country of origin.

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

The Maltese Contact Point operates on a national level to fulfil the European Migration Network's aims in terms of information dissemination to the European institutions, authorities from other Member States and institutions on migration and asylum by providing updated, objective, solid and comparable data on asylum and migration. These in turn, assist in the European Union's policy-making in the respective areas. Officials from the Third Country Nationals Unit continued to participate in EMN Contact Point meetings in Brussels aimed at coordinating the work conducted by the various contact points found in EU Member States. High-level officials from within the Ministry attended for two meetings of the EMN Steering Board in Brussels.

The National Contact Point organised a twinning meeting in April with the participation of contact points from Italy, Cyprus and Greece with discussions focusing on the situation in the Mediterranean from different perspectives as shared by each Member State. Also participating in that meeting were the government entities forming part of the Maltese Contact Point, various academics from the University of Malta, the European Commission's service provider, and an evaluator of the EMN who also conducted interviews with Maltese officials and Cypriot counterparts in the evaluation taking place.

During this year, the Contact Point initiated work on two studies: on Visa Policy as Migration Channel and on Practical responses to irregular migration. The report related to the EMN on Asylum and Migration Policy in 2011 (annual policy report), which also tracks developments related to the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum and the Stockholm Programme, was prepared in collaboration with the Policy Development Directorate. The development of a Maltese version of the Network's glossary of terms related to asylum and migration was also continued and finalised. Preparations on a report on migration statistics for 2009 were also underway. Several ad hoc queries posted by other Member States were also seen to. A newsletter was also printed for circulation among stakeholders.

A conference discussing the studies conducted during the year as well as others in preparation for 2012 was held in November 2011 for public officials, NGOs and interested parties. Speakers included representatives of the Austrian, Portuguese, Italian, Belgian, Cypriot and Irish National Contact Points, as well as from relevant public entities, academics and NGOs. Other meetings for experts of the National Contact Point were also held during the year.

OTHER INITIATIVES/EU PROJECTS

During 2011 the Ministry, together with IOM, embarked on an EU project entitled *Cooperation between Malta and African countries to enhance migration dialogue and development (CoMAM)*, which aims to build working relations with Gambia, Sudan, Burkina Faso, and Mali in the context of voluntary returns. The project is funded by the Return Fund 2010. The project aims at enhancing diplomatic and administrative relations between Maltese authorities and their counterparts in the aforementioned Countries of Origin in order to develop specific and sustainable actions in the areas of assisted voluntary return. During the month of November 2011, the project was launched by a visit of consular representatives from the selected countries to Malta, where meetings were held with officers from the Ministry for Home Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Immigration Police. Various ways to increase collaboration on AVRР were discussed and the representatives were given an overview of Malta's situation with regards to irregular migration.

Another project, called *Mare Nostrum* and funded by the European Refugee Fund (Community Actions) 2008, involves a common approach to upgrading asylum facilities in Malta open centres and aims to identify the needs of people in need of or having been granted some form of international protection and

offering responses to those needs in the following formats: medical assistance through screening in the centres and training to medical and civilian personnel; basic information through cultural orientation; and job skills facilitation.

In connection with these activities, the development and dissemination of information tools (brochures on health and cultural orientation themes, and DVD for new arrivals) were also developed.

The project, which was initiated in August 2010 and completed in June 2011, involved medical assistance and training by the National Institute of Health Migration Poverty based in Italy, in collaboration with the Maltese health authorities. These interventions helped to raise standards of awareness and preparedness in medical doctors and nurses, and the staff administering closed and open centres. A pilot study also assessed the prevalence of infectious diseases in the migrant community. The cultural orientation sessions and training in job skills acquisition were implemented by IOM. These activities enhanced other mainstream efforts at integration and helped raise the chances of inclusion of migrants in the labour market. Both organisations developed booklets and other materials. Copies of a booklet on tropical diseases that are alien to the Maltese, were distributed to medical personnel. Another booklet focusing on general knowledge of disease prevention and symptoms identification was distributed to closed and open centres staff, while a booklet based on topics discussed in the cultural orientation has been developed for distribution to migrants in the centres. A DVD, also covering these topics, was developed and will be used for new arrivals to the open centres, for them to acquaint themselves with the Maltese environment. The project was led by the Italian Ministry of Interior.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

The Ministry is responsible for approving or otherwise applications made by persons with protection for travel documents, essentially Aliens' passports. Throughout 2011, the number of applications submitted increased considerably and this Unit processed thousands of such applications, with 2,686 being approved, which represented more than twice the similar amount of applications approved in the previous year.

STATISTICS

The administration of asylum and immigration is dependent on information. To this end, this Office has provided support and information on a regular and continuous basis to various government offices towards policy-making and diplomatic discussions. Several queries made by researchers both local and foreign were also addressed. Various initiatives were undertaken throughout the year to improve the collation of such statistics and make them more easily available. The Unit coordinates on a regular basis with the relevant stakeholders to produce a monthly summary of asylum and immigration statistics that support the policy making process in the area of migration and asylum and related aspects.

JULIAN MICALLEF

Assistant Director (Third Country Nationals)

EU Affairs Directorate

The work of the EU Affairs Directorate continued to intensify during 2011. The Directorate ensured Malta's regular participation in discussions of proposals for new legislation put forward by the EU, which required Malta's constant input thereon, as well as other instruments that were not legislative in nature. Particular emphasis was made on following very closely, through active participation of experts from Malta and that of the technical attachés from Brussels, the proposals related to asylum, immigration and judicial cooperation, and this by ensuring, as far as possible, that Malta's representatives were in possession of the necessary instruction notes as a basis for such participation.

To mention but a few, during 2011 particular emphasis was made on the discussions that took place on the asylum package (including the proposed recast of the Dublin Regulation, the Qualification Directive, the Procedures Directive and the Reception Conditions Directive), as well as on the discussions on instruments relating to legal migration such as those on the single permit and the discussions on the amendments to the current Frontex Regulation. Discussions of particular importance during this year were those on the so-called 'Schengen Governance', namely the Proposal for a Regulation on the establishment of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis* and the Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EC) 562/2006 in order to provide for common rules on the temporary reintroduction of border control at the internal borders in exceptional circumstances are currently taking place.

In the realm of judicial cooperation, Malta participated actively, as far as possible in the discussions of all instruments. Discussions of particular importance this year were those related to the proposed Directive on succession, the discussions on the proposed minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, the proposed Directive on the right to information in criminal proceedings, and the proposed Directive on the right of access to a lawyer in criminal proceedings, and on the right to communicate upon arrest, to mention but a few.

During 2011, the Directorate therefore coordinated the attendance of officials from various departments falling within the MJHA remit at Council and Commission working group meetings and kept records of those meetings in which Malta participated both through its technical attachés, as well as through the technical experts from the line departments. Line departments were immediately informed of the monthly calendars and agendas of meetings received. The Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs was represented at working groups very regularly and a small number of the meetings were attended by the staff of the Directorate itself. The Directorate ensured that reports of meetings were drawn up by the attendees and followed up by the Directorate or any other entities that needed to follow them up.

The Directorate worked in constant liaison with the technical attachés in Brussels and ensured a constant flow of information and coordination between both sides. The EU Affairs Director accompanied the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs to the Ministers' Council meetings on a regular basis.

As expected, the Directorate continued to receive a constant daily flow of EU documentation which was distributed to the line departments according to the subject matter as soon as these were received. The Directorate was instrumental in the drawing up of explanatory memoranda (which are submitted

to the Inter-Ministerial Committee, Cabinet and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives) and a good number of instruction notes for use at the working groups in Brussels, especially those relating to the most sensitive issues for Malta. The Directorate also prepared instruction notes for each item that fell within its responsibility and that was discussed at the Committee of Permanent Representatives on a weekly basis, as well as briefing notes for the Minister when attending the Justice and Home Affairs meetings. The Directorate also contributed to briefing notes for any bilateral meetings held by the Minister with his counterparts which had EU content, especially those held in the margins of the Justice and Home Affairs Council.

Furthermore, when required, the Directorate provided input to the Malta position, briefing notes and talking points for the Prime Minister when attending the European Council or when holding bilateral meetings, as well as in preparation for meetings held by the Permanent Representative. This Directorate also required to consult the private sector on a particular proposal namely that related to the European Account Preservation Order. Through the assistance of MEUSAC, such consultations were held, and these led to a more comprehensive Malta position that can be put forward in the discussions at the Council on this proposal.

During the year under review, the Directorate continued with the initiative whereby Member States, through their representations in Malta, were briefed about the positions that Malta would be taking in the JHA Council. This was usually done during a meeting held for them one or two days prior to the Justice and Home Affairs Council meetings.

The Directorate coordinated the replies to questionnaires and written information provided by Malta on various subjects, as well as the transmission of such replies and information to the EU institutions with the EU Secretariat at the Office of the Prime Minister.. The Directorate also ensured that any necessary nominations and any notifications of implementation were duly sent to the EU secretariat at OPM for due transmission to the Commission and Council.

Throughout the year, the Directorate, in conjunction with the Programme Implementation Directorate, was instrumental in ensuring that the necessary legislation for the transposition of EU legislation into Maltese legislation was drafted by the relevant entities (sometimes even by the EU Affairs Directorate itself) and this resulted in the timely implementation of the legislation that had to be transposed.

DR JOSETTE ZERAFA
Director (EU Affairs)

Programme Implementation Directorate

INTRODUCTION

In line with the duties originally assigned to similar entities within the various government ministries, the original aim of the Programme Implementation Directorate within MJHA was to act as the overall project management reviewer and to provide for the effective and timely management of customer care, quality standards and green initiatives. Subsequently the Directorate was appointed as the Ministry's focal point for all EU Funding matters and was also assigned the role of Responsible Authority for the management of a number of EU Funds. The latter role was taken up by the Office of the Prime Minister on 28 October 2011. Furthermore, as of 2009, the Directorate has also been entrusted with duties related to the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act across Government.

GREEN INITIATIVES

The Programme Implementation Directorate is directly responsible for ensuring that green initiatives are undertaken by all the line departments within the Ministry. In view of this, the Ministry's Green Leader is appropriately deployed within the same Directorate. Throughout the year, such official continued to maintain contact with the Green Focal Persons deployed within the line departments, keeping them abreast with any developments, liaising with them on areas of related interest and issuing instructions accordingly.

During 2011, emphasis was made on the implementation of the recommendations that were made through the energy audits. The recommendations were studied and organised in a four year plan for future implementation. A number of initiatives were identified and carried out during 2011, mainly the continuation of an awareness campaign for the reduction in consumption of energy, the setting up of ongoing monitoring of electricity and water meters in all the main buildings of the Ministry, and the identification of low-cost initiatives that were to be carried out in select MJHA departments. In addition the number of water heaters and geysers within the main MJHA buildings was collected for the possible use of timers that will be procured centrally through the Office of the Prime Minister (Environmental Affairs Unit). The Directorate also coordinated the installation of a second set of PV Panels (1.7kwps) for the Head Office of the Civil Protection Department.

CUSTOMER CARE

The Customer Care Unit provides for the effective and timely management of customer care and quality service standards. It provides information about services, policies and workings of the various departments, entities and agencies falling within the Ministry, and carries out service standard surveys. In addition, it handles all incoming requests for information, complaints and suggestions in a professional and manner. It routes them to the appropriate department/entity/service provider, follows them through, and provides the necessary feedback to customers.

It promotes customers' awareness of services available electronically, and brings to the attention of the Information Management Unit any necessary amendments to the website. Other necessary amendments were also brought to the attention of the Police website. Furthermore, it participated in a Solvit Centre Workshop on Efficiency and Effectiveness of Solvit contact points in ministries across the Network, as well as in Communications' Monitoring Exercise by the Management Efficiency Unit, OPM.

During 2011, the Customer Care Unit within the Directorate handled a total of 837 requests through the Customer Care System, the Customer Care generic email and by telephone. The requests were distributed amongst the following entities:

Law Courts	389
Malta Police Force	80
Office of the Attorney General	59
Minister's Secretariat	44
Justice Unit	52
Civil Protection Department	23
Correctional Services	10
Third Country Nationals Unit	17
Office of the Manager, Airport Security	4
Policy Development Directorate	11
Office of the Permanent Secretary	2
Programme Implementation Directorate	3
Film Classification Board	2
Department of Corporate Services	19
EU Affairs Directorate	4
Street Naming Committee	11
Information Management Unit	5
Probation Services	2
Commission for the Administration of Justice	3
Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers	2
Chamber of Advocates	4
Non-MJHA related	38
Office of the Refugee Commissioner	3

As per instructions issued by the Charter Support Unit, each department has to ensure that it conforms to a number of minimum customer-oriented service standards. In this regard, the Customer Care Unit of the Directorate regularly monitored line departments, particularly through following up complaints and issuing regular requests for feedback, in order to ascertain whether divisions and departments were compliant or otherwise.

Out of the 837 settled requests, 111 were lodged by foreigners.

EU CO-FUNDING

The EU Funds Unit within the Programme Implementation Directorate is the Ministry's focal point on all EU Funding matters.

It primarily acts as the focal point for the following Funds which are managed directly by the European Commission:

- Prevention of and Fight Against Crime;
- Prevention, preparedness and consequence management of terrorism and other security related risks;
- Fundamental rights and citizenship;
- Civil Justice; and
- Criminal Justice.

Furthermore, up till 28 October 2011, it was the appointed national responsible authority for the management of three of the four funds forming part of the Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows Programme, namely the External Borders Fund, the European Refugee Fund and the European Return Fund. Such role has subsequently been taken up by the Office of the Prime Minister.

In its capacity as Responsible Authority for the above-mentioned three Funds, the EU Funds Unit managed and implemented the multi-annual programmes in accordance with the principle of sound financial management. In particular, it submitted to the Commission proposals for multiannual and annual programmes, organised/advertised calls for tenders/proposals and organised the selection of projects for co-financing under the Funds (in accordance with the criteria set out). Subsequently, it received payments made by the Commission and effected payments to the final beneficiaries, constantly monitoring the delivery of co-financed products/services and checking that expenditure declared for actions had actually been incurred and complied with Community and national rules. It was the main point of contact with the Commission, providing it with progress and final reports on the implementation of the annual programmes, declarations of expenditure certified by the certifying authority and requests for payment or, where appropriate, statements of reimbursement.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

During 2011, the Freedom of Information Coordinating Unit (FOICU) was strengthened through the appointment of two Freedom of Information facilitators in January.

The Unit actively monitored the publication of categories of documents held by the various Public Authorities.

In addition, the Unit was also involved in various training sessions for FOI Officers. From March up to July, the Unit carried out hands-on training sessions (in collaboration with the Centre for Development, Research and Training) on the FOI IT system back-end that was finalised during 2010. Through this exercise, the Unit was also able to identify enhancements that could be applied to the system. In this regard, the Unit worked in conjunction with the Information Management Unit to plan the necessary changes and implementation (which are being envisaged for the year 2012).

The FOI Coordinating Unit was also involved in other training sessions involving government employees outside the FOI Network. Various information sessions were held with private secretariats and other entities and departments, including the Customs Department, the Health Care Division, EUPA, and St Theresa College. Various other information sessions were held through CDRT.

The Freedom of Information Act was also included as a study unit for the Diploma in Public Management offered by CDRT. In this respect, the Unit prepared a four-hour information session, including a workshop for the Diploma candidates. This also included the formulation of a method of assessment for successful completion of the module.

The Unit coordinated with various Public Authorities whenever FOI requests were received (since these could not be processed through the FOI channel). In total, 11 FOI requests were made, eight requests were received on the FOI system, one request was received through e-mail correspondence, and two were forwarded to the Unit through the e-Government service.

JESMOND CAMILLERI

Director (Programme Implementation)

Policy Development Directorate

REPRESENTATION OF OFFICIALLY-APPOINTED BODIES

Officials from the Policy Development Directorate are appointed on a number of government-appointed boards:

- *Task Force for a National Agenda on Placements for young offenders*: This is chaired by the Commissioner for Children and tasked with drafting a three-year plan to ensure dedicated services and placements for young people with behavioural issues.
- *Council for Children*: The purpose of representation on the Council for Children is to contribute towards the main aim of this Council, namely to monitor the country's compliance with the various international instruments, agreements, treaties and conventions regarding the rights of the child.
- *Sanctions Monitoring Board*: an official from the Directorate represents the Ministry on this board.
- *National Commission against Domestic Violence*: an official represents the Ministry on this board.
- *Teen Parties Task Force*: The Director (Policy Development) formed part of this task force, chaired by the Commissioner for Children.

FIREWORKS

Amendments to the Control of Fireworks and other Explosives Regulations (SL 33.03) were published and entered into force on 8 February 2011. The amendments explicitly provide for the possibility to hold written examinations for applicants for 'A' and 'B' licences.

The first written examination for 'A' licence applicants was held on 24 and 26 January. The re-sit was held on 20 and 22 June. The passmark was set at 80%.

The Directorate also assisted in the formulation of a course for licence 'B' applicants. This work was carried out in conjunction with the lecturers concerned and the Police Special Branch. Courses for 'B' licence applicants commenced on 31 October and are scheduled for completion in early 2012.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Agreements (excluding readmission agreements)

Work carried out during 2011 led to the signature of an Agreement with Bulgaria relating to Classified Information and an Agreement on Cooperation against Crime with Georgia. Moreover, an Agreement on Police Cooperation with South Africa, and another on the Fight against Crime with Uzbekistan entered into force during 2011. The Agreement with Montenegro in relation to the fight against drug trafficking, organised crime and international terrorism, as well as the Agreement with the United Arab Emirates on the fight against drug trafficking and organised crime, also entered into force during 2011. The Agreement with the USA on cooperation in preventing and combating serious crime also entered into force in 2011, with the exception of Articles 8-10.

Bilateral

The Policy Development Directorate took part in the Malta-Tunisia Joint Commission that convened in Malta on 13-14 June.

Visits to Malta by International Delegations

The Directorate was responsible for the organisation of the visit by Thomas Hammarberg, European Commissioner for Human Rights (Council of Europe), which took place on 23-25 March.

The Directorate also contributed to the organisation of a visit by a Swedish delegation made up of 24 judges, in relation to immigration and asylum issues, which visit took place on 22-26 May.

The Directorate also organised the visit to Malta by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) on 26-30 September.

Moreover, the Directorate cooperated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in relation to visits by two delegations of United Nations experts on Iran and Libya, which visits were respectively held on 8-10 March and 11-12 June.

Other International Commitments

Officials from the Directorate attended a meeting with the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to discuss Malta's report to the Committee. This meeting was held on 23-26 August.

IMMIGRATION

- *Briefing Notes*: Briefing notes for the Minister and other high ranking officials on the occasion of meetings with foreign dignitaries were prepared during the course of 2011.
- *European Migration Network*: The Directorate, along with the Third Country Nationals Directorate, submitted the final Annual Policy Report for 2010 on 22 March 2011.
- *Implementing Protocols pursuant to EU Readmission Agreements*: The Directorate contributed to negotiations and logistics in relation to the conclusion of implementing protocols to EU readmission agreements. During 2011, the protocols negotiated with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Russia and Serbia came into force.
- *Reception Conditions Directive*: An official from the PDD took part in EU working group negotiations relating to the proposed Reception Conditions Directive.
- *New Police Identification Documents*: The Directorate contributed to the introduction of new Police Identification Documents issued to beneficiaries of international protection and asylum seekers. The new documents started being issued on 30 May.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Directorate provided ongoing support to the Human Trafficking Monitoring Committee, which was set up by the Prime Minister and convened for the first time in May 2011. In particular, the Directorate contributed to the drafting of Malta's first National Action Plan on Combating in Persons, which was approved by the aforementioned Committee on 30 September and published on 4 October.

The PDD was also involved in the organisation of training sessions for stakeholders in the sector, which were delivered by two experts from IOM (Washington) on 14-17 June. These sessions, which were attended by officials from the Office of the Attorney General, the Police, Agenzija Appogg, the Employment and Training Corporation, Caritas and the Jesuit Refugee Service among others, were co-financed by the Maltese Government and the United States authorities.

An international partner - the International Organisation for Migration - was identified to assist the Maltese authorities in the implementation of the Action Plan. A contract was concluded with the IOM, whereby an awareness campaign and further training for stakeholders, among other services, would be provided.

The Directorate organised and facilitated a meeting between the members of the Monitoring Committee and IOM expert Stefano Volpicelli in the context of the IOM project. The meeting in question was held on 4 November 2011.

The Policy Development Directorate also contributed to the drafting of amendments to Human Trafficking provisions in the Criminal Code (Cap. 9), specifically Articles 32 - 35 of the Bill titled Various Laws (Criminal Matters) Amendment Act, which was published on 29 November.

The Director (Policy Development) also participated in the programme *Qalb in-nies* with a view to raising awareness in relation to human trafficking issues. The programme was screened on 24 October.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND RELATED ISSUES

Reforms at Corradino Correctional Facility

The Directorate took an active part in the work of the CCF External Monitoring Task Force through the participation of the Director and two officers. The Task Force submitted its final report to the Minister in February 2011.

The Directorate also contributed to the drafting of calls for application for new positions within Corradino Correctional Facility.

Legislation

The Directorate contributed to the drafting on the Bill titled Restorative Justice Act, which was published on 25 January. The proposed legislation in question was discussed in Parliament and issued as Act XXI of 2011.

VICTIMS OF SEXUAL OFFENCES

The PDD, through one of its officials, is represented on a Task Force appointed to draw up a business plan with a view to establish services dedicated to the protection of victims of sexual offences. In April 2011, the dossier was presented to the Minister for Education, Employment and the Family for consideration and implementation.

WEAPONS

A Substitute Arms Dealer licence was introduced by means of amendments to the Arms Licensing Regulations, which were published on 20 May. The relevant regulations were issued with the participation of the Directorate, following a proposal by the Weapons Board.

JOSEPH ST JOHN

Director (Policy Development)

Information Management Unit

INTRODUCTION

The Information Management Unit (IMU) is tasked with the responsibility of creating policies and strategies for the Ministry's information management and technology. The CIO leads the IMU within the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs.

The CIO has a leadership role in re-engineering MJHA's business processes and underpinning ICT infrastructures to increase the productive, efficient and valuable use of information.

This Office embarked on various important ICT initiatives during 2011. These were mainly aimed at improving the Ministry's website and enhancing the functionality of the new Justice e-Services website. Preparations were made to launch the new Freedom of Information online system, which will serve as a comprehensive workflow for the FOI requirements of all ministries and public authorities and also to serve as an additional important e-government service for the general public. Phase two enhancements on the FOI system are being implemented. Significant work and investment was directed to upgrade the Courts network infrastructure to offer speed and resilience, and to upgrade the existing data centre and the setting up of a new secondary data centre tailored to the Courts' increasing demands on its network infrastructure.

Significant work was done on enhancing the systems and the business processes at the Courts of Justice, Police, the Attorney General's Office, the Justice Unit, CCF and the Civil Protection Department. This Office is also embarking on various other initiatives to improve the deployment of IT across all other departments within this Ministry.

JUSTICE PROGRAMME

The overall Justice Programme was defined through various blueprints of how the business at the Courts of Justice is going to operate at the end of its period. Apart from the various ICT infrastructural initiatives related to upgrading core software applications for Courts, and the upgrading of server and networking equipment, the European e-Justice initiative was considered in the drafting of the Justice Programme. Various e-Government initiatives are included in the programme and are currently being developed. Benefits for the citizens and government are the drivers behind the definition of these blueprints and their high level objectives. The main objective behind the Justice Programme is to bridge the current portfolio of justice related ICT projects and the future programme and cluster initiatives defined by MITA's strategy.

The ultimate objective of the Justice Programme is the ability to give better access to justice to all local and European citizens, judicial and legal communities. A robust core system maintained up to date with the latest technology has been developed to be able to provide Court services online. These services will facilitate the possibility to interact with other EU Member States through services offered on the European e-Justice portal.

NEW MJHA WEBSITE AND E-SERVICES PORTAL

Following the launch of the new Ministry's portal and the new e-Services portal during last year, various other enhancements have been made to the website. The websites were developed using the latest hardware and software technologies, and boast of a new flexible and secure content management system that allows various data owners to update content and records without the need of any central intervention. Work on improving the website is ongoing and the third phase enhancements are currently being developed.

POLICE FORCE

Apart from the various ICT projects that were implemented to assist the Police in its investigative work, major effort was directed towards the implementation of a computerised criminal records system, the new Schengen Information System (SISII) and the Prüm project.

The Criminal Records Office at the Malta Police has been operating a paper-based process and it has become essential to implement a computerised system which will not only satisfy a local business process requirement, but also enable the Police to attain the near future objective of interconnection with other EU member state CROs for the exchange of data on criminal investigative cooperation. The completion of this project is therefore mandatory as the first step towards achieving this EU initiative.

On a local level, the project will eliminate the current manual paper-based process and once the data is in electronic format this project shall allow the CRO to maintain data relating to investigative cases, related judgements (acquittal, conviction and discontinuation).. This project will enhance the prosecutorial role along with the investigative roles, and complement police cooperation within EU member states. Work on this important computerisation project continued to progress steadily during 2011.

Early in 2010, a scope study for the potential replacement of the legacy Weapons Systems was commissioned. The EU directive 2008/51/EC also requires that all EU member states maintain a computerised register of firearms by 2015. The new program will also be designed to conform to the new Accrual Accounting System being implemented by MFEI.

The objectives of the scope study were to provide a high level definition of the weapons business processes, to provide a high level definition of the fireworks and explosives business processes, to gain insight of systems that are currently available on the market through the issue a request for information (RFI) to propose a number of different business options for a new weapons system and to provide estimated costs.

Following research and consultation by MITA with key users and members of the MPF, a number of different business options were identified especially for the process of new applications for sporting and hunting licences and licence renewal.

The business case for the procurement or development of the new Weapons System was submitted for MITA's consideration through the annual CapEx process.

FILE SERVER EQUIPMENT IN THE JUSTICE UNIT

In the previous year, new file server equipment had been installed in the Justice Unit to cope with the additional load in the handling of Laws of Malta database records. During 2011, new operational and data security procedures were put into place and additional equipment implemented to ensure the protection of the data. The Unit was furnished with the latest specialised text editing software to assist in the process of text editing related to laws. Two VPN lines were also installed to facilitate secure remote access for key users.

OTHER PROJECTS

Various other projects kicked off during the year. These include projects for the Civil Protection Department, CCF, Probation Services, Detention Services Refugee Commission, AWAS, FOIA and other departments.

CIVIL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

Plans are underway to implement an incident reporting management system for the Civil Protection Department to computerise the record of all the interventions handled by all stations, and to provide the necessary reporting system required for management information and decision support purposes.

The IMU once again made considerable investment in the upgrading of the LAN Infrastructure and WAN connectivity of the CPD to ensure that current and future line of business software applications that support the department's workflow between Head Office and all its stations can work efficiently.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

One of the major projects embarked upon in 2011 was the implementation of the Freedom of Information Online Correspondence Management System which was developed to provide FOI Request Handling Automation to all PAs across Government, a first of its kind in the way it encompasses all PAs

The system is accessible to the general public where FOI requests can be lodged and their status tracked online by any citizen holding an e-ID.

The Freedom of Information Online Correspondence Management System is designed to cope with the predicted capacity necessary in handling formal requests for information under the FOIA, help PAs optimise use of resources, reduce errors, minimising appeals, provide Management Information reporting, including annual returns to the IDPC, and assist with the enforcement of FOI legislation and best practice.

Implementation of phase two enhancements is currently underway. Various enhancements are being implemented to offer the citizen the best possible user experience.

EU FUNDED PCS

The IMU assisted both the Office of the Refugee Commissioner and AWAS in the tendering process for EU funded PCs and Notebook PCs. It drafted the necessary tenders and led the adjudication process and provided the necessary assistance in the implementation of these PCs and Notebook PCs Biometric Registration and Payment System for AWAS

A new Payment and Registration System, based on biometric technology, was implemented at AWAS. This system which facilitates payments to the asylum seekers is in the final stages of rollout. The IMU supported the tendering adjudication and implementation stages of this new system.

NETWORK ACTIVE AND PASSIVE EQUIPMENT FOR THE COURTS OF JUSTICE.

During the year, two tenders were issued to upgrade the network infrastructure at the Courts of Justice, one for active and the other for passive equipment. The upgrading of the networking equipment is part of a larger IT infrastructure upgrading project aimed to meet the ever increasing demands on IT at the Courts. Leading to these demands is the constant drive for automation and information processing and exchange requirements resulting from the business process reengineering being implemented at the Law Courts. The work on the tender related to the upgrading of the passive and active equipment was finalised in 2011.

Also related to this IT infrastructure upgrading exercise, is the setting up of a new data centre at the Courts and the refurbishment of the existing data centre. The new data centre will host the new server equipment and their business critical data in a safe a secure environment.

END TO END OFFENDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM SCOPING STUDY.

During the current year, the IMU embarked on a project initiative by commissioning a scoping study for the implementation of a new approach to offender management, the possible development of a new model through business process reengineering, and the eventual implementation of a new case management system around the new model, specifically the implementation of an End to End Workflow Management System. Work on the design of this system is ongoing and is due for completion by 2012.

NEW STATISTICS SOFTWARE FOR REFCOM

A new database system that enables the capture and processing of immigrant related data was implemented for REFCOM during 2011. The system was developed by NSO through the coordination of the IMU. This system consists of a number of modules that enable the production of the statistical tables required by EUROSTAT and UNHCR. The database system allows the varied stakeholders and service providers in the area of Asylum and Immigration to develop a systematic interaction and information sharing between them and additionally provide a more coordinated approach in the management of the particular local and external demands. This, in turn, increases efficiency of outcomes, reduce duplication of work and improve the speed of administrative processes. This system introduced integrated data capturing and retrieval and statistical outputs for Eurostat and UNHCR. The scope of this system is consequently to facilitate the collation of data on the illegal immigrants during their stay in Malta and caters for the whole duration of an immigrant's stay in Malta from arrival to return.

CCTVS INSTALLED THROUGHOUT MJHA DEPARTMENTS

An exercise to document all CCTV installations within the MJHA was conducted with the aim of consolidating the maintenance and support functions of these systems and to upgrade the cameras and DVR/NVRs where necessary.

LAN AND WAN AS HOUSE OF CATALUNYA AND AUBERGE D'ARAGON

An exercise was conducted by the Information Management Unit to analyse and document the WAN and LAN layouts of the House of Catalunya and Auberge D'Aragon housing the permanent and private secretariats respectively. Included in the scope of the analysis was the updating of the inventories of all ICT related hardware and software.

The main objective of this exercise was to document all networks and systems related to ICT and to serve as management information for the redesign and improvement of the LAN and systems available.

ENTERPRISE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, E-FORMS AND WEBSITE BRANDING.

These three major initiatives, which are being led by MITA, are aimed at improving the way online government services are delivered to the citizen. The IMU is actively seeking ways to employ these platforms to the citizens' advantage by transforming external and internal processes based on new technology.

KEVIN BUHAGIAR
Chief Information Officer

Office of the Refugee Commissioner

INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Refugee Commissioner's main responsibility is to receive, process and determine applications for international protection in Malta.

The Refugees Act is the first ever specific asylum-related legislation that has been enacted in Malta and incorporates the obligations assumed by Malta under different international and EU instruments.

The fundamental objective of this Office is to ensure a totally transparent and efficient asylum determination process while, at the same time, guaranteeing the best quality possible regarding the hearing, analysis and determination of application for international protection.

In 2011, the number of irregular immigrants that entered Malta increased significantly when compared to the previous year. This could be due to the crisis in the North African countries and the Middle East. During the year, 1,579 persons arrived in Malta by boat as compared to the 28 persons who entered Malta in 2010. Of these, 99.8% applied for international protection.

In 2001, there was also an increase in the number of applicants from Libya and Syria who entered Malta by air or by other regular or irregular means and who were not intercepted by the police. Indeed there have been 188 applications from this latter category of immigrants.

During the year, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner processed 1,727 applications for international protection. Of these, 66 were recognised as refugees, 693 were granted subsidiary protection, 711 were rejected, 59 were withdrawn and 34 were given temporary humanitarian protection.

In 2010, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner extended its mandate and after consolidation with the Ministry for Home and Parliamentary Affairs, was granting temporary humanitarian protection to former applicants for international protection who had not been granted asylum in Malta, but who had nonetheless never been repatriated and had been residing in Malta for at least four years. This procedure continued throughout the first quarter of 2011, whereby the Office granted temporary humanitarian protection on a case by case basis.

PARTICIPATION AT NATIONAL AND EU LEVEL MEETINGS

The Office of the Refugee Commissioner continued to ensure that it was duly represented by a member of staff in national/EU conferences and workshops focusing on various asylum related issues.

Throughout 2011, the Office participated in a number of Asylum Working Party meetings, involving the recasting of the Qualification and Asylum Procedures Directives as well as the Dublin II Regulation in view of achieving a Common European Asylum System.

The Office also participated in meetings at EU level such as EURASIL and other meetings involving the European Asylum Curriculum, as well as meetings involving the EASO such as the EASO Management Board and the NGO Forum meeting.

EU FUNDED PROJECTS

Throughout 2011, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner also worked intensely on a number of projects co-funded by the European Union, an initiative which this Office decided to follow to improve the services offered to asylum seekers.

European Refugee Fund Project 2009-2011

In 2011, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner concluded the first ERF project entitled *Post application client preparation and asylum determination interviewing centre for asylum seekers*, whereby asylum seekers are given all the necessary information about the asylum procedure including information about their rights and obligations during the entire process. Asylum seekers are also being assisted by interpreters, provided by this Office, to fill in adequately their registration form known as Preliminary Questionnaire. It must be noted that the changes that were made by means of this project were recognised by Mr Thomas Hammerberg, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, who, in a report published on 9 June 2011, acknowledged that the provision of information to asylum seekers has improved considerably. Moreover, through this project, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner also extended the current premises by investing in mobile offices. With the use of the new office space, this Office now has 12 properly equipped interviewing rooms in different centres. Moreover, since these offices will be used by staff of the Refugee Commissioner, these were furnished and equipped to cater for the special needs of an asylum determining office, making the place better suited for the asylum interview.

In 2011, through this project, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner organised a training seminar, as well as a national conference. Members of organisations working in the field of asylum, NGOs and civil society were invited for this conference. This event aimed to inform the public on what happens after the asylum procedure is concluded, as well as allowed the Maltese community to connect with refugees on a human level, and to understand the struggles that refugees have to face in order to integrate in our society.

The ORC continues with this practice of providing information to potential applicants for international protection, on the asylum procedure and the rights and obligations attached with this procedure.

GDISC Project

Throughout 2011, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner continued its work with GDISC, an EU organisation that works in the field of immigration and asylum. The Office had already benefited from a project in 2009, and this year it once again participated in this project as a beneficiary. With this new project, the Office benefited from linguistic analysis, as well as from the services of interpreters from the United Kingdom to Malta when there was a need of an increased interpreters' capacity for a short period to provide practical assistance on the spot. A total of six interpreters came to Malta in 2011, two that spoke Bangla, two that spoke Urdu and another two interpreters that spoke Amharic and Oromo, who in total helped in the interviews of just over 90 asylum applicants.

ERF Project 2010–2012

The Office of the Refugee Commissioner also implemented another ERF project entitled *Document analysis in the asylum determination process, training and implementation* (2010-2012), which mainly aims to develop the level of expertise in the field of documentation analysis. This project particularly aims at improving the asylum decision-making process by training Asylum Determination Officers in the field of documentation analysis, providing different level group workshops for Asylum Determination Officers in Malta in the field of documentation analysis, and through the leasing of document analysis equipment, which will assist asylum determination officers in conducting their documentation analysis.

TRAINING

The Office of the Refugee Commissioner continued with its work to achieve a sustainable asylum system, particularly aiming to further improve the quality of asylum decisions. To this effect, this Office invested in training programmes organised throughout the year.

During the June training seminar, Professor James Hathaway, an eminent legal scholar in the field of international refugee law, was invited to deliver a three-day training seminar on *The Refugee Law* to all the asylum determination officers. In December, the asylum determination officers attended a five-day training seminar on documents analysis, which aimed to develop their level of expertise on the subject and also to improve the asylum determination process. Also throughout the year, 13 asylum determination officers attended six different modules of the European Asylum Curriculum (EAC). EAC aims to prepare persons from different Member States as national trainers. The EAC training modules aim to enhance the capacity and quality of the European asylum process, as well as to strengthen practical cooperation among the European asylum/immigration systems. The ORC attended the following modules: Inclusion, Interviewing Techniques, Interviewing Vulnerable People, Drafting and Decision Making, Country of Origin Information, as well as the Dublin Regulation module.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Cases Processed in 2011		No of cases
Refugees		66
Subsidiary Protection		693
Temporary Humanitarian Protection		34
Rejected		711
THPN		6
Withdrawn		59
In Process		171
Subsequent Applications		32

Refugee Status		Subsidiary Protection	
Nationality	No	Nationality	No
Unspecified	2	Erithrea	237
Bangladesh	1	Ethiopia	5
Egypt	2	Pakistan	1
Eritrea	14	Somalia	405
Ethiopia	10	Sudan	45
Iran	3	Total	693
Iraq	1		
Morocco	2		
Myanmar	1		
Nepal	1		
Nigeria	2		
Pakistan	14		
Saudi Arabia	1		
Somalia	5		
Sudan	3		
Syria	3		
Tunisia	1		
Total	66		

MARIO FRIGGIERI
Refugee Commissioner

Information and Data Protection Commissioner

During the period under review, this Office took legislative measures to introduce amendments to Subsidiary Legislation 440.01, which regulates the processing of personal data in the electronic communications sector. Such amendments were required to transpose the provisions contained in Directive 2009/136/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009, amending Directive 2002/22/EC on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services, Directive 2002/58/EC concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws.

Since Directive 2009/136/EC amended both Directive 2002/58/EC on the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector, and Directive 2002/22/EC, this Office held various meetings with the Office of the Attorney General and also with the Malta Communications Authority. The objective was to identify which provisions of the new Directive had to be transposed under the Data Protection Act, and which other parts fell under the remit of the Malta Communications Authority. The stakeholders, particularly the main service providers, were informed on the new requirements emanating from this Directive during ad hoc meetings which were facilitated by MCA.

Feedback of a generic technical nature was received from service providers concerning the new obligations. Given that the EU is strongly promoting the concept of adopting a harmonised approach in the implementation of this Directive, this Office commenced the drafting of guidelines, based on opinions adopted by the Article 29 Data Protection Working Party, to facilitate the implementation of the newly-introduced requirements. The amendments were transposed by virtue of Legal Notice 239 of 2011, published in the Government Gazette of 24 June 2011. Two new principal obligations were introduced:

- service providers were required to notify, without undue delay, a personal data breach to the Commissioner and in the event of a breach which is likely to adversely affect the privacy of subscribers, the provider shall also notify all the affected subscribers;
- data controllers who are responsible for the operation of a web-portal had to obtain the consent of the subscriber or user, prior to storing or gaining access to information stored in the terminal equipment (commonly known as 'cookies') of the subscriber or user.

In view of the fact that the implementation of such obligations is still an ongoing subject of various discussions in European fora and working groups, this Office took an informed decision not to bring the provisions of such regulations immediately into force. Developments at European level are being followed very closely to ascertain a harmonised national implementation approach. In this respect, a commencement notice, which shall bring such regulations *in vigore*, is expected to be published in 2012.

During 2011, the Office received a total of 73 official complaints. The most common subjects of complaints related to the installation of CCTVs by private individuals, the sending of electronic communications for the purposes of direct marketing and the processing of personal data without satisfying the requirements established under the Act. In the course of investigating the complaints, the Office carried out several on-site inspections where technical meetings were held with senior IT personnel. Inspections were also performed on the Commissioner's own motion, while others were carried out to honour specific obligations emanating from EU requirements. Several queries reached the Office, by e-mail and by telephone, where callers enquired about various matters concerning the applicability of the Act and the rights which data subjects enjoy under the privacy legislation.

There was one case where an involved party felt aggrieved by the decision of the Commissioner and, in terms of article 49 of the Act, made an appeal before the Data Protection Appeals Tribunal. However, before the date of the first hearing, this Office was informed by the secretary of the tribunal that the appellant opted to withdraw the appeal.

During this year, the Office held regular meetings with representatives from the various sectors with the main objective to discuss data protection issues applicable to the respective sector. The continuous drive to communicate with the sectors delivers a high degree of positive feedback which the Office requires for the development of guidelines and codes of practice which will ultimately regulate all the sectors. In this respect, meetings were held with various constituted bodies and also entities from the education, social work, telecommunications, law enforcement, media, financial services and the health sectors respectively.

The Office has an obligation to promulgate data protection awareness for the benefit of the citizen and also for the benefit of the various sectors and data controllers. To achieve this objective, continuous work is undertaken to regularly hold presentations and contribute in local newspapers. During this year, the Office delivered presentations to various entities on the applicability of the data protection rules in specific sectors. Presentations and contributions were made at the Malta College for Science and Technology, GO plc, the Employment and Training Corporation and during the COMNET conference. During the year under review, the Office participated, on a fortnightly basis, on a popular family programme aired on the national radio station.

During the year, the Office gave its contribution to the European and international fora by participating in the Article 29 Data Protection Working Party, the European Conference of Data Protection Authorities, the International Conference on Privacy and Personal Data Protection, meetings of the Joint Supervisory Authorities of Schengen, Customs, Europol and Eurodac, the Case Handling Workshops, the Council of Europe, the Joint Supervisory Body of Eurojust and the Bureau of the Consultative Committee of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals on the Automatic Processing of Personal Data.

On 28 January, the Data Protection Commissioner joined the other Data Protection authorities in Europe to celebrate the Data Protection Day. To mark this day, the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner distributed informative material to students in all state, private and church schools.

The Office followed closely the developments happening at a European level concerning the European Commission's proposals for a revised legislative framework for data protection. During the consultations, a large majority of stakeholders agreed that the principles remain valid, but there was a need to adapt the current framework in order to better respond to challenges posed by the rapid development of new technologies and increasing globalisation. The first official draft of the proposed regulation is expected to be launched by the European Commission in January 2012.

In view of the upcoming Schengen evaluation, scheduled to be carried out in July 2012, this Office commenced with the necessary preparatory work intended to gear up for the peer review, which shall be carried out by a team of European data protection experts. A technical team from this Office carried out two onsite inspection visits at the Embassy and Consular offices of Malta in Moscow and Cairo. The scope of the inspection visit was to assess the processing of personal data undertaken by both missions in issuing visas for third country nationals. The visit was also carried out with the objective of reviewing certain established procedures in the light of the requirements deriving from the provisions of the Data Protection Act and other legal instruments. A training session on data protection awareness was also delivered to members of staff in both missions to create awareness on the privacy rights citizens enjoy under the Act, the relative Visa Information System (VIS) regulations and the Schengen Convention in relation to the issuing of visas.

JOSEPH EBEJER

Information and Data Protection Commissioner

Airport Security

Mission Statement

To regulate the aviation security system,, and to provide adequate security services for the protection of all property and stakeholders in the aviation industry in Malta

RESPONSIBILITY

OMAS is responsible for the overall management and control of aviation security in Malta and for the coordination and supervision of security resources. The Office is responsible for developing, regulating and managing a secure aviation system, with the objective of ensuring a safe and secure environment for all passengers, airport employees, the general public and property.

COMMITTEES

The Office of the Manager Airport Security actively participates on two Committees involved in aviation. The Manager Airport Security is the Secretary of the Aviation Security Committee and ensures that decisions taken by this Committee are implemented by the entities concerned.

OMAS is also a member of the Airport Users Committee (AUC) and actively participates in this Committee and supports aviation stakeholders when required.

SECURITY PROGRAMMES

National Civil Aviation Security Programme (NCASP)

In accordance with Regulation (EC) 300/2008 and ICAO Annex 17, OMAS is responsible for the drawing up and maintenance of the National Civil Aviation Security Programme. This Programme provides the framework of regulations, standards and guidelines to be adopted and implemented by all entities, which directly or indirectly, are involved in aviation security in Malta.

The purpose of this Programme is to protect the security, regularity and efficiency of aviation security in Malta. It has been designed to meet the requirements of ICAO Annex 17, European Commission Regulation EC 300/2008 and ECAC Doc 30.

Currently, the NCASP is being amended to reflect the recent developments in EU Regulations on Aviation Security.

National Civil Aviation Security Quality Control Programme (NCASQCP)

OMAS is also responsible for the drawing up and maintenance of the National Civil Aviation Security Quality Control Programme. The objective of this Programme is to verify that aviation security measures are implemented in compliance with the requirements of the National Civil Aviation Security Programme. Monitoring activities are carried out by qualified national auditors within OMAS on a continual basis.

National Civil Aviation Security Training Programme (NCASTP)

During the year under review, OMAS issued the 2nd edition of the National Civil Aviation Security Training Programme. The aim of the NCASTP is to state the requirements for the production and development of aviation security training. The objective is to ensure that aviation security measures and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by those who need to implement them.

Other Security Programmes

During 2011, OMAS approved a number of security programmes submitted by aviation stakeholders that are required to carry out specific security controls.

QUALITY CONTROL ACTIVITIES

During the year under review, the Office of the Manager Airport Security carried out a number of tests and inspections, with the aim of ensuring that entities concerned are carrying out the required security measures.

Monitoring activities were carried out on various aviation activities such as:

- Access control, including airport staff and visitors' screening
- Aircraft security
- Passenger and cabin baggage screening
- Hold Baggage Security
- Cargo and Mail, including Regulated Agents and Known Consignors
- Air Carrier Mail and Material
- In-flight and Airport Supplies
- Staff Recruitment and Training
- Security equipment

Furthermore, this Office monitored the various developments and infrastructural works which were being carried out within the airport boundaries. The aim of these monitoring activities was to ensure that works on buildings situated on the boundary between landside and airside were carried out according to the site plans as approved by the Manager Airport Security. Such controls are conducted to ensure that the airport infrastructure as a whole meets the necessary security standards and that new development take into account security requirements.

DUTIES ABROAD

European Commission Aviation Security Meetings

During the year, this Office participated regularly in the EC AVSEC meetings in Brussels. Throughout these meetings, decisions towards the implementation of AVSEC legislation are made. Malta, together with other Member States, supported the Commission to further strengthen aviation security within the Community.

EC Working Groups

This Office actively participated on a number of Working Groups organised by the Commission. These included the following: EC Cargo Working Group; and EC LAGs Working Group. The working groups are attended by experts in the field of aviation security. The aim of these working groups is to examine specific issues, prepare the ground work and make recommendations to the EU Regulatory Committee for Aviation Security.

EC Aviation Security Inspectors Certification Programme

During the year, two Assistant Managers attended the Aviation Security Inspectors Certification Programme organised by the European Commission in Brussels. The aim of this programme was to certify national auditors under the EC Regulatory framework 300/2008.

Audits/Inspections at Foreign Airport

An Assistant Manager was nominated by the European Commission to participate in a security inspection of an Italian airport.

European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC)

The Manager Airport Security participated in the annual auditors meeting and attended the security forum organised by ECAC, of which Malta is a signatory member.

RENEWAL OF AIRPORT SECURITY PASSES

Under EC Regulatory Framework 300/2008, airport security passes shall be issued to persons other than passengers that, for operational reasons, require to access restricted areas for periods not exceeding five years. During the year, airport security passes started to be renewed and currently the process is at its final phase.

OMAS CERTIFICATION OF AVIATION SECURITY INSTRUCTORS

During the year, OMAS certified 42 instructors from various local aviation entities. The certified instructors shall firstly submit a security training programme to OMAS for approval, following which certified instructors shall only provide security training as indicated in the approved programme.

CARGO AND MAIL

Throughout the year, OMAS validated five Regulated Agents (one initial validation and four re-validations) and seven Known Consignors (one initial validation and six re-validations) OMAS validations ensure that supplies intended for carriage as air cargo are subjected to the appropriate security controls. OMAS validations are recognised on an international level, so supplies manufactured by OMAS validated Regulated Agents and Known Consignors does not need to be subjected to any further security controls in foreign airports. This supports the local industries in maintaining their costs to a minimum.

During the year, OMAS started the process of ACC3 recognition. In accordance with Regulation (EU) numbered 859/2011 air carriers that want to carry cargo or mail from third countries into the EU has to be designated as an *Air Cargo or Mail Carrier operating in the Union from a Third Country Airport* (ACC 3). In 2011, OMASorganised meetings with air carriers in possession of a Maltese Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) and explained the requirements to be designated as an ACC3. Only Air Malta plc requested and was successfully designated as an ACC3.

MARIO BUGEJA
Manager (Airport Security)

Detention Services

GENERAL

In contrast to the previous year's total absence of arrivals, during the year under review 1,535 immigrants arrived over a period of just four months. This raised quite a concern as a large number of people were fleeing the Libyan conflict and there was no way the island could cope with an overwhelming number of arrivals as witnessed by Sicily. Of the immigrants who arrived in Malta just over half were from Somalia and Eritrea while the rest were from West African countries.

The arrivals in 2011 were characterised by a large number of women, children and families. Although this created pressure on available DS resources families, children, pregnant women and disabled immigrants were processed and released from detention centres in the shortest possible time. The actual number of arrivals in 2011 increased slightly with the addition of 44 immigrants who arrived in December bringing the total number of arrivals to 1,579.

The Detention Service

The Detention Service was established on 18 August 2005. It is made up of personnel seconded from the Armed Forces of Malta and from the Police Force under one Command. Currently the Detention Service operates centres in Safi Barracks, Lyster Barracks and Ta' Kandja.

The Detention Service is tasked with the security of closed centres while providing:

- adequate accommodation, including the necessary toilet and shower facilities;
- basic needs, such as food, clothing, hygiene and safe environment;
- access to medical care;
- access to the asylum system i.e. Commissioner for Refugees;
- access to non governmental organisations;
- means of contacting home or their country representative in Malta.

IMMIGRANT POPULATION

At the beginning of 2010, there were only 57 immigrants in detention, but with the arrival of 1,579 immigrants between March and June of 2011, figures rose rapidly. However, many of the new arrivals were granted some form of protection and were subsequently released early. As a result, by the end of the year there were 641 irregular immigrants in detention, the majority of whom were failed asylum seekers.

DEMOLITION OF C BLOCK SAFI

Due to a new public road built within the confines of Safi Barracks, a decision was taken to demolish C Block. However, since internal conflicts erupted in a number of North African countries, DS advocated for the delay of the demolition as a precaution due to unprecedented arrival of immigrants in Sicily. It was subsequently demolished after immigrant arrivals ceased at the end of June.

THE LIBYAN CONFLICT

As soon as the Libyan conflict flared up, the main stakeholders in immigration were tasked with formulating a plan aimed at mobilising the security and paramilitary forces in providing accommodation and support for immigrants in the event that thousands would end up in Malta.

The arrival of over 1,500 immigrants in just four months placed a heavy burden on DS, particularly as a considerable number of immigrants were women and children. Despite difficulties being faced, every immigrant was accommodated and given the necessary support.

During the same period, a riot occurred at Safi involving 300 immigrants. Although 17 members of the security forces were slightly injured, the riot was brought under control without injuries to immigrants.

PROJECT SPARKLET

In 2011, AWAS launched an education-based project for immigrants. Such a project was also implemented in detention centres and DS was one of the main stakeholders. As a result, immigrants were given the opportunity to attend classes in language training, cultural orientation and sports activities. Due to the success achieved by this project, a number of international organisations praised AWAS and DS for such an initiative.

VISITS TO LYSTER DETENTION CENTRE

Due to the arrival of more than 1,500 immigrants over a period of a few months, a number of high level VIPs visited Lyster Detention Centre. Two such VIPs were Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Mr Thomas Hammarberg and EU Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom, responsible for Home Affairs.

REPORTED CASES OF ABUSE

On a positive note, 2011 marks a record year for the least amount of officially reported cases of abuse and mistreatment of immigrants. Normally, such cases are brought to Commander DS's attention by Board of Visitors of Detained Persons, NGOs and international organisations. Reports of abuse have declined drastically through more control, discipline and subject oriented training to staff. As a result, only two cases of alleged abuse were reported in 2011.

BRIAN GATT

Lieutenant Colonel

Commander Detention Service

Courts of Justice Department

SUPPORT SERVICES DIRECTORATE

The Support Services Directorate continued to provide financial advice, management and administrative support services to the line operations of the Courts of Justice Department.

It ensured the timely and accurate preparation and the provision of the full range of support services to the Members of the Judiciary, the Permanent Secretary and the Director General, Courts, in operations management.

The Support Services Directorate also directed, controlled and coordinated the administrative work and provided the Director General (Courts) with advice, recommendations and support on the relative financial and administrative business of the Department.

HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION

Enhancement of Procedures

The Human Resources (HR) Section contacted by e-mail all employees on special unpaid leave (parental, career break, study leave) requesting them their personal e-mail address. This data was inputted in a Personal Information (PERINFO) database and henceforth all circulars are being e-mailed to them in order to ensure that these employees are kept abreast with developments in the Public Service.

The inputting of data of all records into an Excel file of the employees' Personal Record Sheets (PRS) was continued. By means of this initiative, PRSs will take on a modern, computerised format. This is very important for the image of the HR Section at the Courts of Justice Department, especially when these PRSs are sent to other departments in personal files. By means of this initiative, the issue of the Service and Leave Record Form (GP47) will also be facilitated.

The HR Section met the deadline set by the Audit of the Performance Management Programme (PMP) which was carried out at the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs in May. This was facilitated through the electronic inputting of all the data regarding personal details, work plans, performance measurements and comments into all the employees' PMPs, ranging from Clerk (Scale 16) to Assistant Registrar (Scale 5) – total of 155 PMPs. The employees at the Department responded well to this initiative and hence facilitated the meeting of this deadline.

The Courts of Justice Department provided unpaid work placements to three MCAST students who were undergoing studies leading to the BTEC Extended Diploma in Business.

The Department employed 13 university students, who took part in work projects offered by the three Directorates.

Capacity Building Exercise 2010 - 2011

The annual capacity building exercise was undertaken, taking into consideration the HR recruitment requirements for the Courts of Justice Department for the years 2011- 2012. The HR section in due course

evaluated the requests received and prioritised, keeping in mind the established budgetary parameters and recent policy development.

Seminars and Courses

An official represented the HR section on several conferences, seminars and courses.

Calls for applications

Ten calls for applications were issued during 2011 to fill in vacancies in the following categories - Court Messengers, Chief Marshal, Part time Judicial Assistants, Deputy Registrars, Casual Substitute Clerks, Casual Substitute Executive Officers, Drivers with the Members of the Judiciary, Ushers, Marshals, and Senior Marshals.

The following table features statistics of the work carried out by the Human Resources Section:

Study Leave	1	Promotions	5
Maternity Leave	5	Verification of Sick Leave	211
Parental Leave	8	Progressions	6
Sports Leave	1	Qualification Allowance	3
Unpaid Leave	1	PQ'S/Return	16
Cult & Fishing Leave	0	Recruitment/Transfers from	2
Responsibility Leave	0	Terminations/Transfers	31
Adoption Leave	0	Appointments	29
Reduced Hours	27	Pensions	5
Returns	16	Contracts	24
Emigration Leave	0	Salary Adjustments	245
Call for Application	8	Gov. Gazette Notices	11

2011	Total
Study Leave	1
Maternity Leave	6
Parental Leave	9
Sports Leave	2
Unpaid Leave	6
Cult & Fishing Leave	0
Responsibility Leave	0
Adoption Leave	0
Telework	9
Reduced Hours	25
Returns	25
Emigration Leave	0
Call for Application	8
Promotions	7
Verification of Sick	22
Progressions	29
Qualification Allow.	2
PQ'S/Return	25
Recruitment/Transfers	1
Terminations/Transfer	23
Appointments	49
Pensions	13
Contracts	28
Salary	30
Gov. Gazette Notices	8

FINANCE SECTION

Recurrent Expenditure

The Finance Section is responsible for the collection of fines, court fees and other revenue as directed by the Director/Registrar Civil Courts and Tribunals and the Director/Registrar Criminal Courts and Tribunals. This section is also responsible for the payment of salaries to all Courts of Justice employees. Apart from this, payment for goods and services in connection with the day to day running and maintenance of the Courts of Justice are made by this section. Payment is also made for other services directly related to the Administration of Justice such as to court experts and members of tribunals.

The Finance Section continued to update the Ministry of Finance, on a monthly basis, with the financial situation of the Courts of Justice through submission of Re-assessment of Budgetary Estimates.

Operational and Expenses

Expenditure under this category was approximately €16,000 more than last year and €132,000 over the approved budget. Although this Department managed to make savings under Utilities, Materials and Supplies and Repair, and Upkeep amounting to €137,000 compared to the approved estimates, the Courts had to incur additional expenditure under Transport resulting in the above net increase in expenditure under this category. The additional expense under Transport was mainly due to the fact that the contract for the hire of cars for members of the judiciary expired in June and the award of the new contract was delayed following two appeals which were presented to the Contracts Appeal Board thereby postponing the final adjudication. In view of this, this Department had to retain the lease of the same cars which were used on the original contract but for which a higher daily rate had to be paid.

Programmes and Initiatives

An additional expense of €68,000 was mainly due to expenditure over the approved estimates amounting to €26,000 under the Witnesses, Jurors Experts Item, €58,000, under the Re-letting of Urban Property Item, and €50,000 under the Family Court Item. This expenditure was mitigated by savings under other items.

This section continued to support the initiatives of the Operations Section, especially expenditure related to the refurbishment of various halls following the appointment of new members on the Judicial bench.

Capital Expenditure

Payments under this category were made in time and in terms of Financial Regulations. This category included two items, namely Improvement Works, which had a revised budget of €115,000, and Premises for the Judiciary, which had a revised budget €350,000.

Total Capital Expenditure in respect of the Improvement Works Item amounted to €115,000. In fact, the budgeted amount of €100,000 under this Item was exhausted and a virement of €15,000 was made in order to ensure that enough funds were available for the ongoing projects. The major project under this capital item was the replacement of the duplex lifts at the Family Court at a cost of €60,500. Amongst other projects paid from this item were air conditioners €4,000, aluminium windows €5,600, bust Sir A Mercieca €2,300, furniture €5,900, walk through metal detector €6,200, parquet flooring used in the refurbishment of Halls project €4,400, gypsum partitioning €3,000, parts for luggage X-Ray Machine €16,000 and shelving units €2,900.

Expenditure under the Premises for the Judiciary Item amounted to €350,000, which was spent on the first phase of the Chambers of the Judiciary Project. This phase included the demolition of the existing dilapidated building retaining only the facades facing Strait Street and Old Bakery Street, the building of

the shell of the new Chambers comprising 29 Chambers, and various other offices distributed over eight storeys.

Revenue

By the end of December, revenue collected amounted to €5,903,310, which is €706,690 short of the approved budget and €1,058,090 less than the total revenue collected last year. It must be noted that revenue collected in 2010 was rather extraordinary due to the fact that an exercise was carried out to transfer to Revenue confiscated moneys in criminal cases and which had not been transferred under the revenue item for a good number of years. However, when revenue collection for 2011 is compared to 2009 (which may be considered at par to this year) the year's revenue exceeded that of 2009 by €158,000. The table below gives an overview of revenue collected between 2009 and 2011.

Category	Revenue 2009 €	Revenue 2010 €	Revenue 2011 €	Difference (2011 < 2009) €	Difference (2011 < 2010) €
Fines	2,190,700	2,859,600	2,092,910	-97,790	-766,690
Fees	3,522,300	4,094,500	3,809,908	287,608	-284,592
Miscellaneous	1,900	7,300	492	-1,408	-6,808
Total	5,714,900	6,961,400	5,903,310	188,410	-1,058,090

A new initiative was undertaken in 2011 by the Civil Courts Directorate whereby 66 Garnishee Orders were issued. Through this initiative, €71,637 were collected. Apart from these Garnishee Orders, the Revenue Section issued 877 requests for payment and 99 legal letters, from which €130,193 were collected. This drive is bound to reap further revenue in 2012, since the exercise was initiated during the last quarter of 2011.

OPERATIONS SECTION

A good part of the general Capital allocation for 2011 was spent to replace the duplex lifts at the Family Court, to buy spare parts for the X-ray machine, and the replacement of the walkthrough, which are used at the main entrance for security reasons, to purchase and install new digital recording systems for all the Halls, and the purchase of new furniture as needed. The last batch of aluminium apertures at the corridors was also replaced.

The main project for the year was the first phase of the building of the Judiciary Chambers. This building will house about 29 judicial chambers for the members of the , as well as for their staff. The estimated cost of this first phase is estimated at €370,000. The works consisted of the demolishing of the internal walls and ceilings, leaving only the main entrance halls and the stair wells and their rebuilding as per fresh plans. The tender for these works was adjudicated and assigned following a call for a Tender of Works by the Department of Contracts. The building of the shell form was completed by the end of the year and the restoration of the woodwork and the façade is to follow.

Other tenders that were issued included phase two of the new data centre, the leasing of cars for the members of the Judiciary, as well as for the court marshals, the hire of photocopiers as well as for the transport for the members of the jury.

Five Court Halls were refurbished and 13 members of the Judiciary were relocated to other offices, following the appointment of new judges and magistrates. Refurbishment of these offices was also carried out and some had new parquet flooring installed. New office furniture was also purchased.

The new 5,000 litre water tank that was purchased for the Family Court was installed, and the domestic water supply was consequently separated from the fire water tank system. The photovoltaic panels were also connected to a meter so that a rebate for the electricity produced would be possible.

The section continued with the general maintenance and various offices and common areas were white washed according to an ongoing refurbishment programme. Various spent bulbs and neon tubes were replaced by energy saving ones. Soundproofing material was installed in the gypsum partitions of the mediators' rooms. Sound levels were largely reduced. Information signs were put up at the Civil Courts Registry.

The refurbishment of the archives section continued and more wooden shelving was replaced by aluminium ones. This created more storage space and during the process some old files were taken for storage at the Camerata archives. The book binder was relocated in the archives section as his workshop was transformed into a judiciary chamber.

A bronze bust of Sir Arturo Mercieca, complete with pedestal, was commissioned and the works were ready by the end of the year. It will be put in place in early 2012. A prototype notice board in *franka* stone was installed adjacent to one of the Magistrates' Court Halls. It is expected that during 2012, further notice boards will be likewise replaced.

The Occupational Health and Safety General Risk Assessment was reviewed and adjourned. The suggested recommendations were addressed. At the end of summer, a group of about 20 persons from different sections attended a Fire Safety Course at Hal Far.

IT SECTION

UPSs & SNMPs

A Request for Quotations was issued for seven rack-mountable Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) units so as to ensure that all remaining unprotected seven racks within the Courts will minimise down-time. The UPSs were each supplied with an SNMP module in order for the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) to be able to monitor the performance and audit unscheduled events. The installation of these UPSs is scheduled to take place during February 2012.

Enhancement to the IT Infrastructure

The current IT system depends on one Data Centre, meaning one link to IT resources. This is definitely a threat to business continuity, such as in case of a fire hazard, and an unscheduled down-time. In order to eliminate the single point of failure, the Courts issued three departmental tenders in order to set up another Data Centre to complement the only one currently in use.

The tenders are for the purchase and installation of equipment, trenching works, and structural alterations, as well as new racks and accessories for the new Data Centre.

Total Expenses on Completed Projects	€ (incl. Vat)
Project 1 - Provision of Local Area Network and Infrastructure Works, Services and Supply of Passive Equipment	41,835.28
Project 2 (Lot 2) - Provision of Active Network Equipment and Support Services	22,791.00
Project 2 (Lot 1) - Provision of Active Network Equipment and Support Services	55,406.45
Project 3 - Provision for New Racks, Rack Accessories and Structural Alterations.	11,369.21
Total	€131,401.94

New Data Centre at the Main Courts Building

After several meetings with the architect, engineer, contract officers and consultants, the Courts compiled the tender for the installation of electrical installations, air conditioning systems, inert gas fire extinguishing and alarm systems, CCTV and surveillance systems and access control systems. The tender submissions were opened in June 2011. Although there was only one bid, the Courts had a number of clarifications. The evaluation process had to be put on hold due to policy changes at MITA. In view of the

new MITA building facilities at St Venera, the new servers that were to be housed in the new Data Centre are now being separated, one at MITA and the other at the Courts. The Courts continued with the evaluation and the contract was signed in December 2011.

Total Expenses on the New Data Centre Project	€ (incl. Vat)
Project 5 - Provision of Architectural Finishings and Infrastructural Installations for the new Data Centre	€ 56,368.40

Enhancement of the Local Area Network

A contractor was commissioned with the installation of nine new data sockets in three different offices in the Courts' building. The total expenditure amounted to €813.20.

Discussions were initiated with MITA to plan better structuring and physical organisation of network cabling at the ground, first, second and third floors of the Main Courts building. The possibility of Wireless Access within the current network was examined. These enhancements are projected to be completed by the end of year 2013, due to other commitments during 2012.

New Judiciary Chambers Building

The construction of this new building was finalised by the end of the year. Several meetings with MITA consultants regarding infrastructural works and services were carried out .

In December 2011, a statement of works with MITA to assist us during this project was compiled. In the same month, plans and technical specifications were also completed.

Digital Audio Recording in the Halls

After a study carried out in 2010, it was decided that the Courts should install the same digital audio recording system that is used in Parliament. Following commissioning of the system in one Hall as a pilot project, this proved to be successful and well praised by the Magistrate and staff. As a consequence, the Courts started the installation of the equipment in other halls during the year. Each hall required the replacement of the DVD-ROM to DVD-RW, flash cards, card readers, UPSs, muting devices and the recorder itself. Some halls required the replacement of microphones, speakers and other audio equipment due to old technologies that were in place. 16 halls were equipped with the new recording system during this year. It is expected that the remaining eight halls will be ready by the end of March 2012.

Total Expenses on the New Digital Audio Recording Systems so far	€ (incl. Vat)
28 Tascam Digital Recorders (SSR05)	12,955.40
31 Compact Flash Cards and 28 Compact Flash Readers	829.46
24 Standard Uninterrupted Power Supplies (800/600va)	1,036.56
17 New DVD-RW including installation	373.00
Labour and Material	3,739.02
Total	€18,933.44

Telephone Services

The telephone service at the Courts was enhanced by introducing a 50-pair telephone cable from the PBX to Rack E following higher demands for new extensions in that area of the building due to an increase in the judiciary staff. Throughout the year, quite a number of faults in the main courts building were experienced due to the poor state of the physical cabling and lack of cable management. This situation had to be addressed and started research for new innovative solutions.

The introduction of a VOIP service was discussed with MITA. This system would mean the changeover from the current system to a telephone system through the IT infrastructure. Through this new system, the Courts will benefit from using the new installed fibre infrastructure and enable the administration to decrease maintenance costs and resources, as well as costs on licences and be able to monitor and control abuse of service. This will also eliminate the current problem on the state of the cabling. The timeframe for completion is still unknown as other projects need to be finalised.

Videoconference Services

The video-conference service at the Courts was enhanced by introducing the use of IP protocol that connects abroad via internet using MITA's service, rather than using an ISDN telephone line. This enabled the Courts to reduce costs on calls and resulted in a better service. During the year, the Courts introduced an audio and video digital recording facility which is then transferred on a DVD. Next year it is planned to introduce a dedicated internet connection that will give the Courts larger bandwidth and which will improve the connection of the calls with better visual quality. This will cost around €700 annually.

TRAINING ACADEMY

The Training Academy hosted a number of training sessions for the Judiciary and Court Staff and was also responsible for the hosting of other events and information sessions.

Training sessions for Judiciary and Staff

The number of training sessions organised during the year were 13 - four for the Judiciary and nine for Court Staff.

Training sessions for the Judiciary were held in April, June, September and November. In April, the Judicial Studies Committee (JSC), in collaboration with the American Embassy, facilitated a presentation by an American Judge on *The US Federal criminal justice system and the mechanisms that judges and prosecutors use to deal efficiently with criminal cases*. The topics of the seminars were: *Children as witnesses in court: Do we provide them with a child-friendly justice system?*; *Asylum Seekers: Key Legal issues*, and *Mediation*.

The key training sessions for court staff held during the year were: enhancements made on the LECAM, radiation emissions related to the security equipment, employee support needs within the Public Service, an induction course for prospective Deputy Registrars, and ongoing courses for court employees.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Training Academy also facilitated two conferences. The first, on *Transitional Video Conferencing*, was held during February where delegates from six countries participated. The second, held in May, concerned a preliminary meeting of the European Judges Association. The three-day conference was attended by over 80 participants.

Judicial sittings took place, through the Video Conferencing Unit with Law Courts in Holland, UK and Spain facilitating interrogation and submission of evidence via the video-conferencing equipment.

In coordination with the Curriculum Management and eLearning department, the Academy hosted 14 information visits to Form IV students, as well as an information visit to a group of first year (BCom) students from the University of Malta.

In addition to the above, Academy officials also performed the following functions:

- kept abreast with all developments related to the Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act and Better Regulation policy,
- regularly carried out administrative work related to the running of the JSC,
- in collaboration with the Assistant Registrar Civil Tribunals, made the necessary changes to the content management pages of the Maltese content in the EU Justice portal, and
- performed regular updates on the Courts magnetic access controlled doors.

CIVIL COURTS AND CIVIL TRIBUNALS

The year 2011 witnessed the appointment of new members on the judicial bench and new adjudicators presiding over the Small Claims Tribunal. New laws were introduced. Developments were registered in the field of information technology. There were also other various initiatives and other activities which contributed towards the amelioration of services to the general public.

IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES AND E-GOVERNMENT

This Directorate kept monitoring the timely inputting of judgements and records of proceedings on the website. Within approximately three days from the pronouncement of judgements, these were made available for viewing by the general public on the justice services website.

Monthly statistical reports of introduced and decided cases in the Civil Courts continued to be published on the internet. Regular monitoring was carried out to ensure that these statistics remain realistic. This data constitutes an important analytical tool, particularly for researchers, members of the Judiciary and the Courts' Administration. Bi-annual age analysis reports are also published on the same website. These can be found on the site WWW.JUSTICESERVICES.GOV.MT.

The Court Services website was updated to include fixes to the *verbali* display and to the judgement keyword selection in old versions of Internet Explorer.

Scanned images of site plans of immovable properties due to be sold by auction were included in the Judicial Sales section on the same website. This eliminated the need for citizens to have to call at the Courts to view site plans in their hard copy format.

Meetings were held in connection with the proposed introduction of an Electronic Document Management system at the Courts of Justice. MITA initiated a procurement initiative to select a strategic partner to implement an Enterprise Information Management Solution (EIMS) across Government. During this meeting an overview of the EIMS proposal was provided. The following possibilities of usage of the EIMS were discussed as practical candidates to be considered under this Solution - (i) Document scanning of Article 166A (Cap 12 of the Laws of Malta) and other judicial letters and (ii) Document scanning of Garnishee Orders. Meetings were held with MITA regarding additions and adjustments in the IT's Legal Case Management system (Lecam) to reflect the introduction of divorce, which enhancements were implemented prior to the introduction of the law.

The new release of Taxation/Revenue application in Cortex was implemented.

With regard to the e-Forms, various actions were taken to prioritise existing forms. The department also participated in the compilation of an inventory of these forms.

The Directorate gave the required information regarding life events as part of the exercise undertaken by the e-Government section within MITA to carry out re-branding and redesigning of the government portal Gov.mt.

AMENDMENTS AND NEWLY INTRODUCED LEGAL PROCEDURES

Act XIV of 2011 was published by means of Government Notice 682 dated 29 July 2011. This law introduced divorce into Maltese Law. In September, three legal notices were issued: LN 370 – 372 of 2011 consisting of amendments to the Regulations about the Civil Court (Family Section), amendments to Schedule A of Chapter 12 (tariff), and the introduction of new forms in Chapter 12, namely Form 22A and Form 23A, both warrants of prohibitory injunction in connection with divorce cases. The law of divorce was introduced with effect from 1 October 2011.

Amendments to the Administrative Justice Act were published by means of Legal Notice 326 – 328 of 2011.

The deletion of Subarticle 4 of Art. 5 of Tariff D, Cap.12, with regard to the adjudication of movables following a judicial sale by auction, was suggested by this Directorate. As the law stands, there is a Court fee of 1% for every €100 both for the adjudication of movable and immovable property. The law also states that in no case shall the fee levied be less than €116.47. The suggested amendment will leave the 1% in case of adjudication of immovable property, while introducing the following fees for movable property: on the first €499, a fee of €20, from €500 to €999, a fee of €50 and from €1,000 onwards €100 or 1% whichever is the higher amount.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY, CHAIRPERSONS AND ADJUDICATORS

In February, Magistrate Gabriella Vella was appointed as the new Chairperson of the Administrative Review Tribunal for a period of three years.

In April, Senior Magistrate Dr Silvio Meli and Magistrate Dr Anthony Ellul were appointed Judges at the Superior Courts (Malta). They were assigned to the Civil Courts. Dr Francesco Depasquale, who was appointed Magistrate together with Dr Neville Camilleri and Dr Josette Demicoli, was assigned civil cases among others.

In July, Magistrate Dr Jacqueline Padovani Grima was appointed Senior Magistrate.

In September, Mr Justice Mark Chetcuti was appointed to act as President of the new Competition and Consumer Appeals Tribunal in accordance with the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Act (Cap 510 of the Laws of Malta).

In November, Dr Deborah Mifsud Attard and Dr Vincent Galea were appointed Adjudicators in the Small Claims Tribunal for a period of five years.

TRAINING AND CONTINUED PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Following discussions regarding the printing of the case sitting notes (*verbali*) of court cases on coloured paper, a circular was issued stating that with effect from 1 April, all *verbali*, both of the Superior Courts and of the Inferior Courts, were to be printed on coloured paper. This made the *verbali* more easily accessible to judges, lawyers and parties to the case.

A meeting was held for those executive court officers in charge of sending Court acts via registered postal mail (commonly known as pink cards). The aim of this meeting was to familiarise these officers, particularly those who had only just started to process pink cards, with the proper procedure to be followed when effecting service of judicial acts and when drawing up the certificates (*riferti*) following service of same. This meeting was followed by an internal memo incorporating the salient points raised during the said meeting, and which all executive officers in charge of pink cards are expected to adhere to.

A job shadowing initiative with the Chamber of Advocates and the Chamber of Notaries involving students from St Theresa's College was launched, after preparatory meetings were held. The Department participated in an orientation visit for these students, during which basic court rules and procedures were explained and a tour of the law courts was given. They were also given a booklet about the courts. A number of students attended sittings of the First Hall of the Civil Court and the Court of Magistrates (Civil). They also performed a number of hours with a number of participating lawyers and notaries.

An important new development for the Courts of Justice Department in general, as well as for other government departments and interested individuals, was the initiative taken by this Directorate in conjunction with the Faculty of Laws within the University of Malta for the introduction of a Diploma Course in the Laws of Procedure. This diploma is a focused course, enabling participants to specialise in the Laws of Procedure. The course, which commenced in February 2011, is now already in its second semester. About 52 students applied to attend. The diploma is covering topics such as the Law of Civil, Criminal and Commercial Procedure, Administrative Procedure, Procedure before the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, Constitutional Procedure and EU Procedure.

Regular and scheduled visits by 4th year secondary school students are still being held in conjunction with the Ministry for Education on a fortnightly basis. During these visits, the students are addressed by a member of the Judiciary on the practices and procedures of these Courts. Afterwards, they are shown around the different courts, thus giving them the opportunity to experience how justice is practiced.

A representative of this directorate attended a three-day course regarding *Better Regulation and the application of the Standard Cost Model*.

An official attended a conference organised by the NCPE on equality in March. During the conference, the NCPE presented its Annual Report and awarded the Equality Mark Certificate to various entities both public and private.

Two members of the Directorate participated in the *Negotiation and Problem Solving Skills Workshop for Senior Managers* held at the CDRT.

MEETINGS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Following the appointment of five new members on the judicial bench, intensive meetings were held with the Chief Justice regarding the assignment or reassignment of duties to the various Judges and Magistrates. Civil cases were assigned accordingly. A number of meetings were also held with various Judges and Magistrates on the reallocation of judge's chambers and halls.

Various meetings were held regarding Act XIV of 2011, introducing divorce in Maltese Law. Meetings were held with the Chief Justice and Judges presiding over the Family Court. The aim of these meetings was to discuss its impact on the Family Court and about the arrangements that were to be made once the law came into effect on 1 October 2011.

Meetings were also held with mediators and Family Court staff. Meetings were held with the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority, in connection with the newly established Competition and Consumer Appeals Tribunal. Discussions focused on the rules of procedure to be followed by the Registrar both in respect of pending cases and new cases. Discussions were also held with regard to the proposed schedule of fees payable for the filing of acts. Meetings were also held with the Chief Justice on the matter. Various meetings were also held with Mr Justice Mark Chetcuti who was appointed to act as President on this Tribunal.

Another initiative was taken to put up proper signs in the Civil Courts Registry to indicate the particular hall clerk assigned to a Judge or Magistrate. This ensures a better service to the public who can now identify who the hall Clerk assigned duties with a particular judge or magistrate is.

Following the appointment of a Legal Procurator, the Courts started issuing garnishee orders against individuals who had failed to pay for Court Registry fees following the termination of their court case, which revenue had fallen into arrears. During this year, the Directorate collected €71,637, consisting of Registry fees due to the Courts. Another €23,800 are awaiting to be withdrawn following a court decree

Five Judges of the Court of First Instance in Luxembourg visited the Courts of Justice. The Directorate participated during this visit and a PowerPoint presentation was prepared together with the Criminal Courts and Tribunals with the aim of giving an overview of the Maltese Legal System. The Directorate also participated in a meeting held with the CEPEJ delegation (European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice) of the Council of Europe. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the Maltese judicial system and procedures with a view to improving working methods within the court system and adopt a better case management system which could lead to a reduction in the case load.

The Data Protection Activities Report was drawn up. A representative of the Directorate attended a Conference on Data Protection.

A departmental representative attended the 9th Session of the Maltese-Tunisia Joint Commission as coordinator nominated for the Maltese side on behalf of MJHA, under the Administrative Cooperation Agreement in the Field of Justice between the Government of Malta and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia signed on 31 May, 2007. During this Session, minutes were approved in the sense that both sides agreed to commence discussions in order to start implementing the same agreement.

The Directorate participated in the orientation course for prospective Deputy Registrars that was held from 1 to 3 August, by delivering a series of talks on various aspects of the Civil Courts and Tribunals.

Members of the Directorate attended a meeting of the Social Affairs Committee presided by the Hon Edwin Vassallo. The issues that were discussed during this meeting related to separation proceedings in the Family Court.

A meeting was held with the Commissioner for Children, during which various issues concerning children who giving testimony in the Family Court were discussed. The issue of legal aid in urgent cases where it would not be possible to follow the established procedure was also discussed.

The Capital Transfer Duty Directorate within the Inland Revenue Department requested the Courts of Justice Department to identify and stock-take all deposits made with the Monte Di Pieta` throughout the past decades. Most of these deposits consist of valuable items such as gold and silver. It is envisaged that the deposits will be transferred to the Central Bank for safe-keeping. These deposits cover a very extensive period and go back to 1863. A board was set up to verify the contents of each item deposited and evaluate its value. It was also decided that each item should be photographed. The board is made up of two officers from the Monte di Pieta and two officers from the Law Courts, one of whom is a member of this Directorate. The board is in the process of itemising each deposit by verifying the contents, giving a description of each item, photographing, weighing and evaluating them.

Various meetings were held with the Malta Bankers' Association and the Department of Inland Revenue regarding the withholding of capital gains tax by the Registrar of Civil Courts in Judicial Sales by Auction. A solution was found which, following the necessary legal amendments, would facilitate the collection of the relative capital gains due to Government.

A German law student applied for an unpaid three-week internship and spent the first three weeks of August at the Law Courts. He had the opportunity to learn about the Maltese judicial system and also had meetings with some of the Judges and Magistrates.

Cases, Warrants and Other Acts filed

		Total
Court cases (<i>Kawzi</i>)	Superior	1,163
	Family Section	352
	Inferior	421
	Small Claims	1,036
	Admin Rev Tribunal	277
	Total	3,249
Warrants	Superior	1,801
	Family Court	320
	Inferior	3,598
	Total	5,719
Judicial Letters	Superior	4,037
	Family Court	133
	Inferior	3,983
	Total	8,153
Judicial Letters (Bill of Exchange)	Superior	16
	Inferior	146
	Total	162
Judicial Letters (Sec.166A of Cap. 12)	Superior	261
	Inferior	4,873
	Total	5,134
Act Notifications By Hand	Superior	6,831
	Family Court	2,349
	Inferior	3,538
	Total	12,718
Act Notifications By Mail	Superior	14,755
	Family Court	3,025
	Inferior	15,996
	Total	33,776
Mediation letters		1,299
Mediation Notes	Family Court	297
General Applications		266
Applications		972
Researches	Voluntary Jurisdiction Section	6,073
Obligations		76
Hypothecates		89
Sale by Auction		190
Schedules of Deposits	<i>Subbasti</i>	5,068
Withdrawals		2,979
Applications	Court of Revision of Notarial Acts	157

Court Cases

Court/Tribunal	Year					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<i>Constitutional</i>						
Introduced	31	27	36	40	46	46
Terminated	37	26	27	35	36	55
Pending	37	38	47	49	55	50
<i>Appeal (Superior)</i>						
Introduced	348	345	306	317	366	356
Terminated	360	437	371	366	355	236
Pending	865	756	691	641	621	771
<i>Appeal (Inferior)</i>						
Introduced	339	280	247	257	253	300
Terminated	322	294	282	308	259	147
Pending	266	246	211	156	141	301
<i>Civil Court First Hall</i>						
Introduced	1,279	1,736	1,660	1,658	1,706	1,644
Terminated	1,490	1,564	1,550	1,677	1,569	1,695
Pending	4,903	5,022	5,077	4,896	4,764	4,840
<i>Civil Court Family Section</i>						

Introduced	437	551	560	460	502	449
Terminated	456	450	496	401	401	523
Pending	1,020	1,108	1,161	1,187	1,194	1,171
<i>Civil Court (Magistrates)</i>						
Introduced	398	411	415	504	539	422
Terminated	549	421	399	471	470	501
Pending	1,120	1,110	1,126	1,150	1,187	1,132
<i>Injustices Tribunal</i>						
Introduced	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terminated	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pending	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Admin Review Tribunal</i>						
Introduced	-	-	-	91	62	279
Terminated	-	-	-	0	18	71
Pending	-	-	-	91	135	342
<i>Land Arbitration Board</i>						
Introduced	20	43	19	50	33	31
Terminated	42	10	64	69	39	32
Pending	247	277	234	216	198	208
<i>Rent Regulation Board</i>						
Introduced	121	105	81	60	162	137
Terminated	82	45	74	49	134	120
Pending	378	417	422	431	444	467
<i>Rural Leases Control Board</i>						
Introduced	19	20	8	9	12	15
Terminated	26	8	17	14	27	18
Pending	128	138	128	125	106	108
<i>Small Claims Tribunal</i>						
Introduced	1,092	922	952	1,037	1,732	1,037
Terminated	1,621	1,168	992	930	1,353	1,230
Pending	1,208	959	929	1,035	1,356	1,189

CRIMINAL COURTS AND CRIMINAL TRIBUNALS

JURORS COMPUTERISED SYSTEM

The computerised Jurors system was completed and became operative for the first time in the drawing up of the list of Jurors for April 2011. Legal notice 31/2011 termed Drawing of Jurors by means of a Computerised Mechanism Regulations, 2011 amended section 606(1) of the Criminal Code and was published in the Government Gazette in February stipulating March 2011 as the date of coming into force of this IT system. A press conference was organised at the beginning of January to launch the new system. A presentation of the system was also delivered to both the journalists and the legal profession.

Jurors are now chosen randomly by electronic means while notices sent to jurors are generated electronically. Moreover, citizens who are precluded from jury service are automatically removed, while through a direct link with the Common database, deceased persons are removed from the list. Persons who serve as jurors are also removed from the list for that period of time which the Court so orders.

Diploma Course in the Laws of Procedure

Following lengthy discussions between the Courts Administration and the University of Malta, as well as with the Centre for Development, Research and Training (CDRT) within the Office of the Prime Minister, a University Diploma was launched in the Laws of Procedure. This Diploma should be of great benefit to Court employees, officers working in legal offices, whether in the Public Service or private firms, as well as for legal journalists. Moreover, the Courts managed to secure, through the CDRT, sponsorship for its employees who follow this Diploma. Funds were forthcoming through the European Social Fund. Employees working in this directorate were encouraged to apply for this diploma course which is bound to

upgrade their legal knowledge and appreciation of the relevant laws governing the day-to-day work of the Courts of Justice. Seven employees working in the Criminal Directorate applied for this course.

Confiscation or destruction of old Exhibits

During the year, the officer in charge of the bulky exhibits section together with the Senior Criminal Courts Exhibits Officer examined a considerable number of old exhibits which had been stored within the Courts premises for the last 30 years. After examining each exhibit and after confirming that the cases in which these exhibits were presented had been terminated, an application was filed to obtain the Court's approval for their destruction. These exhibits were all photographed prior to their destruction. Over 1,000 old exhibits were destroyed as they were of no value.

The Department continued with the process of sale of a number of cars which had been confiscated by the Courts and which have been kept for a number of years at the St Andrews and Ta' Kandja Police complex. This time-consuming task requires intensive investigation as no inventory exists and some of the vehicles bear no reference to the court case under which they were being investigated. Enquires with court records and contacts with Transport Malta were made to try and identify their rightful owners, but in most cases such exercises proved futile. The cooperation of the police authorities helped in this task. In those cases where the Court confiscated vehicles in favour of the Government, these were sold.

Publications in the Government Gazette

The Directorate continued to take the necessary action required at law regarding freezing of assets, when so directed by the Courts or when informed by the court-appointed expert. Forty-six freezing orders were published in the Government Gazette during the year. These orders were duly notified to the Public Registry both in Malta and in Gozo as stipulated by Law. These orders were also communicated to the Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit (FIAU). A newly set-up Asset Management Unit continued to follow court orders dealing with the confiscation of assets.

During the same period, 24 interdiction orders were published in the Government Gazette. The Electoral Commissioner was duly informed for necessary action from his end. The Registrar also published, in August and November, lists of persons duly qualified to serve as jurors for the year 2012 after being approved by the Jurors Board, which met twice during the year to compile such lists. A monthly list of jurors was also published.

Asset Management Unit

Following various meetings with the Attorney General's Agency, the Police, Lands, as well as the FIAU, a new Asset Management Unit within the Criminal directorate, was set up to follow up court orders dealing with the confiscation of assets. During the year, this unit prepared two reports regarding freezing orders and this in preparation for the coming into force of a legal amendment to the Criminal Code, which would oblige the Criminal Court Registrar to prepare reports on the assets of the offender. This amendment will eliminate the need for the court to nominate a legal expert to prepare such reports since these will now be prepared by the Registrar through this unit thereby reducing experts' fees paid by this Department.

Restorative Justice Board

The Criminal Courts Director was invited by the Minister responsible for Justice to form part of the Restorative Justice Board. Consultation meetings were held on a weekly basis and the Directorate's contribution to the process proved useful particularly when the law comes into force.

Digital Recording and Video-Conference and Public Address System

The Directorate offered its assistance to the Support Services Directorate in the gradual introduction of the digital recording system within the Court Halls, which is replacing the old cassette-based audio system. The system introduced is similar to the one successfully used at the House of Representatives and the first installations were made in the Magistrate's halls. This type of equipment was also installed in the halls in which trials by jury are held. Necessary training was given to staff on how to use this type of equipment. It is expected that the digital equipment in the remaining halls will be installed in 2012.

Hall 7 was also equipped with a video conference system, thereby increasing the number of halls with this facility to three.

Destruction of Drugs

During the year, the destruction of drugs of those cases which were duly concluded by the Courts continued. A substantial number of court cases were examined and drugs and other related items were disposed of according to law. For each case a *procès verbal* was compiled and filed in the relative proceedings. This process was carried out after arrangements were made with WasteServ to carry out the destruction process in the presence of court officials.

Board to examine Court Exhibits held at Monte Di Pieta'

After discussions were held between officials from the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, and officials from the Courts of Justice, a board was appointed to examine valuable court exhibits which were deposited at *Monte di Pieta'* during the past two centuries and which are still deposited therein. The Board is composed of two employees from the Courts of Justice and two other employees from the Capital Transfer Duty Directorate. The main task of this board is to examine each and every exhibit, photograph them and give a detailed description of the exhibit. The board is to suggest how to dispose of such exhibits and which exhibits are to be deposited at the Central Bank of Malta. This is an arduous task as there are quite a large number of exhibits which have to be examined.

Refurbishment of Hall 14 – The second trial by jury hall

During the year, Hall 14 at the first floor of the Courts of Justice main building, which is equipped to house trials by jury when two juries are scheduled concurrently, was extensively refurbished together with the Jurors' room and the adjacent judge's chamber. New recording and air conditioning equipment were installed.

Letters of Request

During this period the Directorate received 33 letters of request from the International Cooperation in Criminal Matters Division. These were passed to the Magistrates who deal with such cases.

Collection of Fines Imposed by the Courts

The comparative table A below shows the amount of fines collected during the last five years, which were inflicted by the Courts of Criminal Judicature. Although the amount of fines collected during the year under review when compared to the previous year show a decline in revenue, comparative table B sheds some light as to the reason for such a decline. In fact, table B shows that the value of fines converted into an imprisonment term increased during 2011 when compared to 2010 since defaulters chose to go to prison instead of paying their fine. Statistics on the conversion of fines to an imprisonment term started being collected from 2010.

Table A

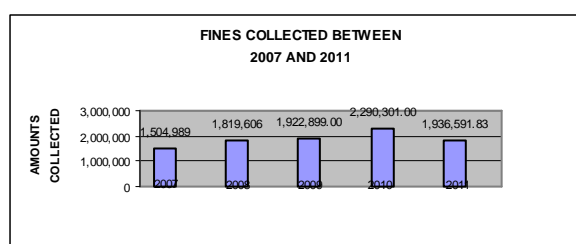


Table B

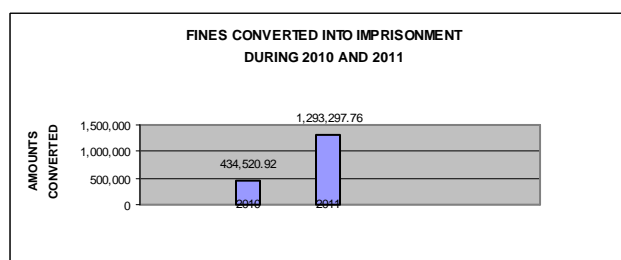
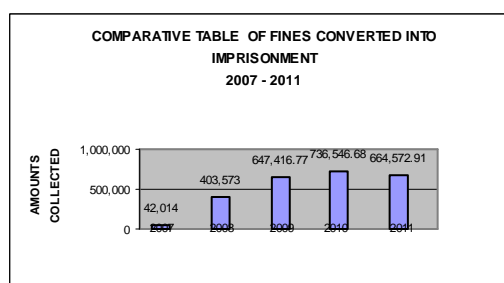


Table C shows the amount of fines which were inflicted in these particular years and which have been converted into imprisonment during the years and are no longer due.

Table C



During the year, the Criminal Courts (Superior) inflicted the amount of €1,230,651.67 in fines, referee's fees or personal guarantees, which were confiscated in favour of the Government of which the amount of €279,265.12 were appealed and €2,276 were revoked or cancelled. The amount of €81,013.28 was paid, while the amount of €639,794.51 was converted into a term of imprisonment since they were not paid. The amount of €228,302.76 is still outstanding and it is expected that judicial action be taken against defaulters in the coming year.

The Courts of Magistrates (Malta) inflicted the amount of €2,260,671.85 in fines, referee's fees or personal guarantees, which were confiscated in favour of the Government of which the sum of €523,304.86 was paid. €438,138.23 appealed and the amount of €24,78.40 converted into a prison term. The total amount of €64,814.71 was revoked or cancelled after a court decree. The amount of €1,209,735.65 is still outstanding and necessary action is to be taken during the coming year to retrieve this outstanding balance.

At the Criminal Courts (Superior), from previous years, the total amount of €1,439,725.41 is no longer due. In fact, the amount of €948,720.25 was written off due to the demise of the persons concerned, the

amount of €9,105.64 was revoked or cancelled by a court decree, €383,737.18 were converted into a term of imprisonment, and the amount of €98,162.34 was collected during this year.

At the Magistrates' Court (Malta), from previous years, the total amount of €1,542,603.91 is no longer due. In fact the amount of €6,876.12 was written off as the persons concerned died, the amount of €32,196.19 was appealed, the amount of €24,332.59 was revoked or cancelled by a court decree, €245,087.67 were converted into a term of imprisonment, and the amount of €1,234,111.34 was collected during this year. Sending monthly intimation letters to defaulters, taking court action and liaison with the Commissioner of Police to execute conviction tickets, yielded positive results. The Registrar regularly files applications in court so that the Court converts the unpaid fines/referee fees/personal guarantee into terms of imprisonment or detention. During the year, over 1,353 applications were filed and 2,162 conviction tickets were issued and handed over to the Commissioner of Police for execution.

REGISTRY - COURTS OF CRIMINAL JURISDICTION

During the year, the Registry handled the following acts:

Filed by	Amount	Revenue, where Applicable
Malta Police		
Application	873	
Replies	209	
Notes	830	
Note of Submissions	13	
Note of Observation	7	
Note of Appeal	183	
Note of Reply	2	
Reports	4	
Total	2,121	
Court Registrar		
Applications	424	
Application Conversion of Fines	1353	
Note of Reply	85	
Total	1,862	
Probation Services		
Note	536	
Report	124	
Applications	88	
Replies	5	
Statements	7	
Total	760	
Welfare Department		
Note	1	
Total	1	
Attorney General		
Applications	188	
Application re Appeals	132	
Reply	558	
Extension of time limits	219	
Note	85	
Others	23	
Note of Reply	7	
Note of Submissions	5	
Application by Jurors	4	
Total	1,221	
General Public		
Affidavits	2,776	€18,642.79
Schedule of Deposit	341	€627,822.92
Applications	4,915	€1,288.23
Applications – Appeal	453	€1,076.38
Applications re Jurors	811	No Charge

Reports	4	€0.46
Replies	108	€18.21
Note	743	€163.87
Note of Submissions	52	€17.77
Note of Pleas	15	€3.70
Note of Observations	13	€2.30
Reply	8	€1.84
Legal Copies	201	€1,513
Notifications	8	€48.72
Total	10,448	

Money Confiscated in favour of Government	182 transactions	€42,575.56
Prison Permits	930	

The Annex to the Registry handled the following transactions:

Services – Transactions – Records – Documentation	
Withdrawal of Schedule of Deposits	258
Police Reports	888
Additional Police Reports	173
<i>Procès Verbaux</i> , Court Files, and Applications to the Attorney General	7,062
<i>Procès Verbaux</i> , Court Files and Replies to Applications from the Attorney General	5,984
Suspended Sentences – Courts of Magistrates	438
Suspended Sentences – Superior Courts	29
Sentences over 1 year imprisonment – Courts of Magistrates	151
Sentences over 1 year imprisonment – Superior Courts	82

Two Deputy Registrars at the Annex to the Registry under the supervision of the Director/Registrar continued with the complex task of assessing the fees and expenses incurred by and awarded to Court Experts. During 2011, the total sum of €1,029,08022 was assessed to various court experts.

CRIMINAL CASES

Courts of Magistrates (Malta) -Criminal Jurisdiction

	Introduced	Decided	Pending
Summary Proceedings	406	423	1,161
Compilations	1,465	1,465	3,082
Inquiries	908	963	1,443
Customs	8	23	86
Eco Tax	121	98	41
VAT	2,155	1,981	910
Health	124	180	222
ETC	412	408	77
Dep. of Labour & Emigration	145	171	119
Admin. Law Enforcement	338	349	21
Planning Authority	0	24	65
Traffic	1,057	1,097	650
Collisions	407	382	271
Districts	6,653	5,922	4,032
Minors	101	116	22
Health & Safety	78	91	15
Family Court	1,686	1,547	262
Letters of Request	31	36	7
Libel Criminal	11	3	14
Breach of Bail Conditions	12	13	6
Income Tax	759	909	349
Total	16,877	16,201	12,855

Criminal Courts (Superior)

	Introduced	Decided	Pending
Trials by Jury	28	55	94
Court of Criminal Appeal (Inferior)	538*	355*	606
Court of Criminal Appeal (Superior)	36	15	52
Total	602	425	752

*The introduced and decided cases before the Court of Criminal Appeal includes also appealed cases from judgements given by the Courts of Magistrates Gozo. In such case, the Court of Criminal Appeal holds its sittings in Gozo.

GOZO COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

ORGANISATION OF THE GOZO COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

As from 1 June, 2011, following the appointment of two new Magistrates in Malta and on the appointment of one of the Magistrates as Judge in Malta, there was a re-assignment of duties among some members of the Judiciary. One of these new Magistrates substituted the Magistrate who was appointed Judge in Malta, while the other Magistrate substituted the Magistrate taking cognisance of Criminal Jurisdiction cases. However, the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) in its Civil Jurisdiction continues to be made up of two resident Magistrates working on a roster of one week each and taking cognisance of all acts filed during the proceedings of the cases assigned to them, as well as prohibitory injunctions. One of these Magistrates also takes cognisance of acts presented in the Court of Voluntary Jurisdiction. Family Court cases are dealt with equally by the two Magistrates. The two Magistrates are also duty magistrates for the Islands of Gozo and Comino. They thus also hold magisterial inquiries and carry out preliminary investigations. Another Magistrate from the Courts in Malta takes cognisance of criminal cases.

REGISTRY

During 2011, there was a significant increase in acts filed in the Registry, with the exception of schedules of deposit and legal protests/counter protests. The table below shows the number of acts filed in the Registry during 2011.

Type of Act	Acts Filed
Judicial Letters (excl. sect. 166A & 253 COCP)	830
Judicial Letters in terms of Sect. 166A (COCP)	235
Judicial Letters in terms of Sect. 253 (COCP)	14
Schedules of Deposit	340
Legal Protests/Counter Protests	62
Applications/Replies in lawsuits (application program)	2,535
Acts filed by the Attorney General	41

COURT OF MAGISTRATES

The case-load of the Gozo Court of Magistrates, in its various jurisdictions, (Civil) was as follows:

Jurisdiction	Introduced cases	Decided cases	Withdrawn/ceded/deserted cases	Pending cases as at 31/12/2011
Inferior	13	18	6	72
Superior (General Section) (Sworn applications only)	123	94	50	510
Superior (Voluntary Jurisdiction Section)	94	92	0	55
Superior (Family Section) (Sworn applications only)	33	38	12	33
Applications in terms of Sec. 258, 281(1), 466	29	23	7	43

and 836 of Chapter 12: Sec. 402 of Act XXX/1995, and other Laws of Malta				
Applications in terms of Section 13 (3) of Chapter 354 (General Elections Act, 1991), wherein the magistrate acts as Revising Officer	3	0	0	22

The downward trend in the number of pending cases in the Inferior and Superior (General Section) jurisdictions continued this year, except for the Voluntary Jurisdiction Section, which experienced a slight increase. An increase was also registered in applications relating to the General Elections Act.

FAMILY COURT (MEDIATION STAGE)

The family cases which end up before the Court of Magistrates, Superior Jurisdiction (Family Section) are shown in the table above.

At mediation stage, the number of letters registered was 85. This number includes 46 letters for mediation, 21 applications (*rikorsi f' medjazzjoni*) and include all types of requests be they maintenance, custody, access to children or other ancillary matters. The 85 letters include also 18 conjunct notes. By the end of 2011, there were 83 decrees concerning pending letters at mediation stage. There were seven letters that were withdrawn, ending with 61 pending letters.

SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL

This Tribunal takes cognisance of cases involving money claims of an amount not exceeding €3,494.06. There were 34 new cases introduced and two cases were referred from the Tribunal in Malta. 48 cases were decided and no cases were referred to the Tribunal in Malta, while 11 cases were ceded and one deserted. One of the newly-introduced cases includes one relating to the European Small Claims Procedure, the first one of its kind at the Gozo Courts. This Tribunal has 25 pending cases.

The five-year term of the adjudicator presiding over the Small Claims Tribunal in Gozo expired on 23 October and was substituted by another advocate practicing in Gozo.

COURT OF MAGISTRATES AS A COURT OF CRIMINAL JUDICATURE/CRIMINAL INQUIRY AND MAGISTERIAL INQUIRIES

Criminal offences and contraventions punishable with a maximum of six months imprisonment are heard by the Court of Magistrates as a Court of Criminal Judicature (*Kawzi Sommarji*). During 2011, the case-load of this Court was as illustrated below, while that of the same Court relating to the preceding year is included to show the significant increase in the number of new cases.

Year	Introduced	Decided	Put off <i>sine die</i>	Re-appointed from <i>sine die</i>	Withdrawn	Pending
2010	1,027	907	85	0	118	784
2011	940	1,126	71	0	159	368

Figures below give an overview of cases in front of the Court of Magistrates as a Court of Criminal Inquiry. No case was transmitted to the Attorney General for the issue of a bill of indictment. The figures for the previous year are shown for comparison.

Year	Introduced	Decided	Put off <i>sine die</i>	Re-appointed from <i>sine die</i>	Withdrawn	Deserted	Pending
2010	118	83	2	0	5	6	197
2011	121	76	1	0	46	4	191

The table below relates to Magisterial Inquiries. It should be pointed out that introduced cases refer also to those cases regarding which a report by a Court-appointed expert is produced. Figures from the previous year are shown for comparison with those of the year under review.

Year	Introduced	Concluded	Pending at end of year
2010	133	109	363
2011	39	55	347

JUVENILE COURT

During the period under review, this Court had nine new cases introduced, decided ten and ended with four pending cases. There were 14 sittings of this Court, which were held at the NGO Centre in the limits of Xewkija.

COURT OF APPEAL

With sittings held approximately once every two months, the Court of Appeal (Civil Inferior) takes cognisance of appeals from decisions of the Rent Regulation Board, the Rural Leases Control Board and the Small Claims Tribunal besides those of the Court of Magistrates (Inferior Jurisdiction, Civil). It also hears appeals from other Administrative boards which hold sittings in Gozo. This Court had 21 newly-introduced cases, decided 15 and had 11 pending cases at the end of the year.

Appeals from judgments of the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) in its Civil Superior Jurisdiction are heard by the Court of Appeal in Malta.

The Court of Criminal Appeal (Inferior Jurisdiction) also holds sittings in Gozo. By the end of 2011, it decided 18 cases, had 33 newly introduced ending with 17 pending cases. Eight cases were ceded, while no cases were referred back to the Inferior Court. There were three abstentions.

The Gozo Court Registry is also designated as the Registry of the Court of Criminal Appeal regarding appeals filed from judgments of the Court of Magistrates as a Court of Criminal Judicature in Gozo.

Administrative Review Tribunal

This recently set up Tribunal, presided by a Magistrate from the Courts in Malta, holds regular sittings at the Gozo Courts.

Boards

This recently set up Tribunal, presided by a Magistrate from the Courts in Malta, holds regular sittings at the Gozo Courts.

Board	Introduced cases	Decided cases	Withdrawn/ceded/deserted cases	Pending cases as at 31/12/2011
Rent Regulation Board	4	3	1	17
Rural Leases Control Board	2	2	0	20

Legal Aid

Three Gozitan lawyers serve as Official Curators and Advocates for Legal Aid at the Gozo Courts and Tribunals.

Judicial Sales/Licitations

At the beginning of the year, there were 43 pending judicial sales, 12 were concluded while 11 were rendered as having been deserted and 36 were withdrawn. There were 58 new applications for judicial sale/licitation filed during 2011, ending with 42 pending cases. Out of these 42 pending cases, seven are scheduled for hearing before one of our Magistrates, 12 are suspended and would be rendered deserted after the passage of one year, the judicial sale of one of them was appointed for 2012, six are awaiting an application by lawyers for re-appointment, while 12 of them lack further instructions from lawyers and/or creditors.

Since last year, notices and site plans regarding appointed judicial sales are viewable online on the MJHA website and this has eased demands by the public on court staff.

Scanning

This Directorate continued with its pilot project initiated in 2008 of scanning all acts concerning new cases registered since the beginning of January 2010 for both magistrates working in the Court of Magistrates (Gozo), in its Civil Jurisdiction, Inferior and Superior Jurisdictions.

The scanned acts relating to new cases introduced during 2011 of both magistrates are then linked to the LECAM system and include acts presented by lawyers during sittings.

Information Technology and e-government

The directorate continues with its endeavour to increase the use of e-government in the delivery of its services for the benefit of the legal profession and the public in general.

Copies of taxed bills and of transcription of evidence are being automatically sent to lawyers and to parties in lawsuits upon request, while the Judicial Assistant continues to send copies of his records (*verbali*) and postponement of (his) sittings to lawyers through e-mail.

Monitors were placed on the judiciary's bench of the two main halls, allowing the Judge or Magistrate to view the writings of the deputy registrar assisting him/her during the sitting. This facilitates the communication between the member of the Judiciary and his deputy registrar, and ensures the correctness of what is being recorded.

Video-conferencing

The internal video-conferencing equipment of the main Hall continued to be used in criminal cases involving witnesses who were minors and/or victims of rape or abuse.

Through funds allocated by the Ministry for Gozo, new internal video-conference/recording equipment was installed at the NGO Centre where Juvenile Court sittings are held.

In 2011, further requests for connection with parties in cases residing abroad using either SKYPE or POLYCOM systems were entertained.

Staff Training

Staff members are continuously encouraged to attend IT courses organised by the Centre for Development, Research and Training (CDRT) in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo. Officers also attended other courses organised by CDRT, MISCO and MEDIACOOP, both in Malta and in Gozo.

Book-binding

The backlog in the Book-binding section was resolved by assigning these duties to a General Hand who was assigned with this directorate to perform cleaning and messengerial duties. This resulted in a cost-effective solution for the directorate, as outsourcing would have cost some €35 to €45 per volume. Since the coming into force of this arrangement in October, 47 volumes were bound.

School Visits

Two school visits for Form IV and Form V students were organised in 2011 by the Courts of Justice Department, the Office of the Chief Justice and the Directorate for Educational Services. The students were shown around the Law Courts and addressed by a member of the Judiciary, following which they were given a historical overview of the Courts in Gozo by the Judicial Assistant.

Collection of Revenue

Revenue at the Courts of Justice is generated in a two-fold manner - through fees paid when filing acts at the registry and the relevant registry fees collected once a case is decided, or ceded and through the collection of fines inflicted by the Courts.

During 2011, a total of 1,054 taxed bills were drawn up, in their majority regarding decided cases. The amount of revenue generated from registry fees amounted to €300,352.89 while that from fines totalled €365,332, bringing the total revenue to €665,684.89 an increase of €146,993.89 over the previous year

The following fines were inflicted by the courts:

Court inflicting fine	No of fines	Amount rounded up/down to nearest €
Court of Criminal Appeal	12	111,294
Court of Magistrates (Criminal Jurisdiction)	579	253,579
Other court divisions/tribunals & contempt of court	8	460
Total	599	365,333

KEVIN MAHONEY

Director General (Courts of Justice)

Department of Probation Services

PREPARATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ACT

In 2011, the objectives of the Probation Services were revised in preparation for the implementation of the new functions to be devolved with the coming into force of the Restorative Justice Act (Cap. 516) that was enacted in December 2011. The impact of the new legislation on the Probation Services were twofold: (a) on an administrative level, the Probation Services were to be separate and distinct from the Correctional Services, and for this purpose these services were to be transferred to the newly established Department of Probation and Parole, thus necessitating the need to obtain the necessary human and financial resources to implement the new functions; and (b) on a legislative level, the department was to assume the responsibilities of the Parole and Victim Support functions in addition to the Probation services.

The main focus of the Probation Services during 2011 was the putting in place of an adequate risk assessment and risk management strategy, following a pilot project initiated in the last quarter of 2010. Assessment tools were selected and the care plan was given a new standardised format. As a result, as from 1 September 2011, Probation Officers started using the established risk assessment and risk management tools to all new post-sentencing cases.

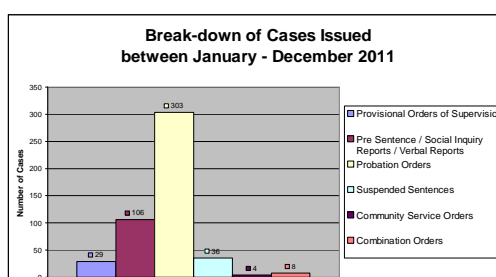
The year 2011 was also significant because it paved the way for an important milestone, ie the formation of the Department of Probation and Parole that was to be set up with effect from 1 January 2012. The Probation Services focused its efforts on the administrative as well as the technical aspects in preparation for the establishment of this new Department.

Moreover, the Probation Services, being one of the major stakeholders in the Criminal Justice System, also participated in the discussions following the publication of the Restorative Justice Bill (Bill No 73). This also led to on-going collaborations with the Institute of Criminology within the University of Malta, which is the main provider of training to probation officers. In-service training was also provided by the Probation Services in collaboration with the Institute regarding the Community Service Order and the operational standards applicable.

STATISTICAL DATA

During 2011, the Probation Services received a total of 486 new cases from the Courts of Law of Malta and Gozo, a 16% increase over the year 2010. Graph 1 below gives a break-down of these cases.

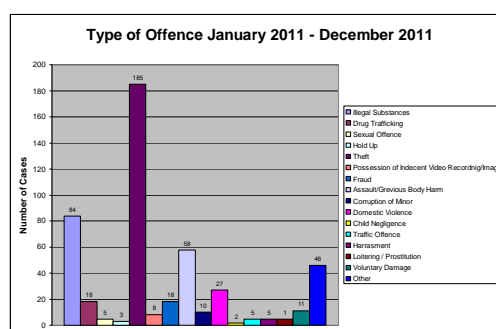
Graph 1



The cases at the post-sentencing stage, increased by 15%, when compared to the previous year's. On 31 December 2010, the Unit was handling a total of 880 active cases distributed among a Senior Probation Officer, carrying a reduced caseload due to other duties, and 15 Probation Officers.

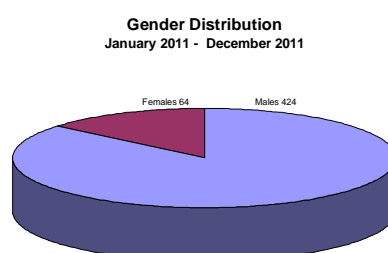
The offences dealt with by Probation Officers during 2011 were varied. Graph 2 gives a graphical illustration of the type of offences processed by the Probation Services. The predominant offence proved to be theft, as has been the case in previous years. In fact this figure was higher by 40% in 2011 when compared to 2010. This same illustration also shows that, for the fourth year running, there was a considerable increase in the number of violent offenders referred to the Probation Services, more specifically, cases of grievous bodily harm or assault and domestic violence. In 2011, a 38% increase was registered in such cases over the year 2010. Moreover, in 2011, the court hearing drug cases started to reconvene and this impacted heavily on referral of drug possession cases. With regards to drug trafficking, a 50% increase was also noted.

Graph 2



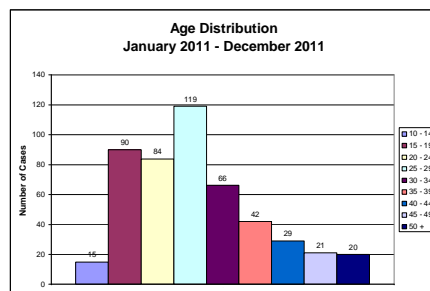
In terms of gender, Graph 3 shows that during the year under review, of those referred to the Probation Services, 64 cases concerned female offenders, whereas 424 cases concerned male offenders. This indicates that the 18% increase in caseload mainly consisted of male offenders.

Graph 3



In terms of age distribution of offenders, the highest proportion of offenders who benefited from our services fell in the 25 to 29 years age bracket. This constituted 24% of the entire new cases for the year under review. In 2010, this figure stood at 14%. An increase could be noted in all age brackets. Also, in 2011, the youngest age bracket, the 10 to 14-year age group went up by 50% over the previous year. Graph 4 illustrates the age distribution of offenders during year under review.

Graph 4



In general, the shift noted in recent years to more difficult and demanding offenders has become even more pronounced. With regards to locality, this year, Cospicua yielded the highest percentage of our cases, with Qormi and Valletta trailing close behind.

Natalino Attard
Director (Probation and Parole)

Civil Protection Department

Acting under the provisions of the Civil Protection Act XV, 1999, the Civil Protection Department has continued to offer services in the field of disaster management to protect human lives, property and the environment. Furthermore, the Department also embarked on initiatives to coordinate humanitarian aid efforts towards those communities which were hit by disasters.

INTERVENTIONS

An Assistance and Rescue Force, which is set up under the umbrella of the Civil Protection Department, operates with the sole purpose of maintaining an adequate service for prompt intervention in case of an emergency, whether occurring on land or at sea. This Force, which is made up of a total staff complement of 113, operates from six different stations in Malta and one in Gozo. The members of this Force have to deal with everyday operations, ranging from domestic fires and rescue interventions to specialised tasks, such as hazardous substance control and technical diving operations. In 2011, the Assistance and Rescue Force of the Department was called to assist in a total of 5,330 operations. A breakdown of interventions which were effected by the Department during the year in review is shown at Appendix A.

There is also a volunteer unit within the Department which is made up of 41 volunteers. The scope of this volunteer unit is to carry out support duties during intervention operations both locally and abroad. During 2011, these volunteers assisted the Department in a number of rescue and fire fighting operations.

As with preceding years, the Department had to respond to a number of calls which turned out to be false alarms amounting to 167. Although this constitutes a decrease of 63 cases over the previous years, mainly due to the better use of systems caller identification, the number still represents a major concern for the Department. Hoax calls do not only contribute to wastage of resources, but may also be detrimental to other ongoing operations due to the fact that vital resources may not readily be available for particular interventions.

HUMANITARIAN AID

Forming part of a wider European network of civil protection, the Department is committed to provide assistance to other member states of the EU and third countries. This network facilitates the solidarity process that exists between member states to assist any particular EU country affected by a disaster.

The year in review was characterised by the political instability that reigned over the North African region. This greatly affected the business concern of the Department to focus largely on humanitarian relief operations for most of the year to assist those who were affected by the turmoil in Libya. At the same time, provisions were made so that the Department would be able to provide additional support in a possible case of a huge influx of immigrants from this region.

In this regard, arrangements were made with the International Federation of the Red Cross and the United Nations Humanitarian Relief Commission, to stock a considerable amount of humanitarian relief material for displaced populations at the Civil Protection Department. Furthermore, alterations were carried out at the Humanitarian Aid Section to offer a flexible solution to those emerging needs that were evolving during the Libya crises.

During the crises, the Department was actively involved in the setting up and managing of reception facilities to host third country nationals who were returning back to their home countries from Libya. More than 16,000 persons passed through these facilities within a span of a few days, during which a total of more than 7,000 food rations were prepared and distributed by the Department to same during their transit in Malta.

In order to better assist the displaced populations, six Airmalta flights were operated to expatriate displaced third country nationals from Djerba to Cairo, Lagos, Niamey and Accra airports. The Civil Protection Department was instrumental to apply for 50% reimbursement of the total cost of transport through the relevant financial instrument of the EU civil protection mechanism.

Members from this Department also participated in a mission to expatriate over 600 displaced Libyans from Tunisia to Misrata and Benghazi by sea. Moreover, members from the same Department were involved in three other missions in Libya to transport 350 tonnes of drinking water to Tripoli and perform assessment missions in Tripoli and Misrata.

During the crises, the Department acted as a hub to ship humanitarian relief material from various countries to Libya. In this sense, the Humanitarian Section of the Department was once again altered to allow the storage and passage of these goods in a streamlined manner. This attracted organisations like the World Food Programme and Actavis, amongst others, to utilise these facilities.

TRAINING

The Department continued to support training initiatives both as part of the principal business concern and as part of the social activities for its employees.

A number of training initiatives were launched to ensure the continuous development of both full-time members and volunteers of the Civil Protection Department. An in-house training programme was set for all members of the Assistance and Rescue Force during winter to review best practices in rescue and fire fighting operations.

Volunteers of the Civil Protection Department had the opportunity to run simulation exercises of an earthquake accident at the ex-Hal Ferh tourist village. Throughout these exercises, civil protection volunteers had the opportunity to put into practice those skills they had acquired overseas thanks to EU training programmes. Furthermore, the Department organised a national exercise involving full time members and volunteers of the Civil Protection Department and a number of non-government organisations which usually support this Department. The training objective was to test the interoperability techniques among agencies in events of disasters.

Both volunteers and full-time members of the Civil Protection Department had the opportunity to attend EU organised courses in the field of civil protection.

The newly revamped Divers section within the Department also intensified its training programme by introducing its members into a more advanced technical diving techniques. Regular training in indoor pool facilities were also introduced for the Divers team to increase their skills in life saving and swimming techniques.

Training in Italy

As in the previous year, in 2011 the Civil Protection Department conducted two training programmes in the southern part of Italy. This could take place thanks to the Memorandum of Understanding which was signed by the Italian *Gruppo Operativo della Protezione Civile Edelweiss* and this end. With this agreement, members of the Maltese Civil Protection provided training to the Italian civil protection team.

Furthermore, a number of volunteers and members of the Civil Protection Department had the opportunity to perform training in the region of Calabria.

Procurement of Equipment

In order to enhance its capability to deal with different kinds of emergencies, the Department procured a number of specialised equipment to enhance its rescue capabilities in situations of collapsed structures, divers rescue and fire fighting. An ex-MOD all-terrain truck and a new fire-fighting module were procured to enhance the capabilities of the Department to deal with bush fires.

PATRICK MURGO

Director (Civil Protection)

Department of Correctional Services

INTRODUCTION OF THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The Correctional Services are an important part of the Maltese justice system. The traditional notion of prison established, circa 1850, was that criminals were to be physically separated from the general public in order to enforce control on them with the use of surveillance. The Department's mission is to protect society by confining those committed by the courts, in a controlled, safe and secure environment. The CCF provides for a humane, just and restorative correctional system, and promotes a rational approach to criminal justice issues. CCF also provides self-improvement opportunities to assist offenders to integrate back into society. Hence, the motto *Suavis Ex Aspero* – 'Firm but Fair'.

The Correctional Services Department incorporates the following services: medical services, psychological services, spiritual services, educational services, welfare services, probation services, the Young Offenders Unit of Rehabilitation Services (YOURS) unit, two female divisions, and other services that are not housed within the CCF precinct, namely the Substance Abuse Therapeutic Unit (SATU) at Mtaħleb and the Forensic Unit for psychiatric and mental health services annexed to Mt Carmel Hospital. The correctional staff has dwindled down to 180 officers, whereas the inmate population has remained in the high 500s.

As from 24 November 2011, the Probation Services was placed under a new headship in order to handle both probationers and future parolees. The Probationary Services will incorporate three main units, the Probation Unit, the Parole Unit and the Victim-Support Unit. The proposed new structure will provide a clear delineation between the probation (including the new Parole and Victim-support) services and the correctional services

During the year, many consultation sessions were held with the various entities concerned while the bill was passed through parliament. The new Act incorporates a reformed remission of sentence system, apart from the Parole system and victim support measures.

The concept of Restorative Justice is based on the notion that crime affects not only the victim and the perpetrator, but also society, the victim/perpetrator's family, and those tasked with the monitoring of the prisoner in custody. The Correctional Services are required to provide the necessary care and adequate programmes aimed at reforming the inmate for re-integration back into society on release. 2011 was a very busy year for the Correctional Services, one that saw the Restorative Justice system become an Act.

REORGANISATION OF THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

The new Correctional Services organisational structure is based on four main sections, namely: HR, Finance and Administration Section, Care and Re-Integration Section, Operations Section and Security Section.

The HR, Finance and Administration headship was set at Assistant Directorship level and an Assistant Director was appointed mid-2011. The other three sections are now manned by Correctional managers appointed early 2011. The Director Correctional Services was official appointed mid-2011.

A capacity building exercise took place, identifying the vacant posts that needed to be filled in, including professional staff and posts at Assistant Manager and supervisory level, as well as clerical support for the

proposed new Boards, namely the Parole Board, the Offender Assessment Board, and the Remissions Board. The need to strengthen the middle management structure at CCF and the Probation Services is, therefore, quite apparent in order to effectively and efficiently implement the new restorative justice measures.

PRISON INMATES – 2011 STATISTICS

The prison inmate population reached the highest record during the year under review. On 1 March 2011, the facility population soared to 611 inmates (sentenced and awaiting trial). The total number of prison inmates exceeded that of 2010 by 64 inmates.

During 2011, the turnover of prison inmates was of 630, of whom 248 were sentenced prisoners and 382 under arrest. Tables 1 to 3 below provide a breakdown of prisoners in terms of sex, crimes committed and nationality.

Table 1: Prisoners entering CCF during 2011

Sentenced	Total	Arrested	Total
Maltese Males	150	Maltese Males	231
Maltese Females	20	Maltese Females	21
Foreign Males	75	Foreign Males	118
Foreign Females	3	Foreign Females	12
Total	248	Total	382

NB. A prisoner may be listed in more than one category

Table 2: Sentenced prisoners categorised according to crime*

Type of Crime	No of Prisoners
Intentional arson	2
Intentional damage	2
Prostitution	7
Homicide and attempted homicide	13
Serious Injury	1
Breach of Probation Order	32
Fraud	9
Escape from custody	10
Sexual Offences	11
Falsification	5
Keeping of a person against his will	2
Threats	11
Breach of conditions of the bail	32
Human trafficking and illegal immigration	48
Other Offences	20
Conversion of fine to imprisonment	65
Drug abuse	80
Theft	110
Slight Injury	1
Total	461

*The list includes also those prisoners who were kept under arrest at CCF before 2009 and who were sentenced during 2011.

Table 3: Prisoners admitted to CCF in 2011 - by nationality

Country	Arrested	Sentenced
Algeria	1	0
Australia	0	1
Bulgaria	2	1
Burkina Faso	1	0
Congo	1	1
Egypt	4	0
Eritrea	4	0
Estonia	4	0

Ethiopia	3	5
Gambia	2	0
Germany	1	0
Ghana	0	1
Guinea	1	0
Hungary	1	0
Iraq	1	1
Italia	8	2
Ivory Coast	4	11
Latvia	2	0
Liberia	0	1
Libya	9	3
Lithuania	1	0
Mali	14	14
Maltese	252	170
Morocco	1	0
Niger	2	3
Nigeria	4	15
Palestine	1	0
Poland	4	0
Portugal	0	1
Rumania	10	0
Russia	2	0
Serbia	1	0
Slovakia	1	0
Somalia	10	8
South Korea	1	0
Sri Lanka	1	0
Sudan	8	0
Switzerland	1	0
Syria	6	1
Togo	1	4
Tunisia	2	0
Ukraine	0	1
United Kingdom	9	2
United States of America	1	2
Total	382	248

Note: An individual may have been admitted more than once.

RE-HOUSING OF MEDICAL SERVICES

During 2012, works carried out by inmates and officer-tradesmen were concluded at the Medical Infirmary room. The new premises comprises of a reception area, the pharmacy and medical examination cubicles, the nurse area as well as a new dentistry clinic. The latter will eliminate the need to escort prisoners outside CCF for treatment. This service is being rendered following the installation of the dentistry chair and dentists' service acquired from the Department of Health.

SERVICE ROAD LEADING TO THE FORENSIC UNIT

During the year under review, CCF upgraded the access road to the Forensic Unit (Mt Carmel Hospital) since it was in a very bad state.

ARTIFICIAL TURF FOOTBALL GROUNDS

On 5 July 2011, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs was invited to open and inaugurated the new turf football pitch. Again, most of the works were carried out by inmates. The CCF can now boast of having its own seven-aside football pitch, including showers and bleachers. A number of games were played against guest teams. The CCF inmate team always distinguished and acquitted itself with honour.

UPGRADING OFFICERS MESS

Works were carried out to upgrade the correctional officers' mess.

WORK BY INMATES

A number of trusted inmates are involved in carrying out maintenance work within the CCF precincts. These are varied and include construction, electrical, plumbing, bakery, gardening, office support and other services last but certainly not the least the upkeep of the drainage system.

WORKS CARRIED

Apart from the aforesaid turf football pitch and its environment, the works were carried out on the following in 2011:

- passage way from Football ground leading to Division 5;
- paving of walkway all the way from the stores leading to the bakery gate;
- installing of new drains in cells in Division 3;
- increased security features at the Law courts Police lock-up;
- tracing of entrance to underground water reservoir to re-use stored water from Female A Division to water football pitch artificial turf;
- refurbishing of office to be used by the newly setup Inmates Services Unit;
- the MI room and psychologists' and social worker offices and area;
- refurbishing of SCO office at Female A Division
- alterations at the new medical location unit.

Given the successful venture in collaboration between CCF and a toy manufacturer for the assembly of toys by prison inmates within the facility, the CCF is looking at new prospects to enhance prison industry. At this point in time around 166 inmates are involved in this venture. The work schedule and logistics are coordinated by a senior correctional officer. Payment to these inmates is effected by the contractor and inmates work on a five-week basis, thus having a system that gives the opportunity to any inmate to take part in this work activity.

WORKS IN AID OF CHARITY

On a number of occasions the CCF help has been sought and both officers and inmates once again rose to the occasion. Works, masonry, plastering, pointing, plumbing, electrical, etc, were carried out at the Paola Girl Guides HQ and on behalf of or in collaboration with Puttinu Cares. A number of fund-raising activities, such as car washes and selling of rolls during Easter time, were also held in aid of Puttinu Cares and the Malta Community Chest Fund.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE THERAPEUTIC UNIT (SATU) ACTIVITIES

The number of inmates at SATU was whittled down due to the introduction of the Restorative Justice system. The programme thereat was redesigned to accept persons with addictive and behavioural problems. The refurbishing structural works are in progress. The programme design is intensive. One of the inmates at SATU participated in the annually held national half marathon.

Young Offenders Unit of Rehabilitation Services (YOURS)

During the last two months of the year, ten young offenders rehearsed for the Drama *When You Hear My Voice* under the direction of Mr Bruce Wall from the London Shakespeare Workout. The Drama is to be performed on 6 to 9 February 2012, under the auspices of the Ministry for Home and Parliamentary

Affairs in collaboration with St James Cavalier and the University of Malta. It is envisaged that thanks to a Norwegian Grant YOURS will be moved out of the CCF precincts.

IMPROVEMENT TO SECURITY

Blocking of Mobile phones and Internet of Inmate Personal Computers

Inmates at the facility can be granted the privilege to have a laptop in the cell. To minimise the possibility that of this tool being used for illegal communication with third parties outside prison, a new system of physically locking the USBs located on a laptop was acquired. This hardware is added at the admission of every new laptop and those already in use. Apart the USB lockers, in 2011 intensified efforts were made to carry out prison searches for illegal or illicit material or equipment. The blocking of mobile phone transmissions was looked into in the hope of being able to bar such use within the CCF precincts.

MAJOR ACTIVITY DURING 2011

In April 2011, a newly acquired Redeemer statue was blessed at the Paola Christ the King Parish Church by the Bishop of Gozo, assisted by the spiritual Director of the CCF, before a packed church. A number of inmates, in traditional white robes, carried the statue along the procession route from the Parish Church to the main gate of the CCF.

CONCLUSION

The year under review was a very busy year for the Correctional Services. In addition to the day-to-day administration and maintenance of the correctional facility (comprising 15 Divisions at CCF and SATU and Forensic unit outposts) and the provision of probationary services, the preparations for the introduction of restorative justice measures were actively underway. These preparations were necessary for the introduction of new measures and work processes that will be necessary to implement the Restorative Justice Act

ABRAHAM ZAMMIT

Director (Correctional Services)

**Ministry for Health, the Elderly
& Community Care**

Office of the Permanent Secretary

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES

The year 2011, was another year of changes and challenges for the Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care (MHEC). One of the major changes was that to its organisational structure. The legal separation of the policy function from the regulatory function was implemented through amendments to the Department of Health (Constitution) Ordinance. This change meant that the role of the Chief Medical Officer was separated, for the first time, from that of the Superintendent of Public Health.

The Superintendent of Public Health acts as the regulator and guardian of the public's health in Malta and it is his responsibility to ensure that the regulatory and public health protection functions emanating from the law are properly and effectively discharged. The Chief Medical Officer, as the Head of the Department of Health, assumed the role and responsibility as the main advisor to Government on health policy, service and clinical developments, funding and commissioning of services and care, entitlement, pharmaceutical policy, EU and international affairs and coordination of services.

The former position of Director General (Health Care Services) was suppressed, and the functions related therewith were delegated to the Management of the different hospitals and institutions falling under the remit of this Ministry.

Another important change which was implemented during 2011 was that all financial, administrative, procurement and supply functions were incorporated under the Financial Management and Control Division, headed by the DG (Financial Management and Control). This Division includes the original Financial Monitoring and Control Unit, the Administration, Procurement and Supplies (amalgamating the Central Procurement Unit, the former Government Pharmaceutical Health Services and the National Blood Transfusion Centre), and the Pharmacy of Your Choice.

Significantly important is also the consolidation of the service entities providing direct patient care into five entities, namely:

- Mater Dei Hospital (covering all secondary and tertiary acute health services, also including Sir Paul Boffa Hospital);
- Mental Health Services (including Mount Carmel Hospital, Community Mental Health and the Acute Psychiatric Unit);
- Rehabilitation Services (incorporating Rehabilitation Hospital Karin Grech);
- Elderly (including Community Services);
- Primary Health Care (also incorporating the National Screening Programme).

The above-mentioned organisational changes implemented by the Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care during 2011 reflect Government's overall policy of devolution, decentralisation and empowerment of management down to entity level. This organisational change is also another step closer to this Ministry's commitment to continue to move away from an integrated centralised organisational model to that of a contractual model, with the aim of creating a separation between the Commissioner of services from that of service provision. This change also means the implementation of the first step towards the fulfilling of the expectation that our service providers operate within an autonomous framework, with exclusive fiscal and clinical responsibility.

Another important milestone implemented in 2011 was the appointment of the Commissioner for Older Persons and the Designate Commissioner for Mental Health. This is a confirmation of this Ministry's commitment to focus on these two areas. The Commissioner for Older Persons is to focus on raising awareness of the interests of older persons and the Designate Commissioner for Mental Health given the clear mandate to strive to bring to fruition the enactment of a new Mental Health Act.

THE LIBYA CRISIS

The Libyan crisis was another important challenge faced by this Ministry and its various entities. The events as they unfolded meant that many of the entities falling under the remit of this Ministry had to come together to formulate a contingency plan and to take necessary action on the influx of evacuees and also a number of casualties. During this crisis, coordination was also at its best with the Government Contingency Centre, private health providers in Malta, non-governmental organisations, local suppliers and also foreign governments. Mention must be made of the professionals involved who collaborated and gave their support so as to make Malta's response possible. All professional and support staff worked excellently and with great pride and dedication to assist the evacuees arriving in Malta and to help these injured patients. It is important to state that the response by Malta did not impinge on the day to day running of our services and our only acute hospital.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Several projects progressed throughout 2011. Of particular mention is the focus this Ministry gave in 2011 to cancer related projects, such as the new Oncology Centre at Mater Dei Hospital, the publication of the National Strategy for the Cure of Cancer and the enhancement of the screening services.

Other policies and programmes which were implemented in 2011 and which should be given particular mention are the following:

- the implementation of various Private Partnership Agreements with the private sector through which various waiting lists were addressed;
- the implementation of the My Health Project whereby our clients have easier access to their health data, through their personal trusted doctor;
- the publication of the Sexual Health Policy; the Non-Communicable Disease Strategy and the Strategy against Obesity;
- further roll-outs of the POYC Scheme, such that more clients of this Ministry are receiving a personalised and more efficient service.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT UNIT

The Information Management Unit (IMU) leads this Ministry's ICT strategy, aimed to enhance service delivery standards. The primary focus of the IMU is the strategic direction and management of information management investment within this Ministry to ensure that data is translated into information as a resource.

NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE

The demand on the data network continued to grow rapidly with the implementation of various applications and is forecasted to further expand as new applications and services are rolled out within the Ministry.

A number of changes had to be implemented, including the provision of fibre optic cable, installation of ADSL backup equipment, routers, switches UPS units and equipment cabinets throughout the year. In addition, a number of network extensions have been implemented to enhance the service provision within the Ministry. Furthermore, ageing networking equipment is being gradually replaced with new

networking equipment aimed to improve bandwidth speed to meet the ever growing demands and expectations.

IMU has also been driving the SVPR Campus network project. The project's main aim is to set up local network infrastructure within SVPR. The first two phases of the project have been completed and subsequent phases are in their planning stage. It is envisaged that infrastructure will be extended to cover numerous blocks within the SVPR Campus.

FREE WI-FI SERVICES

IMU continued to offer the use of free Wi-Fi services within visitor areas at Mater Dei Hospital (MDH). Free Internet services are offered to both visitors and patients within the foyer area as well as within the Out-Patients Department.

IMU also continued to assist and maintain equipment for use by the public within all Government-owned day centres for the elderly. A total of 58 PCs and Wi-Fi Internet connections within all day centres have been set up. As a result, the elderly attending day centres have continued to make use of communication facilities through the use of these PCs and Internet connections.

CONSOLIDATION OF ICT SERVICES

In line with the Government's policy to consolidate all ICT services with the aim of reducing total cost of ownership, IMU embarked on the consolidation process of various ministerial services. IMU extended the consolidation to servers located within the Ministry. This consolidation process will continue in 2012 where it is deemed feasible.

A data consolidation project is in process whereby the IMU is analysing all MHEC Data (excluding MDH data), with the scope of: ensuring access rights and privileges; providing data sharing services where this is still lacking; and ensuring that all data is safely stored (relocated if necessary) within the Malta Information Technology Agency's (MITA) consolidated environment.

This project is coupled with a user reorganisation exercise through which internally the IMU would be in a position to formulate a clear picture of the services being availed of by the Ministry users, in terms of office automation.

TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

A number of technology upgrades were carried out within the Ministry through cost savings made by the IMU. Thus, a number of PCs and peripherals were replaced through the Desktop Services Agreement as part of an ongoing technology refresh programme. During the year, IMU was also responsible for the reviewing, monitoring and the approval of ICT requests submitted by the various departments and entities under the Ministry's portfolio.

INTERNAL OPERATIONAL PROCESS IMPROVEMENT AND STREAMLINING

The Information Management Unit also assessed a number of processes, in order to streamline and improve its operations processes, and to provide a better service to its users. It was actively involved in research and development, in order to provide technical consultancy and solutions and improve day to day operations. Areas that have been considered include:

- IMU Service request and procurement;
- CORP domain account password resets and provision of passwords via SMS directly to the user;
- ICT Project Management;
- eHealth Portal Content Management.

IT SYSTEMS

IMU continued to offer operational support and enhancement implementation support for various IT systems already in use. A number of initiatives were also considered for implementation resulting in the submission to the MITA for approval. IMU drafted an IT project submission proposal strategy for the maximisation of value, monitoring of IT system implementation and return on investment (ROI) measurement.

IT HARDWARE INVENTORY

A new IT Hardware inventory for all ICT equipment across all Health Departments (excluding MDH) is being compiled. The chosen solution is planned to be implemented throughout 2012 to revise and streamline inventory control procedures to:

- Standardise the contents of a Ministerial ICT equipment inventory database;
- Facilitate the task of maintaining an up to date Ministerial ICT Equipment Register;
- Ensure that more effective control is maintained;
- Ensure that continuous checks are made to detect losses and discrepancies in a timely manner.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

During 2011, IMU issued various policies, procedures and guidelines. The discussion and drafting process of other policies, procedures and guidelines also commenced. These policies, procedures and guidelines related to various subjects including, but not limited to:

- Social Media activity;
- Printing Equipment;
- Broadband Connectivity;
- Desktop Equipment (PCs and Laptops);
- ICT Equipment Procurement and Movement ICT.

ICT Equipment – Procurement

IMU issued an internal memo which targets the definition of the Unit's specific procurement procedures to determine procurement and contracting vehicles available to meet identified requirements. The clear definition of internal policies and procedures helps to ensure that procurement and contracting activities are processed accurately, consistently and in compliance with Government Procurement Regulations and potentially speed up the learning curve for employees undertaking such responsibilities. The adherence to such procedures also provides ICT Officers and IMU staff with more comprehensive information to better exercise their accountabilities.

PROJECTS

During 2011, IMU was assigned with the project management of various IT health-related initiatives and was also a key driver to initiate new projects.

National Screening Project

IMU continued to assist the National Screening Unit during the hand-holding stage and also coordinated and facilitated discussions with the respective stakeholders. The integration of the Breast Screening System (BSPM) and the Integrated Health Information Systems (IHIS) through Health Level Seven International Interoperability Standard (HL7) message exchange was a major development.

IMU was also a key reference during the requirements analysis exercise conducted prior to the implementation of Phase 2 of the Breast Screening System. The aim of the new phase of the project is to enhance the system's functionality with the introduction of the family history module. IMU was also a

catalyst during the rollout of IHIS1 within the Gozo General Hospital (GGH) (Symptomatic/Breast Screening GGH Mammography Workflow).

Medicines Entitlement Project

The Directorate for Pharmaceutical Policy and Monitoring (DPPM) embarked on an initiative to address the limitations of the current Schedule V system and also meet the objectives of the Schedule V Reform. The DPPM, in liaison with the IMU, assessed the limitations of the current IT system and subsequently compiled a project brief for the procurement of a new entitlement system. The project is currently in the tender document preparation stage.

Integrated Health Information Systems (IHIS 2)

Following the issuance of the IHIS2 tender by the MITA, IMU provided extensive technical input and feedback throughout the tender adjudication phase for the procurement of IHIS2 modules. The IHIS2 tender is currently in its adjudication stage and should be complete in 2012.

Human Resource and Finance System Implementation

During 2011, IMU was also involved in the negotiation and provision of the necessary Private Runtime hosting environments for the deployment of HR Systems within Primary Health Care and Sir Paul Boffa Hospital (SPBH).

IMU has also been driving the provision of a robust, resilient, fault-tolerant and scalable environment for the deployment of financial applications currently in use across health. It is envisaged that the hosting environment will be available by 2012.

eHealth Portal

During 2011, IMU steamrolled a joint initiative with the Ministry for Gozo and the Ministry for Education, Employment and Family with the aim to migrate and deploy the Ministries' web presences with their respective Content Management System (CMS) onto a single MITA Private Runtime Environment (PRE) in order to minimise recurrent costs and consequently share computing resources. Through the PRE infrastructure, MITA enables contractors to manage the assigned virtual resources, physically located within MITA data-centres. This initiative is in line with MITA ICT Strategy 2008-2010 to decentralise ICT business plans and systems. The strategy elicits the utilisation of PRE infrastructure for the deployment of non-core applications.

IMU also assisted the Postgraduate Medical Training Centre to provide access to the EBSCO (Online Journals) site. An audit exercise on all the Portal's web pages was initiated and conducted. During this year IMU also performed numerous content migrations from the *sahha.gov.mt* site to the *eHealth.gov.mt* Portal. The *www.health.gov.mt* has been decommissioned.

Healthy Living Site

IMU, together with the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, continued to develop and implement the Healthy Living site. The site is aimed at providing relevant information to citizens on various healthy topics (e.g. nutrition, physical activity, skin and body care). The Healthy Living Site was launched in 2011.

Primary Health Care Scheduling System (PHCSS)

In order to relieve undue pressure on pharmacists and provide citizens with an improved service through Health Centres, Primary Health Care embarked on a new initiative to address the drug pickup distribution. To minimise the capital costs to be incurred by the Government, an assessment of the Breast Screening Scheduling System was undertaken. It was established that the Breast Screening scheduling system could be re-used to fulfil Primary Health Care's scheduling requirements. Minor customisations to the existing System were undertaken to re-utilise the Scheduling system within the Health Centres Pharmacies currently dispersed drugs to the community. The Scheduling System was rolled out during the third quarter of the year.

myHealth Record

During 2011, the eHealth (Strategy and Projects) Office carried out extensive work on the design and implementation of the myHealth Record System, which will enable patients and their doctors to gain access to key parts of personal health records through any computer connected to the internet.

In the first phase, which will be launched early in 2012, patients will be provided access to their Case Summaries and will be in a position to submit requests to doctors to act as their doctors within myHealth. Doctors would in turn be granted access to the citizen's Case Summaries.

It is envisaged that through subsequent phases the following information will also be made available through the myHealth Portal: Laboratory Results; Radiology Reports; Appointment notifications; Patient Medication Entitlement.

Electronic Case Summary System

A strategy was formulated for the MDH Electronic Case Summary system to be extended to other Government hospitals and to consolidate it as the basis for a National Patient Summary. Works are currently in progress to further enhance the Electronic Case Summary to be used within all government health in-patient institutions.

Integrated Health Information System (IHIS) I

Further rollouts with respect to IHIS applications were undertaken. Following the successful implementation of iSoft's Clinical Manager Result Viewing, in 2011, IMU was involved in the rolling of iSoft's Clinical Manager Ordering module within a number of health sites.

IMU was also involved in the extension of IHIS services to the GGH, wherein the Laboratory Information System, the Radiology Information System as well as iSoft's Clinical Manager were implemented.

Home Help Project

The Elderly Department requested IMU's assistance to formulate the scope and eventually implement a system that can facilitate and streamline Home Help Office's business processes.

Health IS Applications - Access Using Tablet Devices from the Bedside Study

During 2011, IMU conducted a study to explore ways for providing access to health applications to clinicians from the bedside using tablet computing devices. IMU embarked on a research project aimed to determine whether this relatively new technology is effective and feasible to implement within the corporate health sector, particularly MDH. Following the decision taken by the Health IT Steering Group (HITSG) not to make use of the bedside terminals, managed by Melita within MDH, the Information

Management Unit was asked to investigate the possibility of investing in a wireless infrastructure within the wards and provide access to clinical applications to the clinicians at the bedside using tablet devices. A variety of tablet devices have been submitted to a series of usability tests. Some of these tablets were designed to be in use within the healthcare environment, others are primarily aimed at the consumer market. IMU conducted test sessions with some of the clinicians using these tablet devices in a test environment. During these sessions, information on usability and performance on the devices were gathered and a study was compiled presenting the various options which are currently available to implement such a solution.

National Membership of the International Health Terminologies Standards Development Organisation (IHT SDO)

The eHealth (Strategy and Projects) Office made a formal application to the IHT SDO for National Membership. This was accepted. As a result, Malta can now use the SNOMED-CT terminology (Systematised Nomenclature of Medicine-Clinical Terms) in its healthcare systems. The Office also evaluated a number of SNOMED-CT browsers. Preparatory work was carried out for the setting up of the SNOMED-CT National Release Centre (NRC).

Corporate Health Data Management

Extensive work was carried out on a number of specialised health-related datasets, in particular those relating to medicinals. Work was also carried out on key datasets, such as the Medical Council Register.

Mater Dei Hospital Website Content Management

45 new pages were created in MDH website hosted on the Ministry's eHealth Portal, providing general information for the public, on subjects such as Bus Services, Visiting Hours, Telephone directory, MDH site maps and other information related to specific wards and clinics.

KURA

During 2011, the eHealth (Strategy and Projects) Office managed KURA (the MDH Intranet), which continued to serve as the premier internal source of hospital information, as evidenced by the steady growth in access, with a total number of 6,471,872 page views, equivalent to 17,731 page views per day, an increase of 24.7% over 2010. The peak Kura activity time during 2011 was registered as being between 08:00 and 10:00, with over 2,000 page views per hour within this time slot.

October 2011 saw the introduction of a more personalised feel to Kura by giving clients the facility to create shortcuts to their personal selection of content on KURA. Services provided through KURA continued to show a steady increase of usage over 2010. Medical Files requests service increased by 11.7% over 2010, with file requests via KURA amounting to 193,655; the use of Customer Care Request forms increased by 4.9%; 5,683 forms were logged into the Customer Care database.

EU Related Projects

epSOS – Smart Open Services for European Patients

epSOS (www.epsos.eu) is the EU's main eHealth project. It is a large-scale interoperability pilot that aims to improve the medical treatment of citizens travelling in the EU by providing health professionals with access to the patient's essential health data from their home country. The Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care is an associated partner in the project, and is fully engaged in its governance and implementation, in collaboration with MITA. During 2011, MHEC representatives regularly attended and

took part in all relevant project activities in Malta and in other EU Member States, in preparation for live piloting that is scheduled to start in 2012.

eHealth Governance

The eHealth (Strategy and Projects) Office also supported the EU's eHealth Governance Initiative. This contributes actively to the shaping of the eHealth political agenda at EU level. EU Member States aim at achieving interoperability and increasing the quality and efficiency of care by strengthening their cooperation to get support in how to deploy eHealth services also across borders.

Joint Action on Patient Registries (PARENT)

Another EU-related activity by the eHealth Governance Initiative Office was preparation for the Joint Action on Patient Registries (PARENT), which is scheduled to start in 2012. Its overall objective is to support Member States in developing comparable and coherent patient registries in fields where this need has been identified (e.g. chronic diseases, rare diseases, medical technology), with the aim of rationalising and harmonising the development and governance of patient registries, thus enabling analyses of secondary data for public health and research purposes.

Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information Project

An EU project which will require Member States to exchange social security and health related benefits in cash/kind electronically once the new IT system being developed by the European Commission and other third party companies is in place. The ultimate aim is to strengthen the protection of the social security rights of citizens who are mobile by fully computerising application of the EC law on social security and healthcare. This will in turn facilitate and speed up the decision-making process for the actual calculation and payment of benefits to citizens who move around Europe.

Even though the ICT system was planned to be implemented and fully operational in all Member States by 1 of May 2012, developments in the project led to an extension of the deadline to 1 of May 2014. 2011 was a busy year for the project during which the software has been continually developed by the contractor and released for the installation within an acceptance environment by the Member States. IMU is involved in the technical commission of the project and regularly attends meetings chaired by the presidential member state.

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

Development of the HR strategy continued to gain momentum in 2011, with a number of initiatives in line to HR plan. The key areas of attention focused on both employee relations and people resourcing which have been identified as critical areas to sustain the momentum in line with health strategy direction. HR has been instrumental in the establishment of manpower plan with other key stakeholders detailing human resources needs for the various health entities. Employee relations was characterised with various claims raised by unions and also opening of negotiations on a number of sectoral agreements.

Career Related Initiatives

The Human Resources Directorate participated in the Careers Convention held in November at the University of Malta. A stand representing the Public Service was set up and an MHEC HR representative was present throughout the whole week in order to give information regarding recruitment with the Ministry to the students. It is the intention of this Directorate to participate further in such events in the coming year.

Resourcing

- *Recruitment*: 64 Posts, nine positions and one call for a training course were issued, for which over 1,200 applications were received. This year saw an increase in the recruitment of third country nationals – a total of 109, of which 80 were nursing staff.
- *Progressions/appointments*: The table indicate the progressions/appointments processed in 2011:

Grade	Progression		Internal Appointments		External Appointments		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
General Service	16	8	1	0	0	0	25
Professional	1	1	1	0	54	56	113
Departmental	9	10	26	33	113	436	627
Industrial	2	0	12	0	0	0	14
Total	28	19	40	33	167	492	779

- *Terminations*: Details of terminations processed in 2011 are indicated below:

Grade	Resigned/Dismissed		Retired		Medical Grounds		Transferred		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
General Service	1	1	5	1	0	0	3	9	20
Professional	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	8
Technical	1	1	6	0	0	0	2	0	10
Departmental	4	2	11	5	1	0	7	5	35
Industrial	0	0	8	0	0	0	2	1	11
Total	9	8	30	6	1	0	14	16	84

- *Medical Boards*: The following table gives information regarding the medical board requests processed in 2011 for all the Public Service:

No of Medical Boards Convened	137		
No of Employees Referred to a Medical Board	118		
By Nature	Psychiatric	Medical/Surgical	Oncology
	71	40	7
By Gender	Male	Female	
	68	50	
Outcome	Unfit for Work	49	
	Fit for Work	14	
	<i>Others</i>	8 employees advised to temporarily take up duties in Gozo; 1 employee recommended to perform light or alternative duties; 11 found fit to be reinstated within the Public Service	

- *Reinstatements*: Seven requests for reinstatements were processed; namely four Health Assistants, one Hospital Auxiliary, one Nursing Aide and one Ward Clerk.
- *Transfers*: 295 Internal transfers were issued together with 19 external ones.

Standard Operating Procedures

This Office started drawing up SOPs for a number of processes carried out and intends to continue this project in 2012 until all processes are covered. This exercise is aimed at enhancing uniformity and flexibility within the Human Resources Directorate.

HR Data Management

Discussions were held with the HR Systems and Data Management Directorate, OPM, with the intention of introducing the Dakar system at the Human Resources Directorate. It was agreed that Dakar would be installed in 2012 and a number of staff trained in reporting. In the meantime, a data cleanup exercise is being carried out so that the employee data transferred to Dakar would be as accurate as possible.

Employee Services

- *Discipline* - as per the following table:

Discipline	Total
Number of charges issued during 2011 in terms of the PSC	
Disciplinary Regulations	
Reg 18	7
Reg 19	224
Reg 20 (Minor)	20
Reg 20 (Serious)	30
Criminal Offences	22
Cases finalised by the end of 2011	17
Total	320

- *Injury on Duty* - 57 cases in respect of Health employees (31 females and 36 males);
- *Sick Leave Verification* - total sick leave verification visits carried out in 2011 was 5,317;
- *Applications* - total applications for various forms of paid/unpaid leave are outlined below:

Type of application	Male	Female	Total
Maternity Leave	-	219	219
Parental/Responsibility Leave	10	202	212
Reduced Hours	75	1,009	1,084
Unpaid Leave	39	57	96
Sports Leave	54	20	74
Cultural Leave	4	6	10
Emigration Leave	11	20	31
Quarantine Leave	0	2	2
Union Leave	27	39	66
Leave to do Voluntary Work	8	9	17
Leave to try Alternative Employment	6	3	9
Special Paid Leave	8	20	28
Total	242	1,606	1,848

- *Continuous Professional Development*: A total of 3,545 requests for CPD were collected in 2011 from nursing and paramedical staff. Applications were received in March and October from various entities within the Ministry. The total cost paid was of €1,945,064.45 for nursing staff and €239,017.08 for paramedical staff.
- *Staff Development*: The Human Resources Directorate once again gave full support to its members of staff in order to enhance their personal and professional skills required to offer an efficient service to our clients. During 2011, employees were granted study leave in connection with qualifying examinations, training courses both locally and abroad as well as clinical attachments in hospitals/conferences abroad as indicated in the following table:

	Male	Female	Total
Medical	826	1,039	1,865
Paramedical	797	381	1,178
Nursing/Midwifery	2,222	933	3,155
Dentists	66	48	114
Pharmacists	102	19	121
Other	124	88	212
Total	4,137	2,508	6,645

SPECIAL INITIATIVES DIRECTORATE

Kols Cooperative Ltd

The year 2011 was a challenging year for Kols Cooperative Ltd following the fire which destroyed 40% of the laundry in 2010. Sources of finance were sought to make good the damage sustained and improve the standards in line with the relevant EU Directive. The company entered into a service level agreement with the MHEC and the Ministry for Gozo to provide laundry services to the hospitals.

Waste Management at Mater Dei Hospital

Following a request by the employees working on waste management at MDH, the Director (Special Initiatives) initiated an operational review of this Sector prior to implementing the required business re-engineering to set up this unit as a cooperative society. The objectives are to increase productivity, reduce expenditure and ameliorate the workers' employment conditions.

Mental Health Legislation

The Director (Special Initiatives) finalised the draft Mental Health Act after a widespread consultation with all stakeholders. The First Reading of this Act was presented to Parliament.

Management Protocols – Mount Carmel Hospital

At the request of the Board of Directors of Mount Carmel Hospital (MCH), the Director (Special Initiatives) was detailed to formulate the patient management protocols envisaged in the proposed new Mental Health Act. The objectives of these protocols are to safeguard the human rights of our clients whilst improving the care meted out to this client group and enhance the professional accountability of all health care employees working in this sector.

Council of Europe

The Director continued to participate at the Steering Committee on Public Health of the Council of Europe. He was re-appointed by the Committee to sit on the Bureau of the Committee for the second consecutive year. The Steering Committee also appointed the Director to be part of the Expert Group on Governance in the Health Sector. This Group was mandated to formulate a recommendation to improve governance in the health sector and to develop practical tools to attain this aim. The Group presented the recommendation in December 2011 and formulated four computer-based tools to aid member states of the Council of Europe to improve healthcare governance. These tools include interactive programmes on governance, codes of conduct, conflict of interest and a questionnaire aimed at the public to measure the perception of the level of governance within the health sector.

On the request of the Portuguese Ministry of Health, the Director co-chaired the technical group to formulate the recommendation on 'Child Friendly Health Care' in preparation for the 9th Conference of Health Ministers of the Council of Europe. The Director formed part of the Maltese delegation to the conference led by the Parliamentary Secretary for the Elderly and Community Care, during which the recommendation was adopted by the Ministers.

European Commission

The Director continued to attend the Expert Group on Mental Health and Wellbeing of the EC (DG SANCO). The Director formed part of a core group to prepare for the thematic conference on 'Mental Health at the Workplace' and chaired one session of this conference.

On the request of DG SANCO, the Director was invited to submit a project brief and lead the work package on 'Depression in School Children and Adolescents' as part of the Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-Being of the EC. The project brief, which has four deliverables, aimed at the prevention and early detection of depression in this cohort group, was submitted to DG SANCO in September 2011, but the request to lead this package was refused due to lack of clerical support that the Director enjoys.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION DIRECTORATE

Key Objectives, Tasks and Initiatives undertaken during 2011

One of the main functions of DPI is to oversee the implementation of measures and initiatives undertaken by the various departments within MHEC. This involves the continuous monitoring and drawing up of reports to identify the progress achieved by various line departments and entities in implementing measures resulting out of key national documents including: Budget measures, initiatives within the National Reform Programme (NRP), National Report for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (NSR), and the Public Service Agreement.

DPI also encourages departments and entities within MHEC to identify projects that can benefit from EU funding. DPI offers support to facilitate the submission of such project proposals, ensures that the correct procedures are being followed and oversees their implementation. To ensure effective communication between all stakeholders involved, the DPI acts as a liaison between project leaders and the relevant authorities.

DPI has responsibility for the coordination and monitoring of MHEC's participation in joint actions and projects falling under the Health Programme. The National Focal Point for the Public Health Programme (NFP) provides information relating to the new Joint Actions and Projects that derive from the Work Plan of the Health Programme and provides guidance and support for project leaders to submit applications and keep in constant liaison with the Executive Agency. The NFP facilitates any feedback which is requested either by the Commission, the Agency or by the Project Leader. A database of all the projects and joint actions is being kept constantly updated. Evaluation meetings between project leaders and the DPI are held on a bi-annual basis. Representation at EU level is being covered by the NFP.

Public Service Agreement

Communication lines for the scope of updating the PSA measures have been continuously established with directors, managers and CEOs of different entities falling under the remit of MHEC. Public Service Agreement measures are updated bi-annually.

EU Co-funded Projects

During 2011, DPI, through its EU Fund Manager, pursued its commitment to oversee the implementation of MHEC projects which include the following:

- MDH Oncology Hospital;
- PET/CT Scan for the MDH (Swiss Fund);
- Occupational Health and Safety Authority - Specialised Research on OHS and development of OHS accreditation system;
- Italia – Malta – RESPIRA Project;
- epSOS - Smart Open Services - Open eHealth initiative for a European large scale pilot of patient summary and electronic prescription;
- EU-ERF Project – Mare Nostrum – Common approach to upgrade asylum facilities in Italy and Malta;
- Leonardo Mobility Project – Alternative ways to long-term hospitalisation in Psychiatry.

Public Health Programme

DPI manages and oversees the implementation of a number of projects under the Public Health Programme. There are a total of 21 such projects, namely:

- EUROCAT: European Surveillance of Congenital Anomalies;
- EPIDERM : European Prevention Initiative for Dermatological Malignancies;
- JAMIE : Joint Action on Monitoring Injuries in Europe;
- EPAAC: European Partnership for Action Against Cancer;
- TACTICS: Tools to address Childhood Trauma, Injury and Children's Safety;
- FLURESP: Cost-effectiveness assessment of European influenza human pandemic alert and response strategies;
- EHES JA: European Health Examination Survey;
- EUNETHA: European network for HTA (Health Technology Assessment) Joint Action;
- IMPLEMENT: Implementing Strategic Bundles for Infection Prevention and Management;
- EPiSouth+: A network for the Control of Public Health Threats and other bio-security risks in the Mediterranean Region and Balkans;
- PHIRE: Public Health Innovation and Research in Europe;
- H-Cube: HBV-HCV-HIV three different and serious treats for European young people -A network to study and to face these challenges in EU;
- AIR: Addressing inequalities interventions in regions;
- PITOC: Public information on Tobacco Control;
- ECHIM: Joint Action – Health Indicator Implementation;
- MODE: Mutual Organ Donation and transplantation Exchanges;
- PaSQ: Joint action on patient safety and quality of Health Care;
- HoNCAB: Project partnership on cross-border Health Care (Malta – Italia);
- ACCORD: Achieving Comprehensive Coordination in Organ Donation throughout the European Union;
- eHGI: EHealth Governance Initiative;
- PARENT: Cross-Border Patient Registers Initiative.

Better Regulation

DPI is also involved in the initiative undertaken by the Government concerning the Better Regulation Strategy which addresses one of the specific components outlined in Malta's National Reform Programme 2008-2010/Lisbon Strategy – to reduce or eliminate administrative burdens and information obligations on citizens. The scope of this strategy is to enable Malta to achieve a reduction of 15% of the administrative burden by the year 2012.

Represented by the Better Regulation Ministry Coordinator, DPI attended the BR forum. Furthermore, members of staff from DPI participated in the Better Regulation training courses delivered as part of the ESF 4.87 Developing the Public Sector's Capacity to implement Better Regulation on the Standard Cost Model (SCM). Better Regulation within MHEC during 2011 was largely concentrated in sending nominees to SCM training.

Finally, DPI was tasked by the Better Regulation Unit to submit a report on best practice used to implement EU legislation with respect to the Food Safety area.

Quality Management System

Implementation of the quality management system continued throughout 2011. A quality systems training program was established, wherein training on principles and fundamental aspects of the QMS, SOP writing and control of documentation is delivered to newly-deployed staff, new recruits and to basic specialist trainees that are engaged with the Department of Health (hereinafter in this Section referred to as the 'Department'). This training facilitates the achievement of the department's mission, goal and

objectives outlined in the Quality Manual. A training programme about job descriptions was drawn up and delivered to senior management with the aim that by end December 2011 job descriptions would be in place across the department.

Internal Auditors' training sessions were continued to produce 13 internal auditors. With the establishment of internal auditors, this meant that there was a core group with three functioning members within each directorate/unit:

- Administrator – responsible for the upkeep of SOPs
- Quality Focal Point – responsible for quality aspects
- Internal Auditor – responsible to carry out internal audits and self assessments

Management were tasked to list their critical documents for incorporation within the Quality Manual. The Quality Manual was approved and signed off by senior management in March and published on the shared folder of the department. The internal audit programme for the department spanned from February to June and audited seven areas. The internal audits were performed at predefined time intervals. The exercise determined if the directorates and units were complying with the defined quality system processes outlined in the 43 SOPs. The audits were used as a management tool to verify objective evidence of the documented processes and to assess how successfully the processes had been implemented. For the benefit of the department as a whole, the internal auditors were also asked not only to report non-conformances and corrective action but to also highlight best practices in their reports. The aim was to share good practice, knowledge and skills across the department. It is to be noted the corrective actions were taken up by all the directorates and units audited.

The task of corrective action within the directorates and units was overseen by the Quality Systems Coordinator and was ongoing from July onwards. Corrective action was still ongoing in December. This will open up the next stage of the evolution of the QMS which will spill over into 2012 and that is monitoring of activities.

Terms of reference for a training programme on Risk Management and Assessment were drawn up and the training was held in June over two full-day sessions. There were 24 participants at this training including the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), senior management, line managers, consultants and BSTs. The training was evaluated and the feedback received was very positive. The 1st Management Review was held on 1 August. A management review at least once annually is a requirement of ISO9001:2008. All directorates and units were asked to submit a report on their activities focusing on information on services to customers (directly or indirectly) and the considerations directed to customer and other interested parties.

The meeting was documented in the form of minutes, reports and presentations and recommendations were put forward by the management. This first meeting offered the opportunity to initiate the primary stage of the implementation of measurement, analysis and improvement processes which will continue into 2012 wherein directorates/units will determine the appropriate means for monitoring and measuring their quality management system's processes and for analysing the results and for making improvements.

A networking forum for the internal auditors was held wherein the internal auditees' questionnaire feedback was analysed and discussed. The internal auditors' feedback was also highlighted during the forum. Internal auditors were encouraged to share and discuss their perspective experiences during the internal audits. By the end of the session, a list of do's and don'ts were put together.

Due to restructuring the quality management system was further extended to included two new directorates. The preliminary steps were taken to integrate them into the QMS. Documentation of processes and underlying systems will be developed over 2012.

The Quality Systems Coordinator also gave support to Cellular Pathology at MDH who are initiating the process of ISO15189 accreditation. The support consisted mainly of sharing of knowledge through

meetings and training sessions on how to develop and implement a quality system. Examples of documentation required i.e. Quality Manual and Standard Operating Procedures, were also passed on.

DEPARTMENTAL CONTRACTS COMMITTEE

The Departmental Contracts Committee (DCC) completed its first full calendar year during 2011. During this year, the DCC experienced and reflected on a number of trends and operations that shall be highlighted in this report.

Purpose and Objectives

Although changes have been carried out to the composition and the operations of the DCC, the purpose and objectives of the Committee remained unchanged. The brief of the Committee is to establish and regulate the procedure to be followed during the evaluation of departmental tenders and the award of public contracts valued below €120,000 (excluding VAT), in line with current rules and regulations.

The Year under Review

- *Change in Committee Composition* - In March 2011, the composition of the Committee was changed when the Department of Contracts (DOC) representative on the Committee was replaced by another DOC representative. This change brought about a review of the documentation and the processes which were accompanied by minor changes in the operations. These changes were eventually transmitted to the Contracting Authorities through an internal communication.
- *Workload Volume* - the DCC reviewed just over 1,500 files. Most of the files were referred to the DCC from the Government Health Procurement Services (GHPS), later renamed Central Procurement and Supplies Unit (CPSU). More than 75% of the DCC workload originated from GHPS.

Outcomes

In October, one year from the setting up of the DCC, an analysis of the outcomes of the DCC operations was carried out. This exercise calculated the percentage of DCC approved award recommendations out of the total of files presented to the DCC for each month from its first month of operation till end of October. The ultimate aim for issuing a tender is to award a contract and hence it is important to know to what extent this aim is being reached. Thus, the percentage of recommendations approved each month by the DCC was calculated. In the initial period, a number of recommendations were not approved since these were not in line with the new directions given by the DOC and hence these recommendations were sent back to Contracting Authorities for adjustment; by the end of October 2011, approximately 60% of tenders were being awarded. By the end of the year, the percentage increased by a further 6%. This shows that the number of awards significantly increased since January 2011, when this was 45% to end up with a percentage of 66% of the total files reviewed in December 2011. Although the number of files recommending a cancellation and re-issue has significantly decreased from the start of the year, yet this issue still remains as a challenge. The DCC noted that 15% of the files received either required the approval of a clarification/rectification or else required amendments in the evaluation report submitted. This is the same as that recorded in October 2011.

Initiatives

In view of the outcomes described above, a number of initiatives were taken by the DCC. To start off with and in response to the recommendations submitted in the previous annual report, the DCC circulated a memo in January informing all contracting authorities about the standard of the evaluation report to be submitted to the DCC. The DCC noted that a number of issues could effectively be changed during the tender planning stage which would lead to an increase in the number of awards. These concerns and issues were discussed in a meeting at which were present the major contracting authority within the MHEC, DG Financial Management and Control, DCC-MHEC and the Permanent Secretary. The aim of this meeting

was to reduce the number of files recommending a re-issuance of the tender that then accounted to nearly 50% of the workload reviewed. A number of practices were discussed, as a result of which this figure has now effectively been reduced to slightly more than 30%. Following a change in the management of GHPS, a meeting took place between the CEO (Procurement and Supplies), the two newly appointed Procurement Managers and the DCC, to address issues that recommend a successful award. The emerging issues were discussed and DCC-MHEC was informed about the planned reform in the procurement activities within the Ministry. The DCC-MHEC expressed its availability to support the contracting authorities and has taken proactive measures to assist the contracting authorities.

Another initiative was taken during September, whereby the DCC carried out an exercise to understand the reasons why a number of tenders are being cancelled and re-issued. This data is very valuable information as it serves as an eye-opener to review the procurement processes and gives direction for necessary changes. The data collected is summarised below:

Reason for cancelling Tender and requesting Re-issuance	% for Sept 2011
No sample was submitted with offer	5.2
No Specific Product Characteristic data sheet submitted with offer as requested	15.7
No Offers	26.3
Price submitted is well above estimate	5.2
Product offered not up to specs	31.6
Administratively required docs not submitted	10.5
Change in specifications	5.2

Statistics

By the end of 2011, the DCC held 57 meetings since its inception. Further statistics are illustrated in the table below:

Description	Total
No of Meetings held	45
No of files reviewed	1,503
No of Tenders Awarded	846
No of Tenders Cancelled	10
No of Tenders re-issued	429

Local Conference

In December 2011, the DCC was invited to attend an information session on new Electronic Public Procurement System being implemented by the DOC.

Conclusion

Although only 15 months of the DCC operations have passed, yet the initiatives taken by this committee have lead to significant improvement on the procurement outcomes. This improvement, although steered by the DCC, has met positive collaboration from all stakeholders concerned. The DCC strives to achieve excellence in procurement of pharmaceutical and health related supplies, services and works and to meet the challenges that the future may bring.

DR KENNETH GRECH
Permanent Secretary, MHEC

Superintendence of Public Health

The Superintendence of Public Health (SPH), formerly the Department of Public Health Regulation, apart from the general safeguarding and promotion of public health, is also responsible for the formulation, monitoring and enforcement of national standards for health in both the public and private sector. It is its responsibility to ensure that public health legislation is being adhered to by all concerned and in this regard is responsible for the inspection and licensing of the various entities that provide health care as well as food establishments.

Within the Superintendence there are three directorates, namely:

- Directorate for Environmental Health (DEH) - responsible for the enforcement of public health legislation as well as environmental issues;
- Directorate for Health Care Standards (DHCS) - responsible for the establishment and monitoring of standards to be adhered to by service providers in the primary, secondary and tertiary care sectors as well as the enforcement of legislation in relation to blood, organs, tissues, and cells;
- Directorate for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (DHPDP) - responsible for all activities aimed at improving health and the prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

The SPH is also responsible for medicines' regulation in his capacity as licensing authority. In this regard, there is a close working relationship with the Medicines Authority for ensuring the quality, safety and efficacy of medicinal products on the Maltese markets as well as the inspection and licensing of manufacturing and wholesale dealing establishments as well as pharmacies.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

Biennial Collaborative Agreement 2010 - 2011

During 2011, the Office of the Superintendent was responsible for the implementation of the BCA for 2010-2011 and negotiated the terms of the Biennial Collaborative Agreement for 2012-2013. The BCA forms part of a medium term framework for collaboration between the World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for Europe and the Maltese Government for the six-year period 2008-2014, corresponding to the WHO Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP 2008-2013). The BCA also provides for technical support from WHO Europe in the various areas.

The priority areas for collaboration included in the framework agreement are based on Malta's public health priorities and ongoing efforts to improve the performance of the health system, in line with WHO's country strategy to strengthen health systems and its global priorities and policy direction for this period. The above-mentioned priority areas are the following:

- addressing policy development for health promotion and disease prevention in the areas of diet, physical activity, and counteracting obesity;
- strengthening national environment and health - implementation of Parma ministerial conference commitments; and
- developing pharmaceutical policy.

During 2011, the remaining projects under SPH responsibility covered by the Agreement for the Biennium 2010-11 were completed. The projects included:

- implementation of a Walking Bus Project – a project aimed at the introduction of an organised, good, safe walking system around the local villages to the local primary school thus facilitating school children to walk to and from school and in the long term to encourage them to adopt lifelong regular physical activity habits;
- carrying out two separate national studies on blood lead levels in adults and children;
- carrying out a national indoor radon mapping survey which monitored radon levels in a representation of households, public places and schools in the Maltese Islands; and
- supporting the World Health Day Activities on 7 April 2011, aimed at increasing public awareness of the problem of antibiotic resistance and the need for better use of antibiotics, which included a billboard campaign and a press conference. This was later followed by a seminar on the same subject held for health professionals on European Awareness Antibiotic Day on 18 November, and also supported by the agreement.

Biennial Collaborative Agreement (BCA) 2012 – 2013

Proposals for the next BCA 2012-13 were coordinated by SPH and presented to the WHO. Negotiations are in the final stages. The proposals include a number of projects, amongst which the revision of the National Food and Nutrition Plan and continued work in the area of Healthy Eating in Schools, a national report on social inequalities in environmental health, indoor air quality assessments in schools, and further bio-monitoring studies as part of the follow-up and implementation of the Parma Environment and Health Ministerial Declaration and Commitment to Act. Support has also been requested from the WHO for the conduction of Health System Performance Assessment, as a follow-up to the Tallinn Charter, and for the preparation of a plan and consultation process with a view to launching the Health 2020 document in 2015 with a five-year implementation period.

World Health Assembly - May 2011

The Superintendent of Public Health formed part of the delegation to the 63rd World Health Assembly held in Geneva between 16 and 24 May 2011. At this session, the Health Assembly discussed a number of public health issues, including among others a report on the functioning of the International Health Regulations (2005) during the pandemic, monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals, the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, falsified medicines, and a strategy for the prevention of HIV. The Health Assembly also discussed the programme budget, administration and management matters of WHO as well as proposals for the reform of WHO to make it a more effective and sustainable organisation.

WHO Regional Committee - September 2011

The Superintendent also formed part of the Malta delegation to the 61st WHO Regional Committee for Europe held between 12 and 15 September 2011 in Azerbaijan. The main topics discussed included the development of a new European Policy for Health – *Health 2020*, the strengthening of health systems, action plans for the implementation of the European Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Non Communicable Diseases, as well as action plans on antibiotic resistance, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS. During the session, the Superintendent of Public Health was elected to the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for the years 2011-2014. A resolution was also passed which once again confirmed that the 62nd Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe will be held in Malta from 10 to 13 September 2012.

PATIENT SAFETY

The SPH is in the process of preparing a framework for a policy document on patient safety. Important stakeholders such as the WHO, the European Commission for Health and Consumer Protection (DG SANCO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), amongst others, all acknowledge the problems caused by injury and harm in care and urge political commitment to improve safety of care and facilitate the development of patient safety policies and practices in all countries.

The SPH is working on a document which will put forward an overview of international patient safety recommendations, systems, problems and gaps. It will provide an overview of the initiative currently taking place within the MHEC and will provide a mechanism through which such initiatives will be integrated. The document will also provide a sound framework for addressing patient safety based on international experiences. Suggestions will be prepared together with a way forward for implementation. It is planned that the document will be completed during 2012.

PROCESS MAPPING IN THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY (A&E) DEPARTMENT OF MATER DEI HOSPITAL

The SPH carried out a detailed situational analysis to review the admission processes in the Accident and Emergency Department in order to try and address the stagnation of the flow and bottleneck at priority area two with the consequence of long waiting time at A&E and delays in admissions.

Following a thorough overview of the local and other international literature related to the background of this initiative, the Office of the Superintendent embarked on a series of consultations with all the key stakeholders (qualitative feedback) on the current A&E situation as well as mapped all the processes and gathered all the relevant statistics on the admission processes at the A&E Department at MDH. The information collected was analysed in an attempt to identify the existing gaps between the current procedures and the desired service outcomes and compared MDH admission figures with those of similar foreign establishments. There was also an evaluation of the current operational policies, procedures and practices that determine admissions in respect to MDH workings and efficiency; and proposals for any possible improvements to the current policies, procedures and practices were made.

It is difficult for one to draw an overall conclusion. However, there is no doubt that the waiting time at A&E is a complex and sensitive occurrence which takes up valuable resources, stops the admission process flow without adding value for patients or their relatives. It is also evident that the apparent bottlenecks in the flow process of priority area two of A&E is not a syndrome on its own and needs to be tackled from the wider strategic aspect of delivery of care, both within the hospital as well as in other health care sectors.

The analysis identified the need for a number of further issues to be looked into in order to get a clearer picture and a better understanding of some of the data elucidated as well as to enhance patient safety. Moreover, a number of short-term to long-term recommendations were made for consideration by the health service authorities.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR BLOOD TRANSFUSION

The work on the drafting of National Standards for Blood Transfusion continued during this year and a final draft was circulated for internal consultations. This was followed by extensive external stakeholder consultation. The standards were finalised toward the end of the year and will be published in 2012.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR USE OF MEDICINES

The working group working on the drafting of the National Standards for the Use of Medicines continued its work and finalised its first draft. In view of the complexity and extensiveness of the document, it was

felt that the draft needed to be reviewed internally prior to going for wider internal and external consultation. The completion of the internal review is planned for the first quarter of 2012 when the process of wider consultation will begin.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR LEAST RESTRAINT USE

A working group on National Standards for Least Restraint Use continued with its work. In view of the many disciplines involved and the multiple health care settings such a document will need to cover, as well as the legal and ethical sensitivities associated with the subject, drafting is difficult and rather slow. Information obtained from the extensive literature review carried out by the drafting group needs to be evaluated in relation to the local beliefs and culture. The drafting continued and it is hoped that the final document will be finalised in 2012.

GENERAL SERVICES BOARD

The General Services Board is appointed by the Minister for Health on a yearly basis and is set up in terms of Article 44 of the Department of Health Constitution Ordinance. The function of the Board is to determine public health issues referred to in terms of the Code of Police Laws. During 2011, the General Services Board met 13 times, whereby 90 applications were discussed, out of which 72 were new cases.

MERIT AWARD SCHEME

The Merit Award Scheme was set up in terms of an agreement signed between the Government of Malta and the Medical Association of Malta in February 2002 as an addendum to the agreement that had been signed in 1993. Subsequent amendments have been effected. The scheme is a quality assurance initiative whereby medical consultants/doctors submit, on an annual basis, initiatives which are then assessed by an *ad hoc* committee. Approved initiatives are then remunerated according to the provisions in the agreement. During 2011, the Committee met 13 times whereby:

- 195 initiatives were received from 183 doctors;
- 87 doctors had a second initiative approved for recommendation;
- 24 doctors failed to send in their final report for 29 initiatives;
- 1 doctor had his final report rejected.

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS APPEALS COMMITTEE

The Health Care Professions Appeals Committee was set up in accordance with Article 49 of the Health Care Professions Act. All members of the Appeals Committee are appointed or elected, as the case may be, for a term of three years. The function of the Committee is to decide on appeals lodged by health care professionals in respect of registration decisions delivered by regulatory councils. During 2011 the Committee met four times whereby ten cases were discussed, out of which four appeals were rejected, four appeals were upheld and the other two were given temporary registration subject to further training.

REGULATORY COUNCILS

The four health care professions regulatory councils namely the Medical Council, the Pharmacy Council, the Council for Nurses and Midwives, the Council for Professions Complementary to Medicine as well as the Specialist Accreditation Committees, were set up in terms of the Health Care Professions Act. The principal scope of the Act is to regulate the practice of health care professions in Malta. New registrations accepted by each council during 2011 are indicated in the following table:

Medical Council		Professions Complementary to Medicine	
Medical Practitioners (Principal Register)	80	Chiropractor	1
Med Practitioners (Provisional & Temporary Register)	124	Dietician	0

Dental Surgeons	8	Environmental Health Officers	5
Pharmacy Council		Medical Laboratory Scientists	15
Pharmacists	38	Nutritionists	6
Pharmacy Technicians	6	Dental Technologists	5
Qualified Persons	7	Optometrists	1
Nurses and Midwives		Physiotherapists	17
Nurses	150	Podiatrists	0
Midwives	12	Psychotherapists	17
Specialist Accreditation Committees		Radiographers	18
Certificate of completion of specialist training	38	Speech Language Pathologists	0
Certificate of Specialist Dental Surgeons	3	Acupuncturist	1

PHARMACEUTICAL UNIT

The Pharmaceutical Unit is responsible for the administration of the technical aspects of legislation and the development of national policies within the various pharmaceutical areas. These policies are developed and implemented with the aim of providing support to medicines' legislation, safeguarding patients' rights and wellbeing, as well as boosting the health care professionals' confidence in the medicinal products available, from their manufacture to administration and use by the patient.

Narcotic Drugs, Psychotic Substances and Precursor Chemicals

The Pharmaceutical Unit implements local legislation and fulfils international obligations with respect to narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. A number of reports required by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) were compiled - namely Forms A/P (four reports), Forms A (four reports), Form B, Form C, Form D and Form P, as well as other INCB, and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) questionnaires. Other authorisations were issued as follows:

Import Permits for narcotic drugs	61
Import Permits for psychotropic substances	146
Withdrawal Permits	207
New Methylphenidate approvals	162
Renewal of Methylphenidate approvals	490

Together with the Customs Department, it is also taking part in an exercise to control precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, both physically and by means of adequate legislation.

Authorisation for the Use of Medicines

Responsibility for the implementation of the guidelines for the supply of medicinal products for human use through processes which are not covered by the Medicines Act 2003 and its subsidiary legislation, falls within the remit of the Pharmaceutical Unit. In 2011, the Unit processed 147 individual requests by prescribers.

Libya Crisis

The Libyan crisis was managed centrally within the MHEC, through a purposely set up Humanitarian Crisis Management Committee chaired by Permanent Secretary MHEC. The SPH was the vice-chair and was overall responsible for the coordination of the response within the Ministry and with other stakeholders. On average, the group met every week to develop a contingency plan and to discuss updates on the possible influx of a number of casualties. The plans were evaluated by the European Regional Office of the WHO which offered to coordinate support as this was required.

At the beginning of the crisis, several thousand foreign workers were evacuated to Malta, as a first step towards their repatriation. A medical post was set up at the port of entry and the response, which involved a number of different sectors, was coordinated by the Government Contingency Centre (GCC) within the Office of the Prime Minister. The number of passengers on board the various ships varied from groups of less than twenty passengers to cruise liners with more than a thousand persons on board. The concomitant arrival of migrants/evacuees by boats who were rescued at sea by the Maritime section of the Armed Forces of Malta complicated matters. These arrivals brought up to 300 individuals per boat over short time intervals.

The SPH supported and coordinated various humanitarian initiatives undertaken by various private entities and foreign governments which used Malta as a strategic hub to transfer medicines, food and water to Misurata. In August, Malta organised a specialised humanitarian mission to medically evacuate 620 Libyan patients who had received treatment or were stranded in Tunisia back to Misurata and Benghazi. Of these, 287 were injured casualties and 95 were children. The age range varied from a 27-day -old baby to an 80-year-old gentleman.

In July 2011, MHEC established communications with the Minister of Health representing the National Transitional Council. As part of the collaboration, Malta accepted five Libyan paediatric cases that required specialised surgical and orthopaedic care which was not available in Libya at the time. Their relatives were provided with accommodation and a *per diem* allowance. Primary health services were offered to support these relatives and children once out of hospital.

In September, Malta, with the cooperation of the Qatari Government, accepted 16 seriously injured patients from Misurata, ten of who required intensive care. This activated the prepared hospital plans which included the extension of a new wing of intensive care. All patients were cohorted together. This response was supported by the enhanced collaboration with the private hospital sector and the various non-governmental organisations which provided ambulances to transfer the patients. Nurses with past training in intensive care nursing were redeployed from other service entities to support this response. All professional and support staff worked excellently and with great pride and dedication to help these injured young patients. Because of the resource limitations, the response had to be limited in order not to impinge on the day-to-day running of our only acute hospital. Through intensive collaboration with the private hospitals and the use of the Gozo General Hospital, it was possible to offer help to a larger number of injured persons. In all, up to 66 foreign persons, including Libyan nationals, were admitted to MDH, four patients were admitted to the GGH and up to another 100 were admitted to St James Hospital. The more critically ill patients were admitted to Mater Dei Hospital. All patients recovered except two. Arrangements were made for the repatriation of the corpses.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORATE

The Environmental Health Directorate promotes and safeguards the wellbeing and health of the public from adverse environmental effects.

This Directorate, within the Public Health Regulatory Department, provides its services through the following sections:

- *Health Inspectorate Services*: the executive arm of the Directorate, provides services through the Administration Unit (Citations; Licensing; Complaints); Regional Units (Food Risk Management Team and Environmental Health Risk Management Team); Port Health Services; Food Safety Unit; Pest Control Services; Burials Administration Unit; Drug Control Unit; and the Food Safety Commission Secretariat.
- *Port Health Medical Services*: primarily has the duty of border control from infectious diseases.
- *Public Health Laboratory Service*: provides analytical and scientific support to the investigations performed by all the branches/units within the Department.
- *Environmental Health Policy Coordinating Unit*.

HEALTH INSPECTORATE SERVICES

Administration Unit

This Unit coordinates all work between regional offices, units and branches, replies to parliamentary questions, issues the relevant memos and correspondence, processes contraventions, performs prosecution on behalf of the DEH and is also responsible for procurement/distribution of equipment to all staff. Regions/units/sections that fall under the responsibility of the Manager Health Inspector (MHI) are monitored, controlled and advised through this office, to provide consistency. 98 replies to parliamentary questions were drafted during 2011. 400 memos were issued (some of these memos were additions to a general memo).

Citations Unit

During the year this Unit was involved in the following services:

- 20 health sittings were appointed to be heard before Magistrate Dr Padovani Grima; total number of cases heard was 637**, of which 85 were decided (38 food-related and 47 environment-related); number of magisterial on-site enquires performed was 11.
- 13 health sittings were appointed to be heard before Magistrate Dr Stafrace Zammit; cases heard were 336**, of which 99 were decided (65 food-related and 34 environment-related); 14 magisterial on-site enquiries were performed
- 4 health sittings were appointed to be heard before Magistrate Dr Apap Bologna; cases heard were 22**, of which 1 was decided.
- 3 health sittings were appointed to be heard before Magistrate Dr Micallef Trigona; cases heard were 14**, of which 1 was decided (food-related).
- In Gozo, 5 health sittings were appointed to be heard before Magistrate Dr Edwina Grima; cases heard were 9**, of which 3 were decided.
- Also in Gozo, 9 health sittings were appointed to be heard before Magistrate Dr Neville Camilleri; cases heard were 14**, of which 6 were decided.
(** Cases may be heard more than once during the year.)
- A total number of 430 charges were issued during the year.
- Undertakings issued in terms of Article 39 of the Food Safety Act amounted to 155.
- Undertaking issued in terms of Article 13 of the Public Health Act amounted to nine.
- Two Public Health Emergency Orders were issued in terms of Article 14(1) of the Public Health Act - these were issued for the reasons of acting as a tattooist from a place of residence.
- Emergency Control Orders (34) and Emergency Prohibition Orders (12) issued in terms of Article 36 of the Food Safety Act amounted to 46.
- Enforcement Notices issued in terms of the Control of Legionella Regulations amounted to three.

MEPA Applications

During 2011, this office received 329 new MEPA consultation requests and pre-applications. These were forwarded to the relevant Senior Principal Environmental Health Officer and feedback was given to MEPA as necessary.

Licensing Unit

The DEH deals with the licensing of community clinics and laboratories in terms of the Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance, of tattooists in terms of the Control of Tattooing Act, and of body piercing in terms of the Body Piercing (Control) Regulations. This unit also deals with the licensing of the following clinics, laboratories, tattooists and body piercers, which as at end 2001 stood as follows:

Acupuncture Clinics	3
Dental Clinics	97
Physiotherapy Clinics	7
Chiropody Clinics	5
Radiology Clinics	14
Medical Diagnostic Laboratories	6
Tattoo Licences	51
Body Piercing Licences	19

- Five applications for dental clinics were received during 2011, two new applications for relocation of the clinic, and one for a transfer of licence. Two licences were issued; one relocation and one transfer of licence.
- Three new licences were received for chiropody clinics. No licences were issued.
- Two new applications were received for physiotherapy clinics. One licence was issued.
- One application was received for body piercing. Two licences were issued.
- 19 applications were received for tattooing. 13 licences were issued during 2011. Three applicants resigned from their application. Four licensed tattooists had their licence revoked.

During 2011, two morning courses were organised for tattooists regarding infection control.

Complaints Administration Unit

The total number of complaints as lodged with the Complaints Administration Unit amounted to a total of 6,226, of which 5,265 were on environmental matters and 979 were food-related.

Regional Units

Environmental Health Officers were deployed to work within six Regional Units around Malta and one in Gozo. The Health Inspectorate functions within a Quality Service Charter with respect to the service offered to the public. Furthermore, the Environmental Health Directorate acquired MSA EN ISO 9001:2008 accreditation for the quality management system for the handling of complaints.

The services offered by the Health Inspectorate Services included:

Inspections in connection with Licensing	701
Undertakings (re Article 39 of the Food Safety Act of 2002)	138
Inspections for Risk Assessment Grading purposes	5,924
Inspections of food premises (other than Risk Assessment)	2,121
Samples taken during inspections of food premises	334
Samples taken in connection with environmental issues	2,411
Samples taken in connection with sampling programs	2,223
Samples taken in connection with food poisonings	327
Nuisance reports/Abatement notices	594
Inspections re-food poisoning	118
Inspections to verify immunisation of children	3
Complaints	6,226*
Food related	979
Environment related	5,265
<i>(* The difference in total of number of complaints is due to the fact that a complaint may be jointly related to food and environment.)</i>	
Registration of new private water suppliers (as per Legal Notice 357 of 2004)	9
Registration of new swimming pools (in accordance with Legal Notice 129 of 2005)	33
Inspection of swimming pools	184
Pool audits carried out	79
Legionella audits performed	123

Food Safety Unit

This unit is responsible for giving consultations prior to licensing food businesses or refurbishing already licensed food businesses. The following are the number of inspection performed by this unit during 2011:

Inspection of food premises prior to licensing/refurbishing.	15
Issuing of approvals in connection with:	
Trade Licences (TLU)	304
Planning Authority (MEPA) applications	183
Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) applications	108
Police Department (Temporary Licences)	3
Other Temporary Licences	5
Health Department (SPH Licences)	27
Total number of applications for 2011	630
Total number of inspections performed during 2011	1,012

Pest Control Services

The Pest Control Section deployed two teams of operatives in Malta. 308,400 point baits and 2,840 sewers were baited, while 112 insect disinfestations/disinfections were effected during 2011. 1,296 complaints re pest control issues that were lodged with the Directorate were seen to by this unit.

The team available in Gozo handled the baiting of 28,844 point baits and 2,810 sewer baits, and effected 30 insect disinfestations/disinfections during the year.

Burials Administration Unit

The Burials Administration Unit is responsible for the running of Addolorata, Żebbuġ, Mosta, Burmarrad, Rabat, Mellieħa and Ta' Braxia Cemeteries. Burials carried out at government cemeteries were: 1,577 in Addolorata and 321 in other government cemeteries.

The number of new applications received for new gravesites during 2011 was 114. Also, 31 new applications for the transfer of graves by donation or inheritance were received.

Total number of cleaning of graves and transportation of remains during 2011 were:

	<i>Cleanings</i>	<i>Transportation</i>
Addolorata	388	111
Other government cemeteries	9	36

The Gozo region is responsible for the administration and management of the government cemeteries in Gozo (St Mary's Cemetery in Xewkija and Tal-Għonq Cemetery in Victoria). The number of burials effected in these cemeteries during 2011 was 73 (51 inside private graves and 22 in state-owned graves). 17 transfers of remains were effected whilst 31 cleaning of graves were carried out.

Drug Control Unit

A major function of this Section was the issuing of Control Cards for narcotic and psychotropic drugs as per the Drugs (Control) Regulations and the Dangerous Drugs (Internal Control) Rules. A total of 23,080 Control Cards were issued during 2011.

Licensing Unit

The DEH also deals with the licensing of community clinics and laboratories in terms of the Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance, of tattooists in terms of the Control of Tattooing Act, and of body piercing in terms of the Body Piercing (Control) Regulations. This Unit also deals with the licensing of

Acupuncture Clinics, Dental Clinics, Physiotherapy Clinics, Chiropody Clinics, Radiology Clinics, Medical Diagnostic Laboratories, Tattooists and Body Piercers. The following is the number of licences as on 31 December 2011:

Acupuncture Clinics	3
Dental Clinics	97
Physiotherapy Clinics	7
Chiropody Clinics	5
Radiology Clinics	14
Medical Diagnostic Laboratories	6
Tattoo Licences	51
Body Piercing Licences	19

- Five applications for dental clinics were received during 2011, two new applications for relocation of the clinic, and one for a transfer of licence. Two licences were issued; one relocation and one transfer of licence.
- Three new licences were received for chiropody clinics. No licences were issued.
- Two new applications were received for physiotherapy clinics. One licence was issued.
- One application was received for body piercing. Two licences were issued.
- 19 applications were received for tattooing. 13 licences were issued during 2011. Three applicants resigned from their application. Four licensed tattooists had their licence revoked.

During 2011, two morning courses were organised for tattooists regarding infection control.

Food Safety Commission Secretariat (FSCS)

- The Food Safety Commission met eight times with the total number of meetings since the Commission was set up since 2004, amounting to 219.
- The FSCS continued with the registration of new premises and updates on existing premises. By the end of 2011, there were a total of 12,270 registrations entered on the official Food Premises Register as required by LN 180 of 2001. Of these registrations, 8,619 are open premises, while 3,451 have been deregistered. During the year, there were 1,111 new registrations, of which 42 were definitely closed, five were permanently closed and four were temporarily closed, thus bring the open registrations to 1,060 registrations as at 31 December 2011.
- 49 food premises certificates were issued during 2011. These certificates were issued at the request of the licensees of the premises concerned.
- The number of food handlers registered and issued with the required document during 2011 was 7,465; the total number of food handlers cards issued so far including renewals is 70,219.
- New Food Hygiene Course Providers (FHCP) are authorised by the unit. Presently there are 68 FHCPs individuals or organisations approved to provide food hygiene courses.
- Registered cheeselet producers stands at 1,301, as one new registration was received during 2011.
- The FSCS is entrusted with the daily checking of all notifications received by e-mail from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) network. During 2011, all 3,812 original notifications that were submitted through the RASFF were checked, of which 635 were alerts, 1,860 were border rejection and 573 were information for follow-ups. In addition, 5,345 follow-up notifications were vetted. Thus there were 9,157 emails vetted. 20 RASFF e-mails containing news were checked with 120 new follow-ups. Whenever a notification was relevant to Malta, the Secretariat maintained contact with the office of the Director until a reply was formulated and forwarded to the RASFF Network office in Brussels. There were 25 Alerts originating from Malta during 2011.

PORT HEALTH SERVICES

Activities of the Port Health Office, Health Inspectorate Services, Floriana were as follows:

Inspections of marine crafts requested by Malta Maritime Authority	27
Inspection of refrigerated vehicles requested by Commissioner of Police	129

Repatriation of human remains	127
Burial at sea	2
Processing of requests in respect of import declaration of foodstuffs	20,221
Processing of requests for importation of pharmaceuticals and allied products	10,207
Ship Sanitation Control Certificate	96
Ship Sanitation Exemption Control Certificate	170
Extension of Ship Sanitation Certificates	9
Number of Inspections of Catering Establishments and Warehouses	106
Samples taken of imported items of food	218
Health/Radiation free Certificates issued	752
Undertakings	19
Inspections of incoming consignments	773
Destruction Certificates for unfit food	14
Registration of trader's application	102

The Port Health Medical Services were offered from the Floriana Port Health Office, Malta International Airport Health Clinic (Gudja), and the Yacht Marina Health Guard premises. The Activities at Port Health Medical Services were as follows:

Number of ships granted pratique	6,550
Number of ships exiting port	6,592
Number of International yachts at marinas	47
Ship conveyances outside harbour requiring port health clearance	1,776
Number of crew disembarked for health/injury reasons	33
Radio Medical advice referred to ships	37
Examination of corpses on board	3
Examination in stowaways	0
Examination of corpses recovered from sea	0
Examination of irregular immigrants	1,497
Examination of sea-farers for certification fitness purposes	27

The Airport Clinic was responsible for the implementation of the International Health Regulations, foremost the prevention of priority communicable diseases being imported into Malta.

Sick/injured travellers seen	1,297
Sick/injured employees seen	3,231
Passengers referred to hospital	119

PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY

The Public Health Laboratory (PHL) continued to provide the vital analytical back-up service for the whole department. The laboratory is a food, feed and environmental testing laboratory and is responsible for checking for compliance with relevant local and EU legislation requirements. Activities covered include: (i) monitoring/surveillance programmes; (ii) investigation of suspected food poisoning cases; and (iii) providing professional advice and interpretation of test results. The PHL employs a quality management system and is accredited by NAB-Malta for various test parameters according to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 standard. The PHL management is committed to consistently work to the highest achievable standards of quality so as to provide an efficient, cost effective and professional service which satisfies the need of the customers and those of the accreditation body.

The laboratory performs official food testing activities. It has also been nominated National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for 19 fields/parameters for food, animal feed and water.

The laboratory is comprised of two main sections, the Microbiology (MPHL) and the Chemistry (CPHL) sections which are located in the right and left wings respectively, on the first floor of Evans Building, Lower Merchants Street, Valletta. A satellite radio nuclide testing laboratory is located in St Luke's Hospital grounds, G'Mangia. To date, PHL has 21 test methods in its scope of accreditation as awarded by the local accreditation body, NAB-Malta. The laboratory is currently awaiting the decision by the

NAB-Board regarding extension to the scope of accreditation by another nine microbiological and physicochemical test methods.

The Microbiology Section of the PHL was nominated National Reference Laboratory (food and products intended for animal feed) for: Salmonella (SLM-NRL); Campylobacter (CMP-NRL); Listeria (LM-NRL); Coagulase Positive Staphylococci (CPS-NRL); Verotoxigenic *E. coli* (VTEC-NRL); Parasites (PR-NRL); and Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (AMS-NRL).

While the Chemistry Section of the PHL served as the National Reference Laboratory (food and products intended for animal feed) for: Dioxins/PCBs; PAHs; Pesticides in Cereal; Pesticides in Food of Animal Origin and Food of High Fat Content; Pesticides – Single Residue Methods; Pesticides in Fruit and Vegetables; Mycotoxins; Heavy Metals in food and feed; Heavy metals in Food of Animal Origin; Food Contact Material; GMOs.

The nomination as a National Reference Laboratory for Genetic Modified Organisms is a recent event, (during 2008). This laboratory examined a total number of 8,046 samples. The following list summarises the samples submitted from different sources as well as the samples analysed in the different sections of the Laboratory:

Food for Chemical Analysis	979
Water for Chemical Analysis	1,569
Food for Microbiological Analysis*	1,142
Samples (Environmental Swabs) for Hygienic Standard	323
Water for Microbiological Analysis	3,383
Clinical samples for Microbiological Analysis	121
Culture testing	529
Total	8,046

* A large number of food samples tested consisted of five sub-samples (N=5).

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH POLICY COORDINATION UNIT

The Environmental Health Policy Coordination Unit (EHPCU) was set up in 2008. Its principal functions include:

- informing and forming environment and health related policy through consultation and advocacy;
- consultation on other environmental health policy related issues;
- consultation regarding health impacts from various developments, projects and policies e.g. contribution to setting terms of reference for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control permits as requested by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA);
- consolidating the evidence-base through literature review and research in environmental health;
- specific projects e.g. blood lead levels study in adults and children, national radon mapping survey, child safety, road safety;
- responsible for Tobacco Data Reporting (tobacco ingredients information reports, FCTC reports etc);
- representation on General Services Board;
- chair and membership on departmental boards of discipline and investigation;
- training of Environmental Health officers and Public Health doctors attached to the Unit and supervision/consultations re student dissertations related to environmental health;
- other: representation (national and international), responding to media requests, parliamentary questions, requests by other departments, general public etc.

Inter-sectoral Collaboration

The unit continued its collaborative work with other sectors, mainly with the environment sector through regular meetings of the Environment and Health Management Committee co-chaired by the Director of Environmental Health and the Director, Environment Protection of MEPA. It is the intention of the

Environmental Health and Environment Directorates to formalise this committee, which includes EHPCU staff. The Committee worked collaboratively on various issues, including follow-up of commitments⁴ to the WHO Parma Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (March 2010) and on various issues including air quality, radon, noise, bio-monitoring.

Other collaborative work included the Unit's involvement in the area of national zoonosis control, road safety (lead role in national Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020) and standard setting for indoor play areas. A meeting was held with the Commissioner for Children with the aim of re-establishing links and carrying out future collaborative work in areas of overlap.

Consultations

During 2011, the EHPCU was involved in several consultations on environmental health policy related issues. The consultations were focused on various developments, projects and policies requiring Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), Strategic Environment Impact (SEA) and Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) permits. The Unit was involved in formulating of terms of reference and several discussions with the ultimate aim of preventing and/or mitigating potential health impacts. Health concerns centred mainly on the impacts of air quality, water quality (bathing, ground and service water), noise and vibration, traffic management, waste management, rodent control and general safety considerations to the exposed population. Conformity of proposals to existing public health regulations as applicable was also advised. The majority of these requests for consultations originated from MEPA, the Office of the Prime Minister (Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment) and private entities commissioned to carry out such assessments. The major consultation issues in this regard were:

- Requests for Changes in the existing IPPC Permits (Marsa Power Station Permit No IP 0003/07; Delimara Power Station permit No IP 0002/07)
- Report on the Estimation of Economic Costs of Operation of the Delimara Extension Power Station Equipment Using Different Types of Fuel Submitted by Enemalta Corporation in the Context of the Application for IPPC Operating Permit for the Delimara Power Station Extension
- Strategic Environmental Assessment on 'A proposal for an Energy Policy for Malta'
- Public consultation in the IPPC permitting process for the proposed extension of the Delimara Extension Power Station
- Draft Noise Action Plan
- Key needs of actions in environmental protection till 2020 - contribution to the assessment of 6 EAP (Briefing Note for the Informal Meeting of Environment Ministers of 11 July 2011)
- Proposed Interconnector Terminal Station at *Magħtab* and *Wied ta' Kieli*, Naxxar including the Excavation and construction of Tunnel from St Andrews to Magħtab
- Masterplan for the Magħtab Environmental Complex
- MEPA Administered Funds - Public Consultation
- Redevelopment of *Hal Ferħa* touristic complex, as per development brief for area
- White Paper delineating legal and institutional recommendations on neighbourhood noise prevention, abatement and control
- Further consultation on the first update of 'A Solid Waste Management Strategy for the Maltese Islands'
- Consultation on the first draft of the Document to establish the Strategic Objectives 'Strategic Plan for Environment and Development 2010-2020'
- Consultation Draft of the National Environment Policy (2011).

These consultations were carried out following thorough literature review and research in related environmental health issues to consolidate the evidence-based recommendations.

The EHPCU was also regularly consulted by the MHEC DPDEU office for input regarding EU and international environmental health related issues. Examples of these requests as follows:

⁴ As agreed to in Parma Declaration and Commitment to Act.

- 18-month programme of the Council (1 July 2011 - 31 December 2012) proposed by the future Polish, Danish and Cypriot Presidencies;
- Comments for the Malta representative on the Working Party on Public Health on the Draft Council conclusions on 'Prevention, early detection and treatment of chronic respiratory diseases in children' as proposed by the EU Presidency.

Internal Collaboration and Consultations

EHPCU staff was involved in the formulation and editing of a draft National Obesity Strategy to be published for consultation by the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate.

Media Requests, PQs

A number of media requests and replies to parliamentary questions were submitted by the Unit in 2011.

National Indoor Radon Mapping Study

In December 2011, the EHPCU, in collaboration with WHO Regional Office for Europe, through the Biennial Collaborative Agreement 2010-2011, concluded the data collection for a national study to determine the distribution of radon levels in buildings in Malta and Gozo. Radon measurements were carried out over a period of one year in 85 locations including households, schools and public buildings randomly selected in 5x5 km grid of the Maltese Islands based on a standardised map system in line with harmonised radon maps by DG Joint Research Centre. The study will estimate average annual exposure of the population to radon and the range of exposures occurring and identify areas, if any, where higher than average radon concentrations are likely to be found. This data will also be useful in obtaining average grid, regional radon levels and radon mapping. Mapping is being done in collaboration with the mapping unit at MEPA. The direct benefit of this study will be that of obtaining up-to-date, comparable data for the frequency distributions of indoor radon levels in Maltese households, schools and public places and establish national reference (action) levels which will be used to decide when remedial action advised or required in existing dwellings, although these values are expected to be low, as has been shown in the two local studies on indoor radon conducted previously. The first period measurements (November 2010 to May 2011) obtained in this study were below the European recommendation on the annual mean indoor radon concentrations (400 Bq/m³ in existing buildings and 200 Bq/m³ for new constructions). The second batch of monitor readings should be available in early 2012. Should annual average measurements exceed EU and WHO recommended reference levels, mitigation measures will be proposed.

Monitoring of Child Population Blood Lead Levels

The EHPCU, in collaboration with the Department of Paediatrics and Toxicology laboratory at MDH, is carrying out a study to determine the mean blood lead levels in Maltese children between the ages of 4 and 14. The WHO identifies human exposure to environmental lead as a continuing concern in view of strong accumulating evidence that low levels of exposure to lead have an effect on the neurobehavioral development of children. In view of this evidence, it is important to have a measure of the current blood lead levels in children and depending on the results of this preliminary study, if necessary, to identify possible sources of lead and devise strategies to eliminate the problem. Preliminary results from a recent (2010/2011) yet unpublished study and previous local studies indicate that blood lead levels in the Maltese adult population are largely within acceptable limits, apart from those individuals where occupational exposure had occurred. It is expected that levels in normal children will also be low; however this has yet to be established. The sample will consist of the first 120 children aged between 4-14 years attending the Paediatric outpatients' clinic at MDH and requiring blood investigations for other medical reasons. 82 blood samples have already been analysed during 2011.

Participation in International Projects

TACTICS

The EHPCU is involved in the EU funded project, ‘Tools to Address Childhood Trauma, Injury and Children’s Safety (TACTICS)’. The purpose of this project is to address knowledge gaps related to inequities and child injury, understanding where responsibility for child injury prevention lies within countries and the EU and factors that promote and hinder effective adoption, implementation and impact monitoring of effective multi-sectoral action at all levels. This proposal was accepted for 2010 under the second Health Programme (2008-2013). This project started in January 2011 and will last for 36 months. EHPCU staff attended a project meeting in Rome, Italy, between 4 and 6 October 2011.

RESPIRA

The EHPCU is involved in the RESPIRA project (A1.2.3-7.2) under the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 Operational Programme, which after the first evaluation was deemed eligible for funding under certain conditions. The project, led by the MHEC in collaboration with Sicilian partners (*Università degli Studi di Palermo and Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche*), will look at indoor and outdoor air quality and respiratory health in Malta and Sicily.

PITOC (Public Information Tobacco Control Project)

The EHPCU is a partner in the Public Information Tobacco Control Project, an EU funded project which commenced in 2009. The aim of this project is to contribute to the reduction of smoking-related morbidity and mortality by supporting tobacco product regulation and to inform the public on different tobacco ingredients. One of the obligations laid out by Directive 2001/37/EC is that that part of the data on tobacco ingredients, submitted by manufacturers, must be disseminated to the consumers. To inform the public well, authorities are obliged to make an understandable description of the different tobacco ingredients. During 2011, the PITOC factsheets were almost completed and a dissemination plan drafted.

Tobacco Ingredients Monitoring

The EHPCU is responsible for holding a database according to EU Directive 2001/37, requiring manufacturers and importers of tobacco products to submit a list of all ingredients and toxicological data. Reports are received from 22 importers and three local manufacturers (cigars).

EMTOC

During 2011, the EHPCU continued to work on the introduction of the Electronic Model Tobacco Control (EMTOC) System for the electronic reporting of tobacco product ingredients. This is a European web application which enables safe submission of the lists of tobacco ingredients by importers and manufacturers to the concerned authorities in accordance with the EU practical guide and the European Directive 2001/37. The data submitted to EMTOC is only accessible to national authorities (regulators) and the European Commission. The national authorities of a member state have only access to data submitted to their corresponding member state. Towards the end of 2011, an information meeting was held with the importers concerned regarding the use of the EMTOC system in 2012.

WHO FCTC Reporting

The EHPCU was responsible for the compilation of Malta’s Second Report to the WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control. The report, which was submitted in February 2012, is available online at www.who.int/fctc/reporting/party_reports/mlt/en/index.html

Organisation of Online Introductory HIA Training Course

The EHPCU was responsible for the organisation of an Online Introductory Course in Health Impact Assessment by the University of Liverpool. Ten Environmental Health Officers, including EHPCU staff, participated in this course, which was held over 10 days starting on 28 November 2011.

Human Resources Section

During 2011, the HR Section continued to deal with work in connection with all issues related to HR. All records are kept electronically and continuous updates are made as necessary on a daily basis. This section processed various applications amongst which were vacation leave applications that were updated on a monthly basis on ending of each respective month. Other applications for requests of various leaves were processed following the correct routes and procedures as per Public Service Management Code.

HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION DIRECTORATE

The main aim of the Directorate of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention is to protect and promote the health of people on the Maltese Islands by:

- empowering individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles;
- advocating the creation of supportive environments conducive to health;
- carrying out effective surveillance and control of communicable diseases;
- developing strategies for reducing the burden of communicable and non communicable disease.

The main tasks of this directorate are to:

- enhance knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and values that are conducive to good health;
- educate and empower the public to adopt healthy behaviour, enhance personal skills, promote environmental change and advocate lifestyle policies favourable to health;
- monitor health and disease trends and provide the necessary input to the development of policies in respect of communicable and non communicable diseases;
- study ways for promoting better nutrition; preventing excessive weight, obesity and chronic disease in people;
- formulate effective health promotion measures, in cooperation with the key stakeholders, by applying a multi sectoral approach;
- produce publications and use media on a range of health topics;
- formulate and regularly update national policy for communicable disease and ensure its implementation;
- carry out field investigation and epidemiological control of communicable diseases;
- minimise the transmission of and mortality from communicable diseases;
- prepare operational policies and strategies aimed at reducing non communicable diseases and their impact on morbidity and mortality;
- reduce the incidence, morbidity and mortality from non communicable diseases;
- formulate contingency plans for potential epidemics and prepare national plans for biological threats to public health.

Activities are categorised under three units:

- Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Unit;
- Health Promotion Unit; and
- Non-communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL UNIT (IDCU)

During 2011, the Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Unit (IDCU) maintained its primary role of surveillance, investigation and control of infectious diseases notified to the Directorate.

Notifiable Diseases

Statutorily notifiable infectious diseases are reported to the Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Unit by medical practitioners, the microbiology and virology laboratories at MDH and other medical diagnostic laboratories. The data presented in this report may be subject to changes according to further investigation results.

- *AIDS*: 6 cases of AIDS were reported during the year; five of which occurred in non-residents and were imported. The gender distribution was of five males and one female.
- *HIV*: 21 cases were reported during the year. 14 of these cases occurred in Maltese residents (13 males and one female) and were probably locally acquired except for three cases who were foreigners. Seven occurred in non-residents and it is thought that all of these cases were imported. The latter group shows a gender distribution of three female and four males. It is thought that of all AIDS/HIV 27 cases, seven were acquired through MSM contacts and 16 through heterosexual transmission, except for four that were unknown.
- *Acute Flaccid Paralysis*: Active surveillance continued throughout this year with reporting to the WHO. There were no cases of AFP in children <15 years reported in 2011. There were a number of cases of acute flaccid paralysis in adults but these all subsequently had a diagnosis of Guillain Barre Syndrome.
- *Diseases of Childhood*
 - three single lab confirmed cases of measles that included an imported case, as well as a cluster of 2 cases;
 - one reported case of rubella as well as two clusters of two cases each;
 - eight confirmed cases of *pertussis* and four clusters involving 12 persons notified;
 - 146 cases of chickenpox plus six clusters involving 14 persons notified;
 - 13 cases of herpes zoster reported;
 - 15 sporadic cases of scarlet fever and one cluster of two cases notified.
- *Hepatitis*
 - four cases of Hepatitis A notified, two of which in Maltese residents and one (involving a foreigner) imported;
 - two cases of acute Hepatitis B, both in Maltese residents but one of which was probably imported, as well as one cluster notified; cluster involved two foreigners and was imported;
 - four cases of acute Hepatitis C, three in Maltese residents and one in a foreigner, notified.
- *Food and Water Borne Diseases*: The table below shows the sporadic cases of notified food related, gastro-intestinal infections for 2011. A short description for each type is given.

<i>Sporadic cases of Food and Water borne diseases for 2011</i>		
	Total	Remarks
Campylobacter	196	Affected 196 individual cases; caused 10 outbreaks affecting estimated 25 persons
E. Coli	3	3 individual cases
Giardiasis	7	1 case was imported
Hepatitis A	4	1 case imported
Listeria	2	
Salmonella	116	Individual cases, of which one was imported; additionally, 7 separate outbreaks affected 26 persons
Typhoid (<i>Salmonella typhi</i>)	2	
Shigella	1	1 sporadic case, together with 2 clusters involving 15 persons
Toxic (Scombroid + Staphylococcal)	2	2 sporadic cases of scombrototoxicity; 5 separate outbreaks of toxic foodborne illness (incl scombrototoxicity and staphylococcal poisoning) that affected 13 persons
Unspecified	33	Individual cases; in addition, 40 reported separate outbreaks that affected an estimated 261 persons

- General Note on Food-borne Illness Outbreaks: 41 food-borne outbreaks and clusters have been notified in 2011, affecting an estimated 201 people (241 in 2008, 310 in 2009, 163 in 2010). These

outbreaks showed an association with households (31%), restaurants (39%), while 22% were related to take away food and 7% originated from institutions.

- *Norovirus Outbreaks*: An unexpected number of Norovirus outbreaks occurred in 2011 involving mainly Long-Term-Care-Facilities (private and government) where an estimated 217 persons were affected in seven outbreaks. There were also two Norovirus outbreaks related to restaurants and affecting 102 persons. Transmission was mainly through person to person or environmental contamination.
- *Legionnaire's Disease*: In 2011, there were 13 cases of Legionnaire's disease reported to IDCU - eight were Maltese and one was a foreigner, and these acquired the infection through local residences (households) or other establishments. Three occurred in foreigners whose infection may be associated with travel to local hotels and one occurred in a Maltese resident and may be associated with travel abroad. All were diagnosed and confirmed through urinary antigen testing. The three cases that may be associated with stay at a hotel in Malta were diagnosed abroad and reported to us by ELDSNet, the European Legionnaires' Disease Surveillance System. These three cases of foreigners associated with stay in Malta were duly investigated and the reports were sent to ELDSNet. The other case of a Maltese resident that may be associated with a hotel abroad was diagnosed in Malta and a report sent to ELDSNet.
- *Leishmaniasis*
 - *Cutaneous Leishmaniasis* - 1 notified case of cutaneous Leishmaniasis
 - *Visceral Leishmaniasis* - 2 cases of visceral Leishmaniasis
- *Leptospirosis*: 1 case of leptospiral disease notified
- *Malaria*: 1 case of malaria reported (imported)
- *Meningococcal Disease*: In 2011 there were a reported total of 11 cases of invasive meningococcal disease. Of these, six were cases of meningococcal septicaemia (two fatalities), three were cases of meningococcal meningitis whilst the remaining two were cases of *Neisseria meningitidis* isolated from another sterile site. Another three cases of meningitis caused by other bacteria were also reported, of which two cases were fatal.
- *Typhus*: three reported and confirmed cases of *murine typhus*, and one confirmed case of *tick-borne typhus*.
- *Sexually Transmitted Infections*
 - 155 notified cases of Chlamydia, 23 of which were non-residents
 - 47 cases of Gonorrhoea, of which 6 occurred in non-residents
 - 23 cases of latent syphilis, amongst which 18 were non-residents
 - 11 cases of secondary syphilis reported; of which one was a foreigner
 - five cases of primary syphilis reported
- *Scabies*: A cluster of scabies was notified in April in a day care centre. Other clusters of cases occurred affecting a number of persons. In the last quarter, there were two large outbreaks in two long-term-care-facilities and where a number of residents were affected, together with some of their carers who in turn transmitted it to their family members or close contacts. The unit had the responsibility of surveillance and monitoring these outbreaks. There were also a number of sporadic cases in the community and in two other long-term-care facilities. The estimated total number of confirmed cases throughout the year was 394. Contacts were given prophylaxis and this necessitated a large amount of treatment.

Sentinel Surveillance

For the influenza season of 2011-2012, eight private GPs participated in sentinel surveillance of influenza. Active sentinel surveillance is ongoing for this Influenza season.

Travel Medical Advice

The Unit provided information to the general public requesting medical advice prior to travelling abroad.

Website

The Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Unit maintained its website by posting monthly reports and also posting information of communicable diseases and any related press releases or updates, as required.

Academic

- Talks to the general public on Labelling of Food products
- Lectures to undergraduates and post graduate students on communicable diseases
- Talks on radio and TV on communicable diseases
- Talks on scabies, Asian mosquito tiger and influenza
- Hosted of a trainee as part of a training programme for specialisation in public health

Conferences, Seminars, Courses and Meetings

Departmental officials attended various conferences, seminars, courses, meetings and workshops both locally and abroad. In all they attended one course abroad on training on prevention and control of seasonal influenza, and a number of meetings abroad which included Health Security meetings, Advisory Forum, Episouth and network meetings on Tuberculosis, Food borne, Influenza, Sexually Transmitted infections and HIV, and Legionnaires organised by the European Communicable Disease Centre (ECDC) in Sweden.

Other Work during 2011

- The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate led the Tuberculosis (TB) Committee which finalised the draft TB Strategy for the prevention and management of TB in Malta.
- One year surveillance of the Asian mosquito tiger throughout the Maltese Islands from September 2010 up to September 2011 in collaboration with the International Environment Institute from the University of Malta and the Environmental Health Directorate.
- An EU funded project called *Mare Nostrum* was finalised by July 2011. IDCU collaborated closely with the Italian NIHMP (National Institute for Health, Migration and Poverty) together with the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs to improve the health care of migrants in open centres in Malta by providing secondary level medical assistance and providing information for civilian and detention service staff in these centres and train health care professionals working with migrants. Two booklets were produced and are being distributed. One is a practical handbook for health care providers on International Migration and Health and another practical guide for non medical workers on Hygiene and Prevention in centres for asylum seekers.
- Participated in International Health Regulation committee, Intersectoral Pandemic Committee, National Antibiotic Committee, National TB Advisory Committee.
- Provided data to various networks including ESSTI, EWGLI, EUVACNET, TESSy and WHO and completed numerous questionnaires to WHO, ECDC, EU Commission and international EU funded project related to infectious diseases.
- IDCU undertook an evaluation exercise on the response by the Health authorities during the influenza pandemic. A report is being prepared.
- IDCU is also undertaking a prioritisation exercise on infectious diseases.

Awareness Initiatives

The Unit was also active in raising awareness on infectious diseases and prevention measures:

- *World TB day* - Awareness was raised on the transmission of the disease and on symptoms for early diagnosis
- *Immunisation week* - Malta joined the rest of Europe during European Immunisation week to raise awareness on the importance of immunisation with the public and special focus on childhood immunisations. Health professionals were also the target group whereby a booklet on vaccine preventable diseases and vaccines were prepared. A seminar for health professionals was held.

- *World Health Day* - The directorate together with the antibiotic committee joined the global move on raising awareness on antimicrobial resistance targeting the general public by means of an awareness campaign and health professionals by means of a seminar on Antibiotic Day.
- *Influenza vaccination campaign* - The directorate joined Primary Care to enhance the vaccine uptake by means of an intensive campaign targeting all people but with a focus on vulnerable sectors. The uptake till end of 2011 was 75,000 doses out of 80,000 procured.
- *Food safety campaign* - held in conjunction with the Environmental Health Directorate focused mainly on food labelling.

Other Functions of the IDCU

The Unit was also involved in other duties falling under the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate namely:

- the vetting of working permits of foreigners from the health point of view
- together with the Environmental Health Directorate, preparing a labelling of food products leaflet for distribution in supermarkets
- hosting local and foreign public health trainees as part of their specialist training programme and other students for attachments.

Tuberculosis Prevention and Control

The Chest Unit within the IDCU coordinates activities on TB prevention, surveillance and control. The main functions of the Chest Unit during 2011 were to run the Screening Programme for Irregular Migrants arriving in Malta, screening of third country nationals applying for work permits in Malta, screening of foreign students, prisoners and staff working in environments placing them at high risk for TB infection. The Chest Unit also screened contacts of patients infected with TB and provided BCG vaccine to those working in high risk areas or those travelling to high prevalence countries and organised Directly Observed Treatment for TB patients. The Chest Unit also gave lectures to interested groups (particularly those working with irregular migrants) on TB and reported data on TB to the WHO and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

In 2011, the Chest Unit further strengthened the provision of Directly Observed Therapy for TB in open centres for irregular migrants, and continued work on guidelines for pre-employment screening for TB and screening of schoolchildren for TB. A database was also created to collect information on screening of irregular immigrants electronically. Following the advice of the Advisory Committee on Immunisation Policy, procedures for vaccinating children born to parents hailing from high risk countries were strengthened in collaboration with the Paediatric Department at MDH.

Tuberculosis Notifications

There were 33 cases of TB notified during 2011 as follows:

- three pulmonary TB cases in Maltese nationals
- 19 pulmonary TB cases in foreign nationals (19 asylum seekers)
- three extra pulmonary TB cases in Maltese nationals
- eight extra pulmonary TB cases in foreign nationals (five asylum seekers)

As in previous years, the majority of TB cases were among foreigners (79% of total TB cases), and among these irregular migrants were the predominant group (73% of total TB cases). These numbers are provisional and could change following the receipt of further laboratory data.

Contact Tracing

The number of persons screened as contacts of notified TB cases in 2011 is given below.

Examination of contacts of notified TB cases	
Outcome	Contacts
Active TB and Treated	0
Referred to Chest Clinic	8
Referred to COP	0
Discharged	31
Total Screened	39

Work Permits

During the year, 713 foreigners were screened for TB during the work permit application process (127 of them are refugees). Of all foreigners that were screened, nine had abnormal Chest X-rays and were referred to the Chest Clinic for follow-up. None were diagnosed as active TB. Three were found to be suffering from Hepatitis B.

Screening Programme for Irregular Migrants

During the year, 1,579 irregular migrants were screened for TB on entry. Of these, 84 had an abnormal screening and were referred to the Chest Clinic for assessment; seven cases of active tuberculosis were found. The following table shows the results of the TB screening programme in irregular migrants to Malta.

Type of Screening Programme	Persons Screened	Outcome
Irregular Immigrants (Landing) ¹	1,579	84 abnormal CXRs; all referred to Chest Clinic; 7 cases were notified as active TB; 6 were started on preventive treatment
Irregular Immigrants (Release) ²	1,021	No abnormal CXRs; no cases were notified as active TB
Screening Programme for Irregular Immigrants (Minors and Pregnant women) ³	Minors: 134 Pregnant: 62	29 had a high Mantoux test and were referred to COP All pregnant women were referred to Chest Clinic and discharge

Screening of Employees Working in High Risk Environments

Although there is no routine recall system for screening of employees working in high risk environments, persons working with irregular migrants are encouraged to attend for annual screening for tuberculosis. This included the Detention Service, AFM, Police, Jesuit Refugee Service, Refugee Commission and Appoġġ personnel. The objective is to test for tuberculin sero-conversion, or high tuberculin reactors and to offer them preventive treatment if required. In 2011, out of 133 persons screened, ten were referred to Chest Clinic for assessment. There were no cases of active pulmonary disease among these personnel.

Screening of Employees working in high risk environments in 2011				
	Tested	High Mantoux	Given BCG	Referred Chest Clinic
AFM/Detention service	76	6	2	6
Police	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Other agencies - Appoġġ/ Refugee Commission etc	57	4	NIL	4
Total	133	10	NIL	10

¹ Irregular immigrants screened for TB on arrival in Malta in 2011.

² Screening of irregular immigrants prior to release from detention centres. This data refers to immigrants released in 2011.

³ Minors and pregnant women are additionally screened through Mantoux tests for evidence of latent TB.

Others

Foreign students are referred to the Chest Unit for TB screening prior to entering a state school in Malta. Of the 260 persons screened, six had a positive tuberculin skin test and were referred to Children's Outpatients for assessment.

Tuberculin Testing and BCG Vaccination

The Chest Unit administered a total of 495 BCG vaccinations in 2011. These were mainly vaccinations of children born to irregular immigrants and foreigners from high incidence countries residing in Malta. The Unit also performed a total of 295 tuberculin skin tests. These were as follows:

- 126 as part of screening of school children coming from high risk countries of TB.
- 38 as screening of irregular immigrants (including minors and prior to giving BCG to children of irregular immigrants and to those babies of foreign parents who are born in Malta)
- 29 as part of testing of persons who stayed in high risk countries for a period >four weeks
- 32 as part of screening of contacts of cases of active Tuberculosis
- 70 classified as miscellaneous.

Referrals from School Medical Services

Seventeen school children were referred by the School Medical Services because of a high reaction to tuberculin testing and were referred to Children's outpatient for further follow-up and possible treatment. No one was notified as active Tuberculosis.

Other Activities

- Collaboration of data with international entities like ECDC, WHO and KNCV (Royal Netherlands Tuberculosis Association)
- Organisation of DOTS (directly observed treatment) for patients with active TB

HEALTH PROMOTION UNIT

The Health Promotion Unit had an eventful year in promoting health and wellbeing to the general public as well as contributing to the development of strategies and action plans in line with current policies of the MHEC. Various initiatives were taken in various settings including the community, schools and the workplace. Collaboration with stakeholders is an important arm in health promotion. This includes the education sector through regular meetings of the education health committee and agriculture amongst others.

Legislation and Policy

- *Tobacco Legislation*: The Health Promotion Unit actively contributed to the development and drafting of legislation on Tobacco Act and the use of Colour Photographs or other Illustrations as Health Warnings on Tobacco Packaging. The Smoking in Public Places Regulations came into effect in January 2011 while the Pictorials (Legal Notice 302 of 2009) came into effect on 27 April 2011.
- *Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes*: The consultation on the draft legal notice on Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes and other related products was launched during the Breastfeeding Week held in November.
- *Reformulation of Salt, Fats and Sugars*: Research on the reformulation of salt, fats and sugars was carried out as background documentation for the working group on reformulation which will be set up in 2012.

- *Malta Food and Nutrition Policy*: An expert from the WHO was invited to Malta to advise on the updating of the Food and Nutrition Policy. Dr Joao Breda visited Malta on 14 and 15 December 2011, and had meetings with a number of stakeholders, including Education, MCCA and Agriculture.
- *Obesity Action Plan*: The Health Promotion Unit actively participated in the drafting of the Obesity Action Plan following on from the Healthy Weight for Life Strategy.

EU Co-funded Projects

H-Cube

The Unit was a partner of an EU project, H-CUBE, which targeted three specific infections namely Hepatitis B and C and HIV/AIDS. The project was co-financed by the European Commission – Executive Agency for Health and Consumers, Health Programme 2008. The main aim of the project was primarily to organise a European information and prevention campaign involving young people aged between 15 and 24 years. An online course on the three infections was organised as part of the project aimed at young people, parents, teachers, counsellors and health professionals. Three sessions were held and over 120 people completed the course. Outreach programmes were held in a number of localities where young people gather. These were launched on the occasion of World Hepatitis Day. In Malta, these included The Point in Sliema, The Gallarija in Fgura and Baystreet, as well as on the Gozo Ferry. Young people were also reached on the beach and through internet. The H-Cube project material were also disseminated during Health Promotion initiatives aimed at young people including Reach on the Beach, a project targeting young people and bars frequented by young people. The project terminated in 2011, however the material generated for such project will be used in ongoing initiatives.

Projects and Initiatives

Alcohol

A campaign highlighting the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol was held throughout December to once again remind the public to avoid consuming alcohol if driving and the alternatives available. This campaign was organised through a working group set up by the unit and included representatives of the Police, Civil Protection Department, Malta Transport, Sedqa and Malta Touring Club.

Cancer Prevention

World Cancer Day in February is an annual event, which is commemorated to draw attention to cancer prevention. The Unit participated in an activity organised in Valletta together with the Malta Medical Students Association. The aim was to raise awareness on cancer, prevention, early diagnosis and treatment for all cancers. Outreach events were held during the cancer week in May focusing on tobacco.

Euromelanoma Day: An initiative promoting awareness of the harmful effects of the sun was carried out in collaboration with the Department for Dermatology. The message promoted the precautions that need to be taken to avoid exposure and utilised mainly billboards. The theme for this year was *Save our Skin*. A 3-page leaflet on pigmented skin lesions, entitled ABCDE was also produced.

During October, the month was dedicated to *breast cancer awareness*. It was an active month with outreaches and initiatives to enhance awareness, prevention measures including early detection.

Healthy Aging

A two-day Train the Trainers seminar with the title *B'Saħħitna Tul Ħajjitna* was held at the Multi Resource Room, St Luke's Hospital on 12 and 13 September, and addressed 17 Community Care staff.

The course included tobacco, effective patient communication, nutrition, physical activity, memory enhancement and drug use.

Health Behaviour of School-aged Children Study

Documents pertaining to the Health Behaviour of School Aged Children study were uploaded to the Data Bank in Bergen for cleaning. These included the data gathered, the questionnaire used, the back translation of the questionnaire and the frequency tables.

Nutrition

Breastfeeding

National Breastfeeding Week – November 2011. The Breastfeeding Week Working Group was reconvened to organise the initiative to enhance breastfeeding. This included the set-up of a breastfeeding room at MDH, development of new and updating of existent brochures on breastfeeding and the guidelines to set up a breastfeeding room at the place of work and public places. A Breastfeeding Seminar was also organised for the general public.

Mother and Baby Clubs

The Unit is collaborating with existing Mother and Baby Clubs run by Cana Movement in educating mothers how to introduce healthy foods to their child at an early stage to prevent obesity at a later stage. A recipe 3-gate leaflet will be given to the mothers.

A working group on Child Obesity Clinic was set up to develop a proposal for a pilot service of child obesity clinics. This formed a multi-professional group including public health, nutritionists, dieticians, paediatricians, physiotherapists, social worker and psychologist.

European Obesity Day

Various measures were taken along the year to tackle the issue of obesity in adults and children. On European Obesity Day, a number of initiatives were launched:

- Launch of Weight Management Courses for MDH staff
- Evidence-based information to health professionals, doctors, pharmacists on management of obesity
- Interviews on media
- Promotion of PSA clips on radio and TV
- Outreach events in various settings.

Salt Initiative

The Unit held A Pinch of Salt Only Campaign in Valletta. The public was offered the opportunity to check their blood pressure and their body mass index. People were offered nutrition advice.

Milk Initiative

The Unit collaborated to the Milk National Campaign led by the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs, targeting school children.

School Fruit Scheme

The Health Promotion Unit forms part of an Inter Ministerial Committee that runs the School Fruit Scheme. The SFS is an EU co-funded project that offers all eligible children, between the ages of three to ten a portion of fruit or vegetables at school once a week. The SFS is managed by the Paying Agency of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. The Paying Agency works in collaboration with the

Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family and the MHEC. The SFS is co-financed 75% from EU funds and 25% from Malta's funds. The scheme was set up as one of many attempts to reduce the increasing obesity rates amongst young children throughout Europe. The SFS endeavours to create awareness amongst children as to what types of fruit and vegetables are available, how they taste, and why they are so beneficial for healthy bodies. Locally the scheme is in its second year. The Unit was entrusted to carry out a preliminary evaluation of the project covering January to July 2011.

Tobacco

Young Female Campaign

An anti-smoking campaign targeting young females between the ages of 18 and 25 was launched. The focus was on the progression of the aging process and wrinkling as a result of smoking. The campaign was spread over two weeks with outreaches in three different colleges. Outreaches were held at post secondary schools. This initiative will be ongoing in various settings reaching young females.

Malta is a participating member in eSCCAN (a Smoking Cessation Clinics Assessment and Network Project). The project is managed by *Office Français de Prévention du Tabagisme* (OFT), which is an NGO involved in research and development in the field of tobacco control in France since 1991. The project, which is in three stages, is related to the delivery of tobacco service as referred to Article 14 in the Framework Convention of Tobacco Control.

The Unit is working on a project on 'TobTaxy' which addresses tobacco taxation and smuggling in the EU. A questionnaire that also needed the input from Customs and the Ministry of Finance between January and April was eventually submitted. An officer from the Unit attended the training.

Smoke-Free Hospitals

The Unit is an active participant in the Smoking and Health Committee at MDH. The committee is working on an initiative with plans towards a smoke free hospital. The unit was responsible for the smoking support services for MDH Staff, the development of the awareness campaign related to the project and the tender for smoking shelters to be set up in 2012.

World No Tobacco Day

A number of outreach activities were held during Cancer Week leading up to World No Tobacco Day in various settings. Information on tobacco cessation through booklets and one to one advice were possible following the press conference. Malta, together with other EU countries, launched an online game on e-health web site in collaboration with e SCCAN network - an anti-tobacco game for children that educates and encourages the moving away from passive smoking. This is also available on the website.

Physical Activity

The Unit made an effort to increase the level of health enhancing physical activity in the population. A number of aerobics instructors were recruited to run the aerobics classes organised by the Unit. In conjunction with this, agreements were signed with a number of local councils who are willing to hold the aerobics classes.

Move for Health Day was celebrated through an advertising campaign aired on television stations. An aerobics session was held in front of the building of the MHEC in Valletta to encourage people to participate in such activities. The Walking Bus was launched and is currently up and running healthily in Hal Safi and Gudja.

The Unit's participation at Freshers Week both at on University campus, and at the Junior College focused on Physical Activity specifically aimed at young people.

The Unit collaborated with *Majjistral Park* to organise walks for different age groups and collaborated also on Cuboree Scouts' open day.

Workplace Health Promotion

The Unit this year greatly enhanced its work within the workplace setting, by collaborating and offering its services to the following entities:

- Occupational Health and Safety Authority - collaborated in launching a leaflet on Healthy Lunches for the Workplace;
- BOV - offered its services to BOV in April 2011 for the organisation of a Health Week held at the Bank's Centre and which included the publication of a recipe book; talks carried out at the Centre, and an exhibition of health-related material. The Unit also ran a 10-week Weight Management programme for BOV staff;
- MEPA - Healthy Lifestyles programme was started in October and is to continue till June with various monthly talks by HPU members regarding various health subjects. A Weight Management programme was also carried out, due to finish in February 2012;
- Inter Continental Hotel - a seminar on Healthy Lifestyles at the place of work was held. A 10-week Weight Management programme and an Aerobics programme were offered;
- Corinthia San Gorg - the Health Promotion Unit gave talks about various subjects for Healthy Living;
- Malta Enterprise - on World Diabetes Day, talks were given at ME on Healthy Eating in conjunction with testing for diabetes and blood pressure.

Healthy Living Website

The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate launched a section on the *ehealth.gov.mt* portal specifically targeting healthy living. This website has information on various topics for a healthier lifestyle. Information is also available for all age groups of the population including babies, children, adults and elderly people. The website also has a series of recipes which constitute a healthy meal and which do not have high sugar, fat or salt content.

Sexual Health

Sexual Health Strategy

The Directorate participated in the sexual health strategy formulation and implementation committee. The strategy was launched during the year. A tender was issued for a pack for media professionals and was awarded. Another tender was issued for the development of a website on sexual health. A three-day training seminar was held, dealing with sexual health targeting various professionals working in the field. The feedback was evaluated and will be used to build a plan for training needs in the area.

World AIDS Day

An awareness campaign was held to promote sexual health, utilising various mediums including bus shelter ads, print media, radio ads, internet banners and outreach events.

Outreach Activities

The Unit actively participated in a number of outreach activities in the Community. These included:

- *Your Health we Care* Open Day at the MHEC
- *Festa Ċitru* at the President's Palace
- World Cancer Day in Valletta

- KSU Open Week to promote young people's health
- *Hu Hsieb Qalbek* event on St Valentine's Day at the entrance to Valletta
- PSD Day at Cospicua Secondary School
- *Festa Frawli*
- Salt Awareness Week
- Nutritional advice during Parents' Day at Żejtun Kindergarten School
- Nutritional advice during Parents' Day at St Martin's College, Swatar
- Żejtun outdoor Summer Fitness Parties
- *Deċeduti* Grand Premier at MFCC, Ta' Qali
- Science Fair at St Monica School, B'Kara
- Malta Trade Fair within the OPM stand
- European Cancer Prevention Week
- World Heart Day in collaboration with MMSA
- *Notte Bianca*
- Fresher's Week at the University of Malta
- Breast Care activities in collaboration with NGOs in Baystreet
- World Diabetes Day
- Fun Run organised by the Fleur de Lys Local Council
- Outreach at St Martin's College
- Outreach Day at St Joseph School, Paola
- Outreach Day at the St Thomas More College in Tarxien
- Floriana Primary School - Physical Activity Morning
- Woman's Day Fun Run
- World Hypertension Day in Valletta
- Cancer Prevention outreach in Żabbar
- World Heart Day at Marsascula
- Outreach on healthy living in collaboration with Żebbug Local Council
- President Fun Run
- European Year for Volunteering Tour

Media Coverage

The Unit collaborated with the media in producing the following programmes:

- a health series of 14 programmes were scheduled in September-December 2011 on *Radju Marija*;
- in coordination with the Education Channel, a series of 13 weekly programmes entitled *Hekk Aħjar* – a health education programme to address the public health challenge of overweight and obesity among the Maltese public.

Besides these, officers from the Unit gave regular interviews on RTK, Radio 101, One Radio, PBS, the Favourite Channel, Net TV and One TV covering diverse subjects.

Talks

Officers from the Unit gave talks covering all areas of Health Promotion in a wide variety of settings, including:

- Talks on Maintaining a Healthy Lifestyle, given at CDRT, Sa Maison;
- Presentations were given on health promotion to 14-year old students as per the 'Job Exposure' initiative;
- A presentation to a group of 45 adolescents attending Kerygma (Catholic group) on healthy eating/physical activity at St Dominic's Convent, Rabat (October). To the elderly at B'Kara;
- School children at Floriana about the benefits of breakfast and performing physical activity;
- Talk to Italian students about healthy eating;
- Held several talks in schools and post-secondary schools (one in Cospicua Girl Secondary School, two in St Benedict's School Tarxien, one at MCAST, two at Sacred Heart School, three at Verdala International School, one at St Catherine' High School in Pembroke, one at St Joseph School in Paola, 1 at Attard Primary School and one at St Thomas More College, Tarxien Primary);

- Talks at Inspire and Equal Partners;
- Presentation at the Clinical Nutrition Conference;
- Talks to the elderly (among others one at the Żurrieq Parish Church and 1 at Santa Luċija *Għaqda Romol*);
- Talk to primary schoolchildren at Floriana Primary School during a Healthy Breakfast organised at school;
- Talk at the Coeliac Association and participation in discussions all morning.

Training

The Unit once again confirmed its belief in continuous training of staff by creating opportunities for training for all members of staff. Staff participated in training the following training throughout 2011:

- Team Building Day held in collaboration with OHSA
- A course on Community Development
- A full day seminar regarding Sexual Health
- A half day seminar re: 'Family, Work-Balance and Parenting'
- A one-day national workshop organised by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, NCPE. The topic for the workshop was discussion and reporting on a EU document on Active Aging, Discrimination and Employment, Age Diversity in Employment and the Economic Case for Anti-Discrimination.

Services

- One-to-one counselling service for weight loss was given to some clients where the weight management programme was deemed inappropriate.
- Guidance on standards in the area of healthy eating within Rehab Facilities of Clients with Addiction to alcohol and drugs to the Department of Social Welfare.
- 28 classes in Weight Management were run involving 521 participants and one class at MDH for staff.
- A total of 16 Smoking Cessation clinics involving 538 participants were held in the community.
- Smoking Cessation Classes were offered also at MDH.
- The Quitline and the Freephone are available for the general public wanting to seek support related to smoking cessation or to apply for smoking cessation classes. On average the Quitline answers about three calls a day, around 750 calls in a year.
- One-to-one counselling on Tobacco Cessation. One of the most effective ways to help a person quit that is usually done through an appointment when smokers are not able to use other community services. The quitters are either followed up by other additional appointments or through telephone calls.
- The Unit organises Aerobics classes that are offered free of charge in collaboration with local councils. A total of 32 classes were held in 2011 involving 839 participants.

Website

The Health Promotion Unit website was continually updated with material related to the initiatives and campaigns held during the year. A depository of support material including leaflets and posters were posted in the library section on the website.

Resources

2011 was another demanding year for the Graphic Design Section of the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate. Various publications were designed as part of national campaigns to promote healthy lifestyles for all the three units within the Directorate. The section carried out photographic coverage for a number of the press conferences, seminars and outreach activities organised by the Directorate.

Various other departments, within the MHEC, requested work related with the design of publications and adverts among which, the Infection Control Unit of MDH, Dermatology Department of SPBH and the Environmental Health Directorate.

A number of past publications were reprinted. These were *L-Ahwa Skely, Ibda Issa – Hu Hsieb l-Ghadam Tieghek, Kun Af*, Healthy Weight for Life, Read Food Labels for Healthier Choices, Eat well by the Following, Application – *Programm tat-Telf tal-Piz Żejjed*, Application – *Ghandek Piz Żejjed*, Application – *Hu Sahhitek Lura* (Smoking Cessation Classes), Salt and Your Health, Lunch box for the Workplace, Love Your Body Love Your Self – Be Breast Aware and Food, Salt and Blood Pressure.

All publications were converted to PDF and are uploaded on the Directorate's website https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/health_promotion/library/publications.aspx

New publications during the year were:

- a set of leaflets related with old people's health: *It-Tabakk, Ikel Bnin Biex Matul Hajjitna Nibqghu b'Sahhitna, Il-Konsum tal-Medicini, Il-Memorja* and *L-Eżerċizzju Fiziku*;
- a leaflet on the prevention of cancer entitled *Minimising the Risk of Cancer*;
- a leaflet on Sexual Health Infections and a booklet named *Is-Sahha Sesswali*;
- a booklet *Ikel Bnin ghat-Tfal tal-Iskola*
- the Official Guide to Immunisations, produced for the Advisory Committee on Immunisation Policy;
- a flyer promoting physical activity, particularly walking;
- a leaflet entitled *Healthy Recipes with Strawberries*;
- an A4, 12-page drawing book was called *Fruit and Vegetables: Colour Your Day*;
- a B5 20 page booklet, entitled *Guidelines for the Feeding of Infants and Young Children*;
- a Snakes and Ladders board game;
- an A5, three-gate leaflet entitled *Fat and Cholesterol*;
- a wall calendar for 2012 and a 3-gate leaflet both entitled *Labelling of Food Products*;
- a three-gate leaflet *Getting Breastfeeding Started: My Diary*;
- a sticker (two different sizes) with the official breastfeeding logo
- an A4 brochure called *Breastfeeding - Frequently Asked Questions*
- a publication entitled *Id-Dieta Bilanċjata, Dieta Mediterranja*;
- a leaflet *Control the Wrinkling Process... Quit Tobacco Now!*

International Participation

Officers at the Health Promotion Unit participated in a number of meetings and conferences abroad. These included meetings of the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity, Biannual HBSC meetings, H-Cube meetings also held biannually, and a capacity building workshop on tobacco taxation and smuggling. The Unit was also represented at the Expert Meeting on Diet, Physical Activity and Tobacco in Godollo, Hungary. Malta presented a scientific poster and won an award for the 'Healthy Weight for Life' campaign 2011.

Contributions

The Unit contributed and filled in the following questionnaires:

- WHO Questionnaire on HIV/AIDS and Nutrition was completed and returned to the WHO.
- WHO Questionnaire on Obesity Economic Costs in collaboration with the Health Information and Research Directorate was completed and returned to Dr Breda (WHO).
- RIVM online questionnaire on community based initiatives on obesity among children was completed.
- Feedback was given to RIVM Netherlands regarding the community based initiatives organised by the Malta Sports Council.
- An online survey that looked into Malta's Tobacco Dependence treatment given and local policy.

NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL UNIT

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

Non communicable (chronic) diseases put a significant health, social and economic burden on the Maltese population. The major chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes and cancer are caused by preventable lifestyle factors such as unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use and alcohol misuse. By investing in the prevention and better control of chronic diseases, there is an improvement in the quality of life of people with a concomitant improvement in socio-economic factors. The National Non Communicable Disease Strategy (2010) sets strategic objectives aimed at reducing both population and individual risk factors and improving the management and outcome of chronic diseases. Its aim is to make the healthier choice the easier choice.

Implementation of National NCD Strategy

The implementation plan was drafted in 2011 and identifies and prioritises the specific actions and resources required within defined timeframes in order to achieve the ten year targets of the NCD Strategy. Actions within the area of musculoskeletal diseases were undertaken by staff at NCDU.

International Collaboration on Non-communicable Diseases

Staff within NCDU collaborated regularly during 2011 with the WHO and the European Union in preparatory meetings and briefings for the National Assembly Meeting of the United Nations held in New York in September 2011 to consider the non-communicable diseases. This was a unique occasion as it was only the second time in its history that the National Assembly of the United Nations has been dedicated to a health topic. Malta was signatory to the political declaration on NCDs issued by the United Nations on 19 September 2011.

National Strategy against Excess Weight

Overweight and obesity is the most significant health challenge facing adults and children in the Maltese population. Excess weight is responsible for a significant proportion of cases of Type II diabetes, ischaemic heart disease and hypertension. It reduces life expectancy and significantly reduces health-related quality of life and increases the risk of onset of several non-communicable diseases. The health consequences of overweight and obesity are also important in children.

The NCD Unit has worked intensively with stakeholders in the drafting of a National Strategy against Excess Weight. The draft strategy underwent extensive internal and external consultation in 2011. It proposes actions such as legislation, health services, health promotion campaigns and other national interventions especially in the areas related to nutrition and physical activity, in order to prevent the population getting heavier and to reverse the trend. The strategy will be launched in 2012. Actions identified as within the competence of MHEC are being implemented.

Website

The NCDU website was launched in February 2011. It contains resources related to non-communicable diseases for both the general public and health professionals, links to relevant international websites and events organised by the NCD Unit. The website is updated regularly.

Osteoporosis and Healthy Bones Campaign

During 2011, the pilot phase of the Healthy Bones Campaign, which was launched on 20 October 2010, was implemented in three state school colleges. Part of the Healthy Bones Campaign consisted of a pre-

and post-intervention evaluation questionnaire. This questionnaire sought to evaluate the change, if any, in knowledge and behaviour of the students with regard to what helps to develop and maintain strong bones and what hinders this.

Meetings with the Education Officers for Personal and Social Development (PSD), Physical Education (PE), Home Economics and Biology, with the College Principals of the selected colleges and the PSD teachers were carried out during the planning stage of the campaign. The implementation of the pilot stage of the campaign took place within these colleges between February and June 2011.

Inputting of the evaluation questionnaires' data and analysis of this data took place during the following three months. The results were then presented during a seminar titled Prevention of Osteoporosis, which was held at the National Curriculum Centre in Hamrun on 20 October 2011. Representatives of primary school and secondary school PSD teachers gave presentations on their experiences as well as feedback from students.

The evaluation of the Healthy Bones Pilot Campaign showed an overall positive outcome, with an increase in knowledge, a positive change in dietary behaviour and an increase in physical exercise. However, the number of hours spent watching television and using the computer are of concern. This is particularly so for secondary school students, the majority of who spend more than two hours using the computer both during weekdays (55.4%) and on weekends (64.7%).

Oral Health

During 2011, two senior dental hygienists joined the team, who are actively involved in the Oral Health Promotion Programme. This programme targets 7 – 10 year old children in order to improve their oral health and future quality of life of the Maltese population. This is achieved through screening and talks to school children. In 2011, the team delivered over 70 talks to over 4,470 children.

In addition, a total of 19 talks covering 570 primary school teachers were given. The aim was to reinforce the message of oral health and to explain the direct link to general health in order to try and instigate behavioural change in the children. Further awareness on the importance of dental health to different target groups was promoted by means of community activities with local councils and elderly institutions as well as interventions on the media.

The World Dental Federation and the WHO declared the 12th September as World Oral Health Day so as to support the improvement of oral health worldwide. In line with the World Oral Health day theme, the Unit has this year focused on the impact of Oral health on the Diabetic patient, organising activities with the Malta Diabetes Association to raise awareness of the risks of poor oral health and the importance of proper dental hygiene. Over ten talks were given to over 200 diabetic children and adults and an information leaflet was prepared for distribution to diabetic patients.

The Unit was once again responsible for organising the Smile for Health Annual Dental Conference XVIII, which is open to all dental professionals and paraprofessionals in Malta. The conference attracted over 190 participants. Topics discussed included accidental and non-accidental traumatic injuries to teeth, endodontics, paediatric dentistry, implantology, preventive dentistry and legal issues. Speakers included local consultants, specialists and dental surgeons as well as foreign speakers. Concurrent sessions for the dental hygienists, dental surgery assistants and dental technologists were also organised.

International Research: The PHIRE Project

PHIRE is a Public Health Programme (PHP) project under the 2009 PHP call for proposals. It is a thirty-month project which started on 1 September 2010 and will end on 28 February 2013. The project consortium consists of eight partners in all, the main coordinating partner being EUPHA. Malta is participating as an associated partner through the MHEC.

The general objective of PHIRE is to contribute to the improvement of public health knowledge and practice across the European Union by assessing the impact and uptake of the first PHP and structuring information on public health research.

A member of NCDU staff is the project leader for the PHIRE project. The work which Malta is carrying out is included in Work Package 5 of the project and consists of collecting data, which demonstrates national innovation and research within the public health field, from seven European countries - Malta, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Ireland.

The implementation of the planned work of PHIRE started in February 2011. The countries for which Malta, as a partner, is responsible were contacted for the collection of data. The work involved management and review of the data collected.

The work carried out and the data collected were presented during a meeting and at a workshop during the EUPHA annual conference in Copenhagen in November 2011. Two PHIRE management meetings were also held during the conference days. A regional meeting was also held during which the work carried out during the first year of PHIRE as well as the work planned for the second year of PHIRE were presented to and discussed with the country contacts and/or representatives of the national public health associations attending the conference. The project leader also contributed to the compilation of the PHIRE Interim report which will be presented to the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) at the end of January 2012.

Academic

Lectures to undergraduates and post graduate students were given by staff at NCDU. The Unit hosted public health trainees as part of their specialist training programme and other students for attachments and well as supervising various research projects. Lectures as part of the Continuing Professional Development programme for public health specialists were given as well as attended.

Conferences, Seminars, Courses and Meetings

Departmental officials attended various conferences, seminars, courses, meetings and workshops both locally and abroad related to the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.

Administration Office

During 2011, the Directorate embarked on a project to form a separate section to handle the administration of the Directorate. As a result, all the personnel records are now kept within the directorate and purchasing and procurement needed by the directorate are being handled by the administration office, which also covers other areas such as reception, transport needs, storekeeping, file movement, inventory and support for outreach activities. The marketing of the Directorate, that is, advertising and also social marketing including facebook page management, is also administered by the office.

- *Personnel:* The office issues and validates attendance sheets and vacation, sick leave and time-off records.
- *Transport:* The Directorate's duties include many outreaches, meetings, radio and TV interviews and lectures and hence the extent of transport required is heavy. Despite this, transport was well coordinated during the year.
- *Storekeeping:* As the Directorate holds a large number of publications which are requested and distributed on a daily basis, the need of storekeeping was felt. Thus a system was set up to ensure that the adequate quantities are in store. This system is helping the purchasing unit and officers when they come to order so that no extra leaflets will be ordered and also the system identifies the shortage in certain publications.

- *File Movement*: A file movement system was set up whereby record of movement of files including internal and external movement is recorded.
- *Purchasing*: As from this year, all the purchasing and procurement needs of the directorate have now passed to the administration office which liaises with FMCU.
- *Inventory*: The Directorate's inventory is continually being reassessed and updated.
- *Cleaning and Upkeep*: The office is also responsible for the upkeep of the Directorate's offices. The office manages the contracted cleaners' schedule.
- *Marketing*: During 2011, a lot of energy went into the marketing of this Directorate and to help the officers deliver their message using different mediums. For this purpose, a video and audio editing suite was set up and is now producing new and editing existing audio video material. In addition a very active facebook page, answering health related questions and delivering messages is being maintained on a daily basis. This page was a huge success and a second page was opened to meet the demand. The marketing is also starting to encourage TV stations and others such as cinema to use the Directorate's adverts for free as part of their social corporate responsibility. In fact during 2011, the Directorate managed to secure free TV spots and free airing in a cinema.

HEALTH CARE STANDARDS DIRECTORATE

The mission of the Health Care Standards Directorate is to promote and safeguard public health by ensuring that the health care provided is of good quality and safe. Patient safety is of paramount priority as there cannot be quality of care without patient safety and this principle remains foremost in mind when planning all the Directorate's activities.

The remit of the Directorate's regulatory jurisdiction includes:

- Quality care, quality assurance, medical audit/clinical performance and patient safety
- Licensing of health care establishments and services and homes for older persons
- Formulation of national standards for health care, health care establishments and health services including primary care and mental care services
- Regulatory aspects related to blood, tissues and cells and organs, surveillance and vigilance of substances of human origin and licensing of tissue and cell establishments

Functions of the Health Care Standards Directorate

- To formulate, monitor and support the introduction and maintenance of high quality national standards for health care establishments and professional services;
- To support policy formulation and promote the development of methodologies that address evolving public health challenges and existent and potential shortcomings in medical care and hospital, community and primary care services;
- To promote a quality culture within public and private service providers and the development of appropriate quality assurance and medical audit programmes;
- To monitor medical service provision and clinical performance, identify where improvements should occur and advise on how they can be achieved while supporting policy formulation and promoting the development of methodologies that address evolving service delivery and health care provider challenges;
- To take necessary measures to remove, control or reduce threats to public health and patient safety, and identify risk factors so as to minimise disease and ill-health impacts on people using health services;
- To regulate the use of human blood, tissues and cells and organs in terms of the relevant legislation;
- To inspect and license hospital services, clinics, community and primary care services;
- To manage representations from members of the public and coordinate and monitor the outcome of complaints investigated;
- To assist the Superintendent of Public Health in regulatory functions related to standards of health care.

Achievements during 2011

Licensing of Private Clinics and Hospitals

There are currently 10 private clinics/hospitals in Malta and scheduled inspections took place to ensure that standards of care are being upheld. All clinics are licensed up to end 2012. These inspections could not be carried out single handed without an inspectorate team. External professional services to augment the department's inspectorate team were engaged by obtaining the services of consultants specialised in anaesthesia. DHCS also collaborated with the St Luke's Hospital Engineering Division, various staff from MDH and the Environmental Health Department to augment its inspection team to visit clinics/hospitals for licensing purposes. For each private clinic inspected, the yearly license was issued by the Minister for Health, after the Directorate had presented the inspection report for each of these entities, with specific recommendations for the amelioration of service provision.

Licensing of Homes for Older Persons and Long Term Care Wards

Homes for older people, which are run by the private sector, the Church and the public sector, total 38 and inspections continued during 2011 to ensure standards of care are being upheld. One of the 38 homes is a new home in Gozo and was licensed for the first time this year. All 38 homes are now licensed up to the end of 2012. The Rehabilitation Hospital Karin Grech (RHKG) and a new ward in St James (Capua) Hospital housing long term care residents have also been recommended for licensing for the first time in 2011. There are also another five long term care premises/wards which house older people. These are now licensed up to the end of 2012.

Homes for Older Persons	No of Homes	No of Beds
Church Homes	16	728
Private Homes	14	1,162
Total	30	1,890

Homes for Older Persons	No of Homes	No of Beds
Government Homes	8	782
Government Long Term Care facilities including St Vincent de Paule Residence	6	1,718
Total	14	2,500

In accordance with the Directorate's remit to include within its regulated remit all the residential care services for older persons, again the long term facilities of Jean Antide Ward in MCH, St Anna's residence and Male Geriatric Ward at GGH were also inspected during 2011 with the intention to ensure standards of care are being upheld.

Following the inspection of St Vincent de Paule Residence (SVPR) by the Health Care Standards Directorate, a licence together with a report with recommendations was subsequently issued. A series of meetings were held with the Director for Elderly to follow up the implementation of the above mentioned recommendations.

Investigation of Service Users Complaints

DHCS continues to investigate and act in a timely manner to service users' complaints. These investigations amounted to 28 in total during 2011. DHCS' intention is not to substitute or replicate the customer care services that each entity needs to have in place as part of good governance. These filtered reports necessitate that they are subject to a structured analysis which takes into account the wider factors within the organisation which may have given rise to the complaint. This is 'root cause analysis' – a term borrowed from the world of engineering and this process allows all of the factors which might have contributed to an event to be identified, analysed with remedial action recommendations not to have recurrence.

Formulation, Monitoring and Introduction of Standards for Health Care

As part of a Working Group, the Directorate is finalising national standards for the use of medicines and finalised the drafting of national standards for 'professional care'.

The Directorate also formed part of a Working Group for the Development of National Standards for the Administration of Blood and Blood Components.

Regulatory Aspects Related to Substances of Human Origin

One of the functions of the Health Care Standards Directorate is to see that the standards set for the Quality and Safety of Blood and Blood components and of Tissues and Cells Intended for Human Transplantation are reached. The Health Care Standards Directorate is responsible for monitoring that the EU legal obligations emergent from the transposition into Maltese legal framework of the EU Blood and Blood Components Directive as well as the Tissues and Cells Directive are satisfied. The year 2011 showed that the haemovigilance system for the reporting and investigation of serious adverse events and reactions related to blood transfusion is now well established following the re-engineering of the system in the previous years. The collection of reports on Adverse Reactions and Events related to blood transfusion by the Haemovigilance Unit within the Directorate continued throughout 2011. The number of reports received by the Haemovigilance Unit during 2011 has stabilised to a level of approximately 52 reports per annum. The 4th Maltese National Haemovigilance Report with data pertaining to 2010 was submitted to the European Commission as stipulated by the EU Directives on Blood and Blood Components.

In a similar fashion, the Directorate also continued refining the system for reporting of Adverse Reactions and Events related to Tissue/Cell Transplantation. The 3rd report on Adverse Reactions and Events related to Tissue/Cell Transplantation pertaining to 2010 was submitted to the European Commission.

The Health Care Standards Directorate also fulfilled several other EU reporting obligations, including a report on the transposition of the Directive on Quality and Safety of Tissues and Cells for Human Transplantation.

During 2011, the Directorate continued strengthening the Rapid Alert System for the dissemination of alerts related to Substances of Human Origin. This included involvement in an EU-wide network, communication at EU level through the CIRCA (Communication and Information Resource Centre Administrator) platform and the distribution locally of alerts to the interested stakeholders.

During 2011, the Directorate finalised the setting up of the mechanisms and structures to have the stem cell collection service providers assessed with an intention to regulate and license according to national legislation.

The Directorate also attended various EU level meetings on behalf of the Competent Authority on Blood, Tissues and Cells and Organs. The Health Care Standards Directorate continued with its networking with other European partners with the aim of sharing best practices and developing competencies and skills for the inspection, regulation and licensing of tissue and cell establishments in line with the EU Tissue and Cells Directives.

A novel area that the Directorate has worked on during 2011 was that of the Quality and Safety of Organ Transplantation. The Directorate was very active in providing recommendations during the drafting phase of the EU Directive on the Quality and Safety of Organ Transplantation. It assisted the SPH in the drafting of the transposition of the Directive on the Quality and Safety of Organ Transplantation and in the consultation stage. It is also assisting in setting up the appropriate regulatory mechanisms. The Directorate participated in relevant modules of the MODE (Mutual Organ Donation and Transplantation Exchanges) Joint Action Training Programme.

Other Miscellaneous Activities/Initiatives

Promotion and Monitoring of Uptake of the Seasonal Influenza Vaccine in Homes for Older Persons

As in previous years, a circular was sent to all the Homes soliciting them to encourage their elderly residents to take the seasonal influenza vaccine.

Involvement in Malta Environment and Planning Authority's Consultation Processes

During 2011, the Directorate continued to offer recommendations in view of MEPA's consultation process in respect of proposals of building/converting into homes for older persons and private clinics/hospitals and other premises. The replies sent to MEPA amounted to 19.

Assistance to Entrepreneurs Interested in Opening Homes for Older Persons and Private Clinics/Hospitals

Furthermore, the Directorate carried out pre-consultation discussions with 22 entrepreneurs interested in considering proposals to build/convert buildings to new homes for older persons and private clinics/hospitals.

Preventive Programmes for the Mitigation of the Ill-Effects of Extreme Weather Temperatures on Vulnerable Persons

During 2011, the Health Care Standards Directorate continued working on the preventive programmes to mitigate the ill effects of extreme weather temperatures - namely heat waves in summer and extreme cold in winter – on vulnerable residents in homes for older persons licensed by the Directorate. Actions in the field were:

- the conduction of a literature research to update the draft guidelines targeting managers and carers in nursing homes to take preventive action to increase resilience and mitigate the ill effects of summer heat waves and winter cold temperatures on vulnerable older persons;
- widening consultations for consensus building including geriatricians, policy makers and administrators of institutional entities;
- circulating both updated guidelines to prevent hyperthermia in summer and hypothermia in winter, in good time for Homes to implement the recommendations and posting them on the Directorate's website at www.healthstandards.gov.mt;
- liaising with the Parliamentary Secretariat for the Elderly to monitor, by active scrutiny during the summer and winter months, that the recommendations have actually been implemented.

Prevention of hyperthermia and hypothermia in older persons are aggressive goals demanding shifting of strategic organisational frameworks and with this aim the Health Care Standards Directorate renewed the strong interface of networking with the Casualty Department of MDH with the start of the winter months in 2011. All elderly patients referred to MDH Casualty have, as part of their clinical assessment, their body temperature measured. These are recorded in lists that are subsequently sent on a daily basis to the DHCS for scrutiny and follow-up. When suspected cases hypothermia of referred residents from licensed homes are detected, surprise inspections at various times of the day and night are coordinated to ensure that preventive action is taken in the identified home in time to prevent more such cases of hypothermia being referred to secondary care.

These same index homes were also under close scrutiny in the summer months. Unannounced inspections were conducted in all homes for older persons during the summer months of 2011 with the aim of assessing the measures taken by the management to ensure that elderly persons were protected from the effects of heat waves.

Collaboration with Other Directorates

Collaboration with the Director for Elderly and Community Care also continued as part of the screening process in the Private Public Partnership (PPP) scheme. The Directorate screens and actively engages in a propitious process to ameliorate the conditions of care in the homes from which Government considers buying beds for older persons under the PPP scheme.

Work and collaboration continues with the Director of Health Information and Research, to ensure that the granularity and content of the data collection especially at MDH as in the Hospital Activity Analysis will enable effective monitoring and auditing by the development of clinical performance indicators. One of the main purposes of this collaborative initiative is to increase the scope of the data being collected to meet national and international health care reporting obligations. Furthermore, the active participation of the Health Care Standards Directorate is to ensure that such data could be transformed into information for quality monitoring as well as comparative analysis of key performance indicators. This inter-directorate collaboration upholds relevant European initiatives such as the Minimum Hospital Data Set, and System of Health Accounts and Health Labour Accounts.

This initiative aims at starting to address the need for improved effectiveness and efficiency of performance indicators and their linkage to other governance policies. The Directorate actively participates in inter-directorate initiatives of having a standardised system for data collection to be able to uniformly code, validate and analyse clinical information.

Service Users' Satisfaction Surveys

One of the main remits of DHCS is to ensure quality of care by monitoring standards of the service deliverance and it is of paramount importance that the service users' perspectives are considered actively, not only in the standard setting process but also as part of the monitoring process. In this respect DHCS is carrying out for the fourth year running a project entitled 'Measuring the Quality of Care in Homes for Older Persons - the service user perspective'. As part of the project, more than 600 randomly selected residents are being interviewed in the various homes, using a well- tested tool to measure their satisfaction with the quality of care in the home.

Medical Devices Alert Cascade

DHCS continues to be actively engaged in the Medical Devices Alert cascade. It is subsequent to the close collaborative networking between DHCS, the Director of Procurement at MDH and the Malta Standards Authority, that we could contribute jointly to this 'engineered safety devices' structured approach as per EU Directives. During 2011, the two main private hospitals also continued to be included in this Medical Devices Alert cascade.

Measurement and Benchmarking the Rate of Adverse Events in Mater Dei Hospital

The Health Care Standards Directorate also believes that a concern for the safety of patients must be both constant and proactive and has set this issue of patient safety as a key target on the agenda of this new Directorate. During 2011, for the first time the rate of adverse events at MDH has been surveyed for benchmarking purposes, both at the international level and for trend monitoring of such rates over set timelines. The Directorate also attends monthly meetings in respect of incident reporting at MDH.

Data on Homes for Older Persons

The Directorate regularly collects data on the distribution and the level of dependency of residents in homes for older persons in the church, and the private and public sectors. In addition, it also collects data on the staffing levels within these homes. In determining appropriate staffing levels in all care homes, and

in nursing care homes in particular, the regulatory requirement that staffing levels and skills mix are adequate to meet the assessed and recorded needs of the residents at all times in the particular home in question must be met.

Facilitating the Interface with Service Users

Website Update

As one of the Directorate's key communications channels, the website has been continually updated to reflect stakeholder needs. The services offered through the website are diverse and include information about the Directorate's remit, updated contact information, a series of electronic forms for use by various stakeholders (e.g. forms used by health care professionals for the reporting of adverse reactions and events related to blood transfusion or transplantation of tissues and cells and forms to be used by persons wishing to open a home for older persons) and links to legislation relevant to the Directorate's remit areas. As in previous years, guidance and advice especially to homes for older persons with regards to hypothermia and hyperthermia prevention are updated. The complete list of licensed homes for older persons, long term care facilities and night shelters as well as the list of licensed private clinics is also regularly updated. Additionally a more user friendly URL (www.healthstandards.gov.mt) was created together with the availability of a generic email.

DR RAY BUSUTTIL
Superintendent of Public Health

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Mission Statement

To ensure an equitable and sustainable health system providing optimal quality of care to all

FUNCTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The Strategy and Sustainability Division (SSD), which was established in 2007, was responsible for research and analysis, policy development, coordination of strategy planning and EU and international affairs. It was also responsible to develop proposals and give direction on the sustainability of health services including health care entitlement. Between January and August 2011, the Strategy and Sustainability Division continued to perform its functions through the following directorates and sections:

- Policy Development, EU and International Affairs Directorate
- Pharmaceutical Policy and Monitoring Directorate
- Health Information and Research Directorate
- Programme Implementation Directorate (until September 2011)
- Healthcare Entitlement and Treatment Abroad Section
- Health Technology Assessment and New Service Development Section

In September 2011, a restructuring exercise took place within the MHEC. A newly appointed Chief Medical Officer (CMO) assumed direct executive responsibility for the above mentioned directorates and sections previously composing the SSD (with the exception of the Programme Implementation Directorate) as well as for the directorates which hitherto had formed part of the Health Care Services Division. Thus the reports for the following two directorates also feature hereunder:

- Allied Health Care Services Directorate
- Nursing Services Directorate

Additionally, it was foreseen that two new directorates would be established: Health Care Funding and Entitlement Directorate; and Coordination of Health Care Services Directorate. These directorates should be established during 2012 and therefore are not being reported upon herein, although activities pertaining to these two functions are being reported under the various directorates/health service entities as necessary.

The newly constituted Department of Health, falling under the responsibility of the CMO, will therefore be composed of the following directorates:

- Policy Development, EU and International Affairs Directorate
- Pharmaceutical Affairs Directorate
- Health Information and Research Directorate
- Allied Health Care Services Directorate
- Nursing Services Directorate
- Health Care Funding and Entitlement
- Coordination of Health Service Provision.

Besides executive responsibility for the above mentioned directorates, the CMO provides an overseeing and coordinating function for the following health service entities:

- Mater Dei Hospital (MDH)
- Sir Paul Boffa Hospital (SPBH)
- Primary Health Care (PHC)
- Mount Carmel Hospital (MCH)

- Rehabilitation Hospital Karin Grech (RHKG)
- Department for the Elderly and Community Care.

Statistics

During 2011, both as Strategy and Sustainability Division, as well as the newly constituted office of the CMO, the main Office performed the following activities:

- 296 parliamentary questions answered
- 34 circulars issued
- 234 queries and complaints processed
- two conferences organised: The National Cancer Plan Launch (February 2011), and the Mental Health Legislation Seminar (July 2011)
- two courses for professional self development organised: Quality Manual (May 2011) and Risk Management Seminar (June 2011)

The CMO also attended the following events overseas:

- January – Bilateral Agreement with Italy, Rome
- March – WHO High Level Meeting, Andorra
- June – EPSCO Meeting, Luxembourg
- September – UN High Level Consultation on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, New York
- September – Cross Border Committee meeting, Brussels
- December – EPSCO Meeting, Brussels
- December – Cross Border Committee Meeting, Brussels

HEALTH CARE FUNDING AND ENTITLEMENT

During 2011, the Strategy and Sustainability Division, and later on the Office of the CMO, continued to work on different initiatives to ensure transparency and accountability in healthcare entitlement. Initiatives were also undertaken to increase information and accessibility to services offered both internally and for the general public. These principles were also used to guide the administration of the EU Healthcare Entitlement Unit and National Highly Specialised Referrals Programme. Work continued on the consolidation and formalisation of the processes by which these two named sections work as well as on a number of initiatives aimed at reducing operating costs and ensuring adherence to the set budgetary allocation.

Entitlement Policy

Guided by the above-mentioned overarching principles, this office has undertaken and participated in a number of initiatives:

- The Office was instrumental in the setting up and coordination of a bilateral meeting with Italy during which Italy agreed to settle the payment of €130,000 related to old claims under EU regulations. This has contributed significantly to our efforts to reduce revenue arrears.
- The Office has actively supported the Financial Monitoring and Control Unit in the compilation and presentation of the Malta's Average Cost Paper for 2007, which was agreed to by all Member States in December. Following publication in the Official Journal of the European Union, Malta will start issuing bills to other Member States in respect of EU pensioners resident in Malta in 2007 on the basis of the agreed rate.
- This Office has also continued to be an active contributor to the work being carried out by the working group set up by Government to review entitlement to healthcare in Malta. Expert advice and assistance in the form of data as well as active participation in meetings was given.
- Advice and information were provided on several policy and legislative reviews carried out by Government; these included the Permanent Residents Scheme and the Insurability of Frontier Workers.

- Support was also given to Billing Sections within hospitals with regard to billing issues as well as entitlement verification and billing procedures.
- The Office was responsible for the introduction of a new streamlined procedure for the issuing of an entitlement document to persons whose healthcare fees are waived on humanitarian grounds.
- Two new information leaflets related to the registration and issuing of entitlement documents of EU nationals under EU regulations were issued with the aim of providing more and clearer information with regards to their entitlement and related administrative processes.
- Media opportunities to inform the public about entitlement to healthcare under the EU regulations on the Coordination of Social Security were secured. An official from the Division took part in one television and two radio programmes.
- A total of 13 Standard Operating Procedures were reviewed and signed off in the 2nd cycle of the Quality Management System. Both the EU Healthcare Entitlement Unit and National Highly Specialised Referrals Programme were audited and officers from both sections formed part of the internal audit teams.

Visits Abroad

The Entitlement Policy Office participated actively in EU workshops and meetings abroad to ensure that Malta was appropriately represented at meetings where important decisions in relation to the coordination of social security benefits including healthcare are taken. Overseas meetings attended included:

Name of Meeting	Number
Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers	5
Working Party of the Administrative Commission	1
Audit Board	2

Reports are drawn up from these meetings and any follow-up actions that need to be taken are implemented.

EU Health Care Entitlement Unit

The EU Healthcare Entitlement Unit was set up in 2005 to implement EU regulations on the coordination of health benefits between Member States. The Unit also serves as the contact point for foreigners seeking information on entitlement to healthcare in Malta. Besides the back office work carried out in relation to the issuing and processing of entitlement documentation, the Unit deals with a considerable amount of public queries via telephone, e-mail and post as well as offering a personalised face-to-face customer care service three times a week.

European Health Insurance Card

In 2011, the Section processed 44,463 applications for the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). As of 1 January 2011, the validity period of the EHIC has been extended from three years to five years. The rationale behind this decision is to reduce the burden for citizens whilst reducing administrative and production costs for Government. The work related to the processing of the card includes:

- sorting and dating of post or applications submitted by hand
- checking whether applicant is entitled for healthcare by Malta through systems such as CdB and SABs
- data matching between information submitted in application and that provided in back-end systems; if data does not match, applicants are contacted by phone
- inputting of application details into IT system to enable card and label printing
- referencing of applications in relation to card printed
- preparing cards for distribution via post or collection.

The Patient Claims Section within the same Unit issues bills to other Member States in respect of treatment given to EU nationals who make use of the EHIC in Maltese public healthcare entities as well as vetting

and payment of claims issued by other Member States in respect of treatment given to persons using an EHIC issued by Malta.

Other Portable Entitlement Documents

Besides the EHIC, the Unit dealt with other matters related to the implementation of EU regulations. This work included the processing of the following different Portable Entitlement Documents:

E-Forms	Outbound (Issued)	Inbound (Registered Processes)
E121 ⁴	1	317
E109 ⁵	10	5
E106 ⁶	56	56

The number of EU pensioners registered with the Entitlement Unit at the end of 2011 was 2,863, of which 2,549 were UK nationals and 314 from the other Member States. At the end of 2011, the total number of Maltese pensioners who are residing in another Member State and for whom Malta is competent for their healthcare in terms of EU social security legislation was 18.

During 2011, the Unit also evaluated 366 requests received by other EU for reimbursement of expenses related to emergency medical treatment received in Malta. A total of five E126 forms were sent by the Entitlement Unit to other Member States, out of which three were approved for re-imburement by the Maltese health authorities and two still awaiting reply from the Member States concerned.

Reciprocal Health Agreement Registration Scheme

Following the launch of a new registration scheme for UK nationals residing in Malta who wish to get healthcare cover through the Reciprocal Health Agreement between Malta and the United Kingdom in 2009, the Entitlement Unit was responsible to register interested UK nationals residing in Malta and issued them with an *ad hoc* entitlement card. The aim of this scheme is to clarify the entitlement and to be able to better account for healthcare expenses incurred in the treatment of British citizens residing in Malta who are not covered by EU regulations on coordination of social security benefits. During 2011, the Entitlement Unit registered a total of 254 persons, out of which 211 were entitled for a Provisional RHA Certificate and 43 were entitled for RHA Card.

Patient Claims Section

The Patient Claims Desk within the Entitlement Unit was set up in 2004 with the aim of implementing the financial provision of EU regulations on the Coordination of Social Security Systems. There are two main sources of revenue related to this desk - lump sum payments (E127⁷) and actual cost payments (E125). Actual costs include both emergency treatment covered by the EHIC and scheduled treatment provided under the E106 to European workers paying NI contributions in another EU Member State but posted in Malta. Lump sums include pensioners and their dependents residing in Malta but receiving their pension from another EU Member State and also dependents of workers where the main insured persons reside and pay NI contributions in Malta whilst their dependents reside in another EU Member State. The total E125 claims issued for the period May 2004 to December 2011 stands at €3,017,635.95.

⁴ Certificate of entitlement to sickness, maternity, and equivalent paternity benefits in kind (i.e. health care, medical treatment etc) for pensioners and members of their families residing with them in a country other than the competent member state.

⁵ Certificate of entitlement to sickness, maternity, and equivalent paternity benefits in kind (i.e. health care, medical treatment etc) for workers and members of their families residing with them in a country other than the competent member state.

⁶ Certificate of entitlement to sickness, maternity, and equivalent paternity benefits in kind (i.e. health care, medical treatment etc) for members of the family of a worker residing in a different member state from the worker.

⁷ E127 and E125 are the forms used by member states to issue claims.

Claims Issued and Received in 2011			
E125		Issued	Total Value
		2,208	€697,130.65
E155		Received	Total Values
		527	€373,432.48
E127		Issued	Total Value
E121	2007	236 (2,884 months)	€302,329.72
	2008	270 (3,130 months)	€328,117.90
	2009	317 (3,644 months)	€382,000.52
	2010	386 (4,186 months)	€438,818.38 ⁸
E109	2007	4 (16 months)	€615.52
	2008	6 (38 months)	€1,461.86
	2009	7 (43 months)	€1,654.21
	2010	5 (60 months)	€2,308.20
E127		Received	Total Value
E121	2009	1 (12 months)	€3,810.48
E109	2009	4 (46 months)	€13,631.25 ⁹
E121	2010	8 (56 months)	€15,296.96 ¹⁰
E109	2010	3 (8 months)	€3,351.68

In 2011, Malta issued €697,130.65 in E125 claims. This amount represents a 31.29% increase over claims issued during the previous year. The overall sum due to Malta as at 31 December 2011 amounts to €1,247,787.59 or 45.05% of claims issued to date.

National Highly Specialised Referrals Programme

Malta and the United Kingdom have been working closely for over 60 years in relation to health care services. These ties were strengthened in 1975 when the Malta-UK Health Care Agreement was signed. Through this agreement Maltese patients are offered medical treatment in UK NHS hospitals just like any UK national registered with the NHS system. The services offered through this programme are considered as an extension to the services being offered locally. Cases referred to UK require specialised equipment and interventions which can be offered in very few highly specialised centres in UK. The local caring consultants are in close contact with UK consultants in order to ensure continuation of care once the patients return to Malta.

Treatment Abroad Coordination Office

The purpose of the Treatment Abroad Coordination Office is to coordinate the National Highly Specialised Overseas Referrals Programme as well as the coordination and logistical arrangements in relation to clinics carried out by overseas visiting consultants at MDH. The Treatment Abroad Coordination Office within the CMO's office worked on a number of different initiatives. These include:

- Reviewed and updated a total of four Standard Operating Procedures which had been drawn up in 2010.
- Continued to increase the number of visiting consultants as well as the number of visits by existing overseas consultants, to reduce the number of patients that require specialised treatment abroad.
- The Office coordinated a total of 64 visits by overseas visiting consultants.
- Facilitated the visits of four new overseas consultants who carried out clinics and surgery at MDH. New areas covered by visiting consultants at MDH include neurosurgery, orthopaedics and respiratory medicine.
- Facilitated the introduction of new neurosurgery service at MDH – Deep Brain Stimulation.

⁸ The inventories (E127) have been issued; however since the average cost rate has not yet been calculated, the figure indicated is based on the last published rate of 2006.

⁹ The amounts due are calculated on the last published average cost rate by the respective country.

¹⁰ The amounts due are calculated on the last published average cost rate by the respective country.

- Actively involved in the introduction of new Respiratory Medicine Service at MDH – This year the Department signed an agreement with ISMETT whereby Maltese patients can benefit from Lung Transplant Services in Palermo.
- Participated in two radio programmes to promote the work of the Treatment Abroad Unit; and inform the general public about the UK–Malta Bilateral Health Agreement.

Treatment Abroad Committee

The Treatment Abroad Coordination Office was responsible to give administrative and secretarial support to the Committee, which met eleven times during the past year. The Office was responsible for taking minutes during the meetings; follow-up matters arising during the meeting and from the minutes; collating trustworthy information from reliable internet sites such as the NICE Guidelines website regarding new or alternative proposed treatment for patients being referred for treatment in the UK; seeking Committee's approval for urgent cases via e-mail.

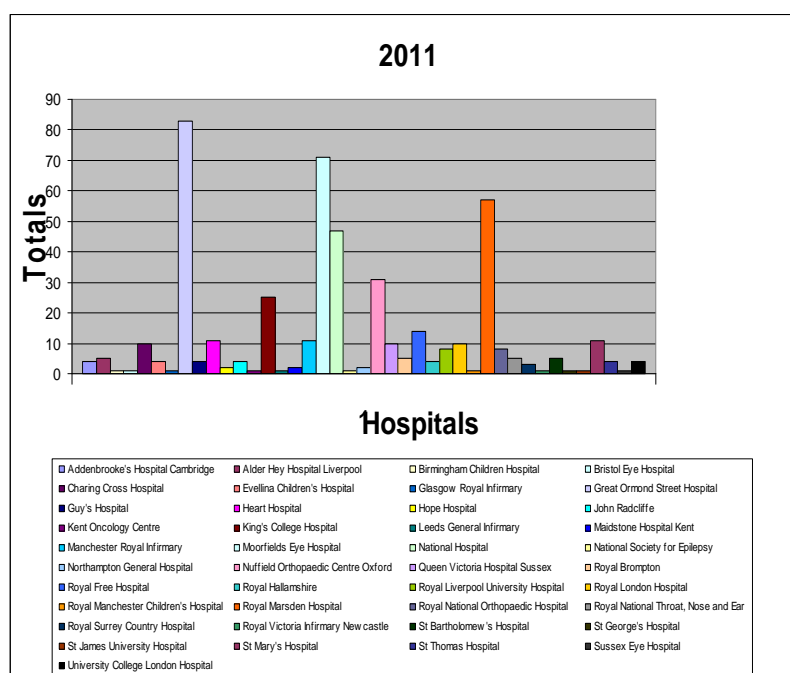
Overseas Visiting Consultant Clinics

Visiting consultants in Spinal Surgery, Paediatric Interventional Cardiology, Hand Surgery, Orthopaedic Surgery, Urology-Surgery, Paediatric Surgery, Pain Management, Ophthalmic Surgery, Interventional Radiologist, Interventional Oncology, Orthognatic Surgery and Neurosurgery were invited to perform operations/procedures at MDH.

Visiting consultants in Paediatric Respiratory Diseases, Paediatric Cardiology, Paediatric Nephrology, Paediatric Oncology, Paediatric Endocrinology, Paediatric Gastroenterology, Paediatric Neuro Muscular Diseases, Paediatric Neurology, Paediatric Neurosurgery, Haemato-Oncology, Respiratory Diseases, and Retinoblastoma Ophthalmology were also invited to hold shared care clinics at MDH during 2011.

Treatment Abroad Section

The Treatment Abroad Section is responsible for logistics related to travel for the cases approved by the Treatment Abroad Committee. The Section takes care of all arrangements related to hospital appointments, accommodation, travel, transport and subsistence for patients and escorts, together with the associated verification and payment and reimbursement processes. During the year, 314 patients (474 episodes) were sent for treatment abroad. Following is a graphic representation of the distribution of patients in the different NHS hospitals:



The following numbers of applications were approved to be supplied free of charge to Pink Card holders:

Medical Aids	Approved Applications
Dentures	1,286
Glasses	1,689
Breast Prostheses	53
Hearing aids and ear moulds	342

The Unit dealt with a considerable number of public queries via telephone, e-mail and post as well as offering a personalised face-to-face customer care service.

Health Technology Assessments

The following Health Technology Assessments were carried out:

- *Brachytherapy for localised prostate cancer* is a form of radiotherapy in which radiation is given using radioactive sources, either permanently via implanted seeds or temporarily implanted wires directly into the prostate. The HTA concluded that this is a treatment option for localised prostate cancer with eligibility criteria according to the European Association of Urology Guidelines. The Treatment Abroad Committee authorised the addition of Brachytherapy to the list of approved treatment for patients with localised prostate cancer, initially by sending patients abroad for this treatment.
- *Pancreatic-kidney transplantation for type I diabetic patients with renal failure* was evaluated as a treatment option. Pancreatic transplantation offers the advantages that it re-establishes normal glucose homeostasis and reduces cardiovascular risks. The HTA concluded that due to the risks associated with transplantation pancreas, transplant should be performed in patients with kidney failure who are to undergo kidney transplantation and immuno-suppression. Currently, Government is seeking collaboration with centres which specialise in pancreatic-kidney transplants.
- *Flushable colostomy appliances* is a health technology assessment which was carried out to evaluate the benefits and costs of these appliances *vis-à-vis* appliances currently in use. It was concluded that flushable colostomy appliances may be useful for patients who worry about disposal of used colostomy appliances or ill-equipped toilet facilities, such appliance may help the patient to have a better quality of life. However, they are not suitable for all colostomates due to restrictions in size and type of stoma. For this reason the health department concluded that flushable colostomy appliances will be offered on a named patient basis following a protocol for entitlement.
- *Hyperthermia as a form of cancer treatment*: Numerous clinical trials (phase I-phase III) have studied hyperthermia in combination with radiation therapy and/or chemotherapy. Local, regional and systemic hyperthermia for various types of cancers, are currently under study. Though many studies show promising results, all studies evaluated during this HTA were at phase I-III, and the Treatment Abroad Committee could not accept this as a standard therapy as it is still considered experimental.
- *Sperm banking for cancer patients*: According to the evidence gathered, depending on the underlying disease, the age of the patient, the type of therapeutic agent used to treat the cancer, the cumulative doses used and the duration of the treatment, 10-100% of surviving cancer patients will show reduced semen parameters after their cure. Sperm banking for male cancer patients was approved by the Treatment Abroad Committee according to protocol.
- *Transgender Health Care*: A review of transgender health care was carried out. This included treatment options in children and adults as well as guidelines for both hormone therapy and surgery according to international literature. The HTA also presented results of the Transgender EuroStudy.

Other Projects

National Dementia Strategy 2020

A proposed strategy for dementia for the next nine years (2012-2020) has been developed and builds up on the field work which was carried out over the past two years by the Malta Dementia Strategy working

group. This strategy highlights various measures which will be implemented in order to improve the quality of life of persons with dementia and their carers. These priority areas include increasing understanding of dementia in society, providing early diagnosis and guidance, improving treatment and care in hospitals and in the community, having a trained workforce, promoting an ethical approach to dementia care as well as promoting research in this field. The strategy entails not only substantial human and financial investment but also joint planning and working between health and social care staff, persons with dementia, their families and carers with the overall aim of improving the quality of life of persons with dementia and their families. The strategy is now in its final draft stages after extensive review by various experts.

The Office of the CMO also oversaw the commissioning of the following services from private providers to complement services provided by the public sector and to address waiting lists in certain areas.

Procedure	No. Performed (at Private Entity)
PET/CT Scans	310
Capsule Endoscopy	39
CT Coronary Angiograms	40
MRI and Multi Skeltal MRI	209
Cataracts	473

DIRECTORATE FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT, EU AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The main function of the Directorate for Policy Development, EU and International Affairs is to coordinate the formulation of the Ministry's position on policies proposed by the EU and functions as the local and international link that explores and utilises opportunities arising from EU membership and bilateral/international relations. Policy development takes place on an ongoing basis through the submission of reports, positions and questionnaires in response to requests from the European Commission. This Directorate plays also a major role in drawing up policies in the areas of public health, health care services and long-term care whilst promoting the sustainable development of the Maltese health sector in line with service users' and national needs and priorities.

The key objectives of the Directorate are to:

- develop and consolidate the policy development structures of the Ministry, identify key areas in line with general government policy for advancement, and conduct this development employing international best practice and local evidence and reflecting appropriate consultations with stakeholders which includes user participation;
- assist in the performance of assessments of economic and sustainability implications of proposed or existing policies and programmes and review of standards, regulation and service development initiatives; proactively identify areas of key strategic importance for the Maltese health sector where the EU institutions are engaging in discussion and formulation of proposals and act as the focal point in preparing EU positions following consultation within the Ministry, with other ministries as relevant and with external stakeholders;
- ensure that all obligations entered into by Government as a member state of the EU are adhered to within the set timeframes;
- promote the development of bilateral activities with other countries and seek opportunities for fostering greater collaboration and ensure compliance with bilateral and multilateral agreements and commitments.

Policy Development

Policy development takes place on an ongoing basis through the submission of reports, positions and questionnaires in response to requests from the European Commission. The Directorate is also involved in the promotion of the concept of 'Health in all Policies' through its work and collaboration in inter-sectoral activities and reviews. It is frequently consulted by other ministries and entities to review their positions on various subjects in order to ascertain that health aspects are promoted and appropriately catered for.

Other specific areas of health policy development carried out by this Directorate during 2011 include the following:

- Work related to the transposition of the Directive of the EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare (Directive 2011/24/EU). This Directive was published in March 2011 and Member States are being expected to transpose it by October 2013. Initial drafts for transposition were started and a meeting with a delegation from the European Commission was held in December in which progress and challenges being faced by Malta were discussed and a presentation and discussion on the transposition were held under the auspices of MEUSAC with a number of stakeholders.
- Monitoring and updating of health and long-term care aspects within the National Strategy Report on Social Inclusion and Social Protection 2008-2010 and input as health representative on the Social Protection Committee. During 2011, the Directorate continued to assist the Directorate for Programme Implementation with the monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the measures proposed in the report for 2008-2010 in the field of Health and long-term care and update report was created and forwarded to the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family which is the leading ministry on the national strategy.
- The National Cancer Plan for the Maltese Islands 2011-2015 (NCP) was launched in February 2011. A steering committee to oversee the implementation of the NCP was created.
- The Directorate had a major role in the drafting of the National Sexual Health Strategy which was launched in November 2011. This strategy followed the National Sexual Health Policy for the Maltese Islands that was published in 2010.
- The Directorate also had a major role in the drafting of a national dementia strategy. The first draft of this strategy was completed during 2011.
- During this year, the Directorate accommodated three specialist trainees in Public Health Medicine. These trainees were involved in the duties concerned with Policy Development and also with EU and International Affairs.
- A member of the Directorate is representing the CMO on a tri-partite committee that was set up in June 2010 to implement and follow the implementation of necessary measures so that Malta will adopt the EU Council Recommendations on Patients Safety that were adopted in 2009. This committee is being led by the Superintendent of Public Health (SPH).
- A member of the Directorate is representing the CMO and leading a tri-partite committee that was set up in October 2010 to implement and follow the implementation of necessary measures so that Malta will adopt the EU Council Recommendations on European Action in the field of Rare Diseases that were adopted in 2009. One of these measures will be the drafting of a national strategy on rare diseases. This member is also representing Malta on the European Committee of Experts on Rare Diseases (EUCERD) and as a collaborating partner for the Joint Action on Rare Diseases which is scheduled to kick-off in 2012.
- A member of the Directorate is representing Malta on the Joint Action for the European Partnership for Action against Cancer (EPAAC) 2011-2013. Malta is an associate member in the joint action and is a member of the core group of work package ten which is tasked with the evaluation of national cancer plans in the EU Member States.

EU Affairs Policy Coordination

DPDEU is responsible for coordinating Malta's participation in EU structures and processes through coordination with local stakeholders including EU Secretariat, other ministries and the Permanent

Representation in Brussels. The core tasks pertaining to the EU Affairs Directorate on a daily basis in the field of policy coordination are the following:

- preparation of explanatory memoranda on EU pipeline legislation;
- drawing up of instruction notes;
- compilation of questionnaires and responses to consultation initiatives and coordination of consolidated Malta position;
- responding to queries arising from a wide range of sources including the authorities of other Member States, various EU structures and local and international organisations;
- submission of reports to the Commission;
- coordination of transposition and notification of EU related legislation and responses to infringement proceedings.

Memoranda and Instruction Notes

The process to deal with new Commission proposals at the various levels of discussion is coordinated by the EU Affairs Office. This process consists mainly of preparing updated instruction notes and briefing notes on the agenda items for discussions. The EU Affairs Office is responsible for preparation of instruction and briefing notes (and speaking notes as necessary) for our Maltese representatives attending Council working parties, MERTENS and COREPER meetings, as well as meetings of the Council of Ministers. The agendas of these meetings consist of topics on which there are ongoing discussions at EU level, most of them being legislative proposals. The successful preparation of these dossiers is the result of teamwork and a good working relationship with line ministries, EU Secretariat (OPM) and Permanent Representation in Brussels. This Office is also responsible to prepare briefing notes for meetings attended by Ministers and the Permanent Representative. Monitoring of the proposal list is conducted at regular intervals in collaboration with the EU Secretariat at the OPM. Furthermore, these legislative items are classified according to the degree of relevance to Malta.

The Directorate continues to employ a process of wide consultation in drawing up Malta's position on EU proposals by communicating with a wide range of stakeholders (internal and external) during the formulation process of the position of Malta on these proposals. Key issues that were of direct relevance to this Ministry during 2011 included EU health strategy, tissues and organs, health care, active ageing and long term care, patients' rights on cross-border healthcare, rare diseases, health security and occupational health and safety .

During 2011, the Directorate produced 150 instruction notes, 12 briefing notes and speaking notes and four explanatory memoranda. Four Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) meetings were held during 2011 and a representation of this Office was present in all of them.

Participation in Overseas Meetings

The Directorate coordinates attendance to EU meetings in order to ensure that Malta is appropriately represented at all meetings where important decisions are taken. The Office is also responsible to identify and nominate national experts in the field of medicines, food, communicable diseases and other public health organisations and networks.

This Office participated actively in EU-related conferences, seminars, workshops and meetings both locally and abroad. Key overseas meetings attended in 2011 included:

- EPSCO Ministerial Councils (June and December)
- Informal Council of Health Ministers meetings (July and November)
- Two Council Working Party on Public Health meeting at Senior level (March and October)
- Steering Committee Meeting of the Joint Action of the European partnership for Action Against Cancer (September)
- European Partnership for Action Against Cancer kick off meeting (March)
- European Partnership for Action Against Cancer (June).

During 2011, the health attaché in Brussels covered most of the relevant working party meetings. This Office also keeps records of Health officials attending all EU-related and other non-EU-related meetings, stores reports drawn up from these meetings in its archives and monitors the actions that need to be taken as follow-up. As shown in the table hereunder, the Ministry attended a total of 28 council meetings, 184 meetings organised by the Commission, 20 presidency meetings, 13 meetings organised by the WHO and 56 meetings organised by other entities.

Meetings attended in 2011 (including meetings attended by the Technical Attaché for Health)						
	<i>Council</i>	<i>Commission</i>	<i>Presidency</i>	<i>WHO</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Total</i>
Ministerial	2	0	2	3	2	9
Public Health *	18	39	7	5	9	78
Food	4	46	1	0	0	51
Pharmaceuticals **	0	16	1	0	8	25
Social security/social questions	0	8	0	0	0	8
Health promotion*	0	30	3	3	1	37
Health Information	0	10	0	0	10	20
Regulatory committees - tobacco, blood, tissues & cells and laboratories	0	8	0	0	0	8
Others	4	27	6	2	26	65
Total	28	184	20	13	56	301

* Including ECDC Meetings

** Does not include visits attended by Medicines Authority and EMEA meetings

Bilateral Affairs

The MHEC successfully continued to operate the administrative arrangement within the framework of the reciprocal health agreement with the United Kingdom. During 2011, DPDEU continued to be involved on work being done to develop and implement bilateral agreements with several countries. DPDEU represented the Ministry in the Joint Commission meeting with Tunisia in Malta in June 2011. In March 2011, a delegation from the health authorities in Israel visited Malta on the invitation of the Maltese health authorities as part of the activity on the Agreement on cooperation in the fields of health and medicine between the two countries that have been in existence since 2005. During this year, a new agreement with ISMETT Palermo for lung and liver transplants was signed.

World Health Organisation (WHO) and International Affairs

This Directorate continued to assist in the coordination of Malta's position on WHO policy, including in relation to the International Health Regulations and the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. DPDEU offered assistance in the preparation for the Maltese delegation that attended the 64th World Health Assembly in Geneva in May. DPDEU was also part of the Maltese delegation that attended the 61st Regional Committee meeting of the WHO European Region in Baku in September. The Director is also on the committee which is overseeing the preparations for the 62nd Regional Committee meeting of the WHO European Region which will take place in Malta in September 2012.

This Directorate was also the contact point for policy matters at United Nations in the field of health particularly on health aspects related to sexual and reproductive health to ensure that Malta's policy on these matters was consistently promoted and safeguarded. The Directorate also assisted in the preparation of the Maltese delegation that attended the UN Summit on Non-Communicable Diseases that took place in New York in September 2011.

Quality Management System

As part of a Division-wide exercise, the Directorate participated in quality management initiatives that were undertaken during 2011, including amongst others training in risk management. All members of the team attended to and were certified for training in aspects of quality management and one member has been nominated as the quality officer while another received training to be able to accomplish quality

audits within the Division. During 2011, DPDEU reviewed and finalised two standard operating procedures (SOPs) and one work instruction (WI) as follows:

- SOP on the development of an Explanatory Memorandum for the Cabinet and for Parliament on EU dossiers
- SOP on the development and updating of Instruction Notes and Briefing Notes for the preparation and attendance to EU Council meetings
- WI on the compilation, analysis and dissemination of information on the international travel on duty that is undertaken by officials of the Ministry.

One new SOP was developed during this year. A standard operating procedure to regulate the drafting, processing, signature and storage of memoranda of understanding (MoU) (resulting from various bilateral agreements) was also drafted together with a set of working guidelines on the format and handling of MoUs. These will serve to further organise and streamline the bilateral agreements business area.

The QMS Focal Point within the Directorate delivered in-house training on the general SOPs to all the staff during January – August 2011.

The Directorate was subject to an internal audit in April 2011. The audit conclusions were very positive. As a matter of fact the audit report identifies four best practices which the Directorate intends to further consolidate:

- Documents are stored on a shared drive thus making them accessible to the team working at the DPDEU.
- The reports, memoranda, instruction notes, etc are very well organised in various folders in the shared drive making it easy for one to find a previously written report which one need to refer to.
- The use of ‘Outlook tasks’ to send reminders to officials attending EU/International meetings.
- When the SOPs were written, stakeholders outside MHEC were consulted.

DIRECTORATE FOR PHARMACEUTICAL POLICY AND MONITORING

In 2011, the Directorate for Pharmaceutical Policy and Monitoring (DPPM) continued to evolve and gradually take up new functions, while addressing the challenge of a growing staff complement, necessary for supporting such changes.

The Directorate has the mission of developing equitable and sustainable pharmaceutical policies for the National Health Service in Malta while ensuring that such policies are implemented effectively. In addition, it promotes excellence in patient care by adding value to individual patient care through assuring safe, accurate, rational and cost-effective use of medicines to all.

FUNCTIONS

The Directorate has seven main units all having different functions.

- Pharmaceutical Health Technology Assessment Unit
 - Receipt of applications submitted by market authorisation holders or clinical consultants, for the introduction of a drug on the government formulary list or for a new indication when the drug is already available; performance of health technology assessments, to evaluate and assess clinical evidence, which assessments are then presented to the Government Formulary List Advisory Committee, for discussion and recommendation.
 - Validation of applications and issue of rejection letters upon validation.
 - Maintenance of the transparency directive database.
- Government Formulary List Advisory Committee Secretariat
 - Providing the secretariat function for the GFLAC set up under LN 59 of 2009.

- Medicines Entitlement Unit
 - Development and maintenance of an entitlement system for medicine, integrating the various entitlement systems.
 - Administering two main offices: *the Schedule V office* which is responsible for the processing of requests for entitlement to medicine according to Schedule V of the Social Security Act; and *the Medicines Approval Section* that processes requests and issues permits for approval of protocol-regulated medicines.
 - Standard operating procedures are in place for both processes allowing for the streamlining of the operation systems and ensuring consistency.
- Formulary Management Unit
 - Responsibility for establishing and regularly reviewing the Government National Formulary List for medicines to be used within the government health services, according to EU legislation.
 - Setting up of protocols for the prescribing and rational use of medicine within the Government Health Sector; regular review and alteration as necessary, after consultation with the various consultants and after research on the latest international recommendations and guidelines.
 - Analysis of information and evaluation of clinical evidence to establish prescribing guidelines and development of a systematic, rational approach for drug use through utilisation of international health technology assessment.
 - Provision of technical advice in the establishment of technical specifications for pharmaceutical items to be procured.
 - Drawing up of circulars related to the formulary management.
 - Maintaining documentation related to all the medicinals in the formulary and also of those which are deleted whenever the list is updated and re-evaluated.
 - Responsible for mapping out all the medicines to the corresponding chronic condition as per schedule V of the Social Security Act.
- Pharmaceutical Pricing Unit
 - Contributing to the fair pricing of medicine procured by the government health services.
 - Calculation of the maximum reference price (MRP), external and internal reference price, and following two years from inclusion of item in the formulary, evaluation and updating of the MRP.
 - Keeping of records of expenditure and marginal costs of drugs newly introduced in the formulary..
 - Maintenance of databases of medicine prices within all EU Member States.
- Exceptional Medicinal Treatment Unit
 - Processing of requests for treatment which is not within the standard policies of the Government Formulary List. These are assessed as per ‘Exceptional Medicinal Treatment Policy’ which uses standard criteria for assessment, in an equitable and transparent manner.
 - Maintenance and upkeep of database of various rare diseases and orphan drugs encountered in such exceptional requests.
- EU Projects and Quality Management Systems
 - *EU Projects*: This unit participates in various EU projects related to pharmaceutical policies; establishes contact with the pricing and reimbursement agencies within other EU countries, with the aim of constantly improving the system used in Malta.
 - *Quality Management Systems*: This section plays the role of quality focal point and quality administrator within the directorate; provides staff training on the various SOPs being followed; and provides assistance to any other sections in the writing of SOPs; implements and monitors policies as per the Quality Management Systems SOP.

In the latter half of 2011, the Directorate started taking up functions related to the new Directorate of Pharmaceutical Affairs. Amongst the new responsibilities which this section brings along with it, there is the assumption of leadership for all aspects pertaining to pharmaceutical affairs within the Ministry. In addition, this section has the role of providing advice to the Permanent Secretary and the CMO on matters relevant to the pharmaceutical profession and also to provide policy direction to all pharmaceutical service areas supporting the development of operational systems and indicators for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of pharmaceutical policies.

ROUTINE ACTIVITIES, NEW INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

Pharmaceutical Health Technology Assessment Unit

This Unit within the DPPM evaluates medicines for introduction on the Government Formulary List, in line with the Transparency Directive 89/105/ECC and the Availability of Medicinal Products within the Government Health Services Regulations. Requests for such inclusions can be submitted by the marketing authorisation holders (MAHs) of the medicinal products or by consultants working within the government health services.

Requests for introduction of medicines in the formulary			
Applications	By Consultants	By MAHS	Total
Requests received during 2011	47	27	74
Requests rejected at validation stage	4	1	5
Requests processed during 2011	26	48	74
Requests still pending as at December 2011	53	39	92
Requests which were recommended	21	22	43
Requests which were not recommended	5	26	31

An analysis by category of all the requests discussed by the committee indicates that:

- 48 requests were for new medicinal products;
- 6 requests were for new indications to existing products already available on the formulary;
- 11 requests were for new combination products;
- one request was for a new formulation; and
- one request was for a new dosage form for products already available on the formulary.

Out of the five requests which were rejected at validation stage:

- three requests were for products not licensed in Malta;
- two requests were for drugs indicated for conditions not covered by the Schedule V list.

In October an intensive three-day training programme was organised by the directorate in collaboration with the WHO and the Scottish Medicines Consortium. Two training workshops were undertaken and provided an insight as to how the clinical effectiveness and comparative efficacy of medicinal products being reviewed is drawn, as well as to how the health economical review is carried out. Further training was given to the two pharmacy directorate members on the GFLAC who in November attended the New Drugs Committee meeting in Glasgow.

Medicines Entitlement Unit

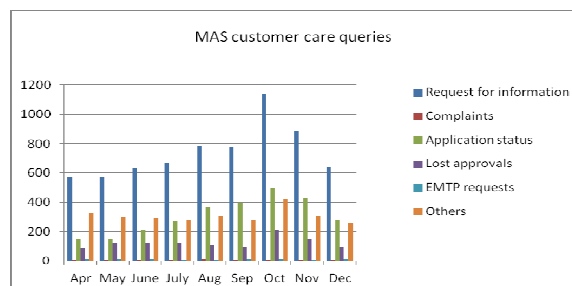
Setting up of the Medicines Entitlement Unit

The Schedule V Office and the Medicines Approval Section were amalgamated forming the Medicines Entitlement Unit. This integration was aimed to improve service to the patients by including the different types of entitlement in one office, and therefore being able to address the various problems presented, from the same location. As part of the ongoing entitlement system review, the directorate is taking over approvals which were previously processed at the various hospitals. This ensures efficiency and consistency.

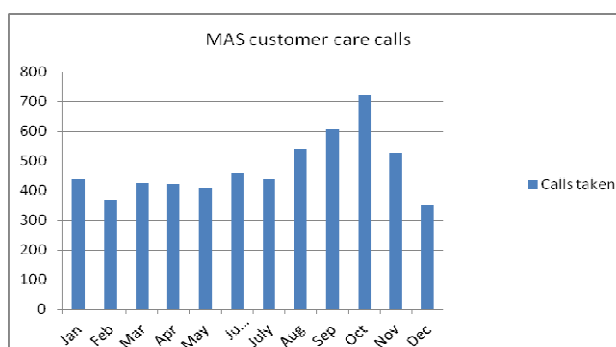
Medicines Approval Section

Following the uptake of the Gozo approvals in 2010, this year requests usually processed at SPBH were taken up and started being processed by the Medicines Approval Section. This amalgamation of processes ensures that the process of evaluation of requests is performed in a standard and transparent way, as per corresponding SOP. As in previous years, this past year has seen the removal of certain protocols, now deemed unnecessary and the introduction of others according to periodical reviews of the Government

Formulary List. Some changes were made to the operating procedures of protocol regulated medicines requests. The patient is now being informed if the approval cannot be granted for the particular medicine being requested whilst previously, it was the consultant who was being informed. The consultant is informed only when there is missing information on the application form, such that this could be amended accordingly. The SOP for this process was updated accordingly as per QMS to reflect these changes.



During 2011, there were in total 25,133 permits for protocol regulated items which were issued by the Medicines Approvals Section. The number of requests for approval which were sent back to the consultant requesting the item, because on review there was some missing information, or otherwise were sent to the patient informing them that that the approval could not be granted together with the reason, was 3,616. There were 1,468 approvals which were resent to patients because they were either lost or misplaced. Apart from offering the customer care service through telephone calls, during this year, Medicines Approvals Section started opening its office for customers who need information or have queries.



Queries and requests processed

Consultants	Patients/Relatives	Medical Officers
25	6,589	73

Schedule V Offices

A total of 35,593 new applications for Schedule V cards were received, processed and approved throughout the year. There were also 3,261 applications for treatment additions which were approved. The number of applications that were sent back to the requesting consultant because of missing information was 1,677. 461 requests were not approved because the required criteria for entitlement were not met.

Source of Customer Queries			
Pharmacists	POYC	Clinicians	Patients
81	43	302	6,407

Formulary Management Unit (FMU)

Formulary maintenance is a dynamic process. Decisions are taken on an ongoing basis with regard to prescriber criteria, medicinal protocol updates, changes in specifications and deletions from the lists. These are backed by the involvement of the various specialities and pharmacists, and by evidence. Clinical expertise as well as cost-effectiveness are considered and used to identify potential opportunities for quality and service improvement.

Formulary Statistics for 2011:

- New items introduced into the Government Formulary List - 20
- New indications added to medicines already available - 11
- Deletions from the formulary list - ten
- Amendments made to the GFL - 113
- New protocols - 24
- Protocols removed - seven
- Total number of changes to protocols - 79
- Items processed for deletion on request from Central Procurement and Supplies Unit (CPSU) or after feedback was received from the specialities - 24
- Other queries for deletions received from CPSU – eight
- Number of items approved for deletion - 26
- Specifications reviewed upon request by the CPSU - 105
- Specifications reviewed as part of different exercises carried out by DPPM - 73
- Specifications amended - 76

FMU also compiled a list of orphan drugs which are currently being reimbursed. New fields have also been added to the Exceptional Treatment database to facilitate with the collection of information on the entitlement of orphan drugs and rare diseases on a named-patient basis.

During 2011, FMU conducted an extensive exercise in preparation for the Schedule V Reform. The reform targets to reduce disentitlements concerning the provision of free medicines by regularising and opening up the chronic conditions. The Unit undertook a mapping exercise whereby the proposed Schedule V conditions were mapped to items listed in the GFL. This was done by reviewing established guidelines, organising internal focus groups between pharmacists and pharmacy technicians within DPPM and also external focus groups between DPPM and the various specialities for their expertise and feedback. In conjunction with this exercise, the medicinal protocols were also reviewed in great detail. FMU reviewed established guidelines and treatment for a total of 93 proposed Schedule V conditions. DPPM also organised 16 external focus groups with the respective specialities and pharmacists on respiratory, renal, malignant, palliative care, haematological, cardiovascular, digestive system, neurology, psychiatry, endocrine, pain, rheumatic, skin, liver, immunodeficiency, paediatric and infectious diseases.

During 2011, a total of 24 circulars were drafted by DPPM and issued by CMO regarding new policies, new medicines included in the formulary and new or improved services offered. These were subsequently uploaded on the website of the Directorate.

Pharmaceutical Pricing Unit

Through contacts between DPPM and other EU countries, pricing databases are maintained for most of the 27 EU Member States. A database including pricing of medicinals for 11 Member States forming part of the Basket of Countries is maintained and regularly updated, to be used for necessary comparisons and for reporting purposes. The current Basket of Countries is composed of those countries falling within the band of having their GDP per Capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) at a level of +/- 20% points of Malta's GDP per Capita in PPS, based on 2009 Eurostat data. Throughout 2011, a total of 233 MRPs were calculated for the different medicines. Most MRP requests were intended for an economic analysis, as part of the Health Technology Assessments (HTA) of New Medicines for the possible introduction into the Government Formulary List. MRPs were also calculated for Exceptional Medicinal Treatment (EMT)

to be used as guidance for procurement purposes, and also to evaluate new or review of existing medicine policy and protocols, including formulary updates.

A total of 711 cases were received for consideration under the Exceptional Treatment Policy of which, after appropriate review of each case, 550 were approved and 161 were not approved.

European and International Fora and Travel

Pricing and Reimbursement Projects

This year, as in previous years, DPPM participated at different levels in various projects emanating from the EU. The main aims of these projects involve the sharing of technical information between members of the EU and European Free Trade Association and include:

- *Infoprice* - The Infoprice Project is an initiative of the Transparency Committee Secretariat. The main outcomes involve the gathering of data, to be then analysed, and disseminated, involving wholesale and retail prices of 15 specific pharmaceuticals in the EU Member States and EFTA.
- *PHIS* - The Pharmaceutical Health Information System (PHIS) is a European Commission funded project, commissioned by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers and co-funded by the Austrian Ministry of Health. The PHIS project ran from September 2008 to April 2011 (32 months). The PHIS project aims at increasing knowledge and exchange of information on pharmaceutical policies, in particular pricing and reimbursements, in the EU Member States, covering both the outpatient and inpatient sector. Malta participates regularly in the PHIS Network meetings.
- *Transparency Committee* - Consultative committee to discuss the implementation of Directive 89/105/EEC relating to the transparency of measures regulating the pricing and reimbursement of medicinal products.
- *Steering Committee for Access to Medicines in Europe* - This platform of the Process on Corporate Responsibility in the field of Pharmaceuticals will be dedicated to enhance collaboration in order to find common non-regulatory approaches to ensure timely and equitable access to medicines after their marketing authorisation.

The DPPM also participated in the: Working Group for Access to Orphan Medicine; Working Group for Access to Biosimilars; and Working Group for Access to Medicine in Small Markets.

Quality Management Systems

The Quality Management System was introduced by the Directorate last year as part of the Strategy and Sustainability Division.

Standard Operating Procedures – Validity and Training

As part of this process, the mission, objectives, vision and organigram of DPPM were established and the various SOPs needed were identified. Following establishment of these main objectives and procedures, the continual monitoring of the SOPs in place is being done within this section such that it is ensured that these at all times reflect the procedures being followed and if changes are deemed necessary in any process, the respective SOP is changed accordingly, reflecting these changes as per QMS SOPs.

OTHER INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

Equality Mark

The DPPM started the process of applying for the Equality Mark given by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE). An equality policy was created and implemented in line with relevant legislation, together with an internal reporting procedure for issues related to gender equality. A Sexual Harassment Policy which is already available through the Public Service Management Code (PSMC) was updated and devised into a booklet, which was sent to all the DPPM staff. The Family Friendly Measures

section available through the PSMC was also updated and devised into a booklet which was made readily available to all DPPM staff. All the staff of the DPPM was trained and made aware of the Equality Policy, the Sexual Harassment Policy and the Family Friendly Measures, by supplying them with the booklets, together with a presentation about the Equality Mark, different types of harassments, inequality and reporting procedures. Staff was also made aware of all the family friendly measures available and how to apply for any of the measures if they are needed. Staff was also made aware that any kind of discrimination and harassment is absolutely not tolerated within the DPPM and serious actions would be taken if anyone were accused of such acts. A certificate of attendance was awarded to all the staff. The DPPM supports staff that need family friendly measures, in fact, eight out of 31 employees of the DPPM are currently making use of family friendly measures. An Equality Representative was also appointed within the organisation.

WHO Pharmaceutical Sector Country Profile

The WHO Pharmaceutical Sector Country Profile for Malta was compiled and submitted by DPPM during 2011. This profile aims to increase the availability of quality information on structures, processes and outcomes of health and pharmaceutical sectors of countries.

Public Awareness of the Medicines Entitlement System through Media

As part of the initiatives of the MHEC, during 2011 the Director participated in one radio programme and two television programmes. During these participations, the current medicines entitlement system was explained in a clear manner such as to make the public more aware of the type of entitlement available and what each type represents.

Requests for Information related to Pharmaceutical Policy and Medicines Entitlement

On a regular basis, a number of requests for information arrive at the Directorate from the various sectors representing the public in general, healthcare professionals, foreign pharmaceutical companies, and also from EU networks and organisations, through surveys. During this past year there were a total of:

- 78 parliamentary questions
- 259 entitlement queries from patients, consultants and government dispensaries, POYC offices and other stakeholders
- 155 formulary queries from clinical pharmacists, consultants, government dispensaries and other stakeholders
- EU queries and international surveys (WHO).

Coeliac Patients Entitlement

A new entitlement document was introduced for coeliac patients, enabling them to place the order of the items they request, in advance such that these can then be prepared accordingly by the responsible staff. The system has this year been changed such that there is now one allocated place – B’Kara Health Centre from where patients can collect their monthly supply. With this new system, there are now more convenient opening hours for the patients, and the prescription by the medical doctor is no longer a requirement. In order to collect these items, the patient must present the entitlement document together with a valid Schedule V card and the ID card.

This system helps with the provision of a better service because patients do not need to wait while their supply is being prepared since it is prepared in advance against the request made by themselves according to the needs for that particular month (which may vary considerably). In addition, it also gives time for the staff to check out for any items not in stock at the moment of the request, to take the necessary action such that, if possible, such items are made available by the time the patient collects the supply.

Another benefit of this system is that it enables better ordering according to the actual requirements such that wastages through expiry of unused items are avoided and stocks are more efficiently used. A total of 881 entitlement documents were issued throughout this year.

DIRECTORATE FOR HEALTH INFORMATION AND RESEARCH

The mission of the Directorate for Health Information and Research (DHIR) is to provide accurate information for the protection of public health, statistical purposes, research and preventive medicine. It promotes and supports the development of health information systems. This Directorate formed part of the former Strategy and Sustainability Division and today forms part of the Department of Health.

Purpose and Objectives

The DHIR leads the collection, analysis and delivery of health related information in Malta. It strives to provide high quality epidemiological information and indicators on the health of the population and health services. Health information is made available for policy and decision makers, for the public in general, interested institutions and other that may require it. Research initiatives are taken and assistance is provided to the CMO by contributing the necessary evidence for the formulation of policy and strategy in the area of public health and health services for both existing and proposed programmes. Its aims are to:

- gather, analyse and disseminate health information;
- conduct epidemiological surveys and maintain disease registers;
- maintain and develop the range of services and products that the department produces, ranging from reports to requests for customised information, accurately and in a timely manner;
- coordinate and prepare reports identifying issues, problems, unmet needs and service gaps, and recommend initiatives, review of policies, and amendments to procedures and programmes as required;
- develop the infrastructure needed for the provision of non-expenditure data for the system of Health Account;
- promote and carry out research;
- communicate relevant results and reports from the above initiatives to stakeholders and the public.

Data Requests

All data and requests arriving at the DHIR continue to be managed in compliance with the Data Protection Act and according to the Department's internal Data Protection Policy Manual. The Data Protection Officer and Data Controller are consulted routinely prior to the release of any questionable or potentially identifiable data to ensure that data protection and confidentiality are constantly upheld. 190 requests for information and 31 replies to parliamentary questions were processed.

Routine Activities on National Information Systems

Malta National Mortality Registry

The Malta National Mortality Registry received, checked, coded, entered and validated 3,313 death certificates during 2011. Validation was done with the Patient Administration System (PAS) and the Central Database (CdB) for demographic details. The PAS system was also updated with date and place of death of those having died during the year. The Registry was updated with information from a variety of sources including the Midwifery Services and the National Obstetric Information System (NOIS), the Statistics Office of the Malta Police Force, the Mortuary, newspaper articles, deceased patient records, and sometimes also pathologists, toxicologists and the certifier him/herself.

Processing involved coding of occupation and the causes of death. Approximately 20% of death certificates required further information which was obtained from the other sources outlined above to make up for insufficient detail in the death certificates.

Copies of a number of death certificates were sent to the Malta National Cancer Registry, the Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Unit, the Occupational Health and Safety Authority and the Malta Congenital Anomalies Registry, on a regular basis, to update their relevant registries. An updated monthly list of deceased patients was sent to various entities including health centres and immunisation centres for them to update their systems.

Collection of data regarding Maltese residents dying abroad required specific tracing from the Public Registry.

The Malta National Mortality Registry has also answered around 50 requests from academics, researchers and medical doctors and approximately five parliamentary questions during 2011.

The Registry collaborates with the WHO and with Eurostat. It also collaborated on specific studies on drug-related mortality with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

Malta National Cancer Registry (MNCR)

During the year, a total of 281,661 new additional information items about malignant and benign cases were identified via 334 notifications of cancers, 949 death certificates and 1,234 cases notified from SPBH, 11,401 from private hospitals and clinics, and through review of around 14,248 MDH pathology, Bone Marrows, Flow Cytometries and Cytology results. All new cases were validated with both PAS and CDB for demographic information, coded, crosschecked in both Cancer Register databases to exclude any duplicates and entered in the National Cancer Register at the DHIR. All already registered cases had been edited in their respective database program and filed. The National Cancer Registry also consults an average of 20 files per month in order to obtain more specific information to classify risk factors and staging in occasional cases.

The following table indicates the source and the number of cases which were received and/or reviewed during 2011:

Source	No of Cases
Notifications from doctors	334
Mortality Register	949
MDH Histopathology Lab	13,538
Private Hospitals and Clinics	11,401
Oncology Department	1,234
MDH Cytology lab	240
Flow Cytometries	230
Bone Marrows	240

National Obstetric Information System (NOIS)

The National Obstetrics Information System received, checked, coded, entered and validated data on 4,335 deliveries during 2011. The NOIS Annual Report for 2010 was compiled and distributed this year together with two interim reports for 2011. These are available on the Department's website. The NOIS website has been kept regularly updated throughout the year.

Malta Congenital Anomalies Registry

In 2011, the Malta Congenital Anomalies Registry (MCAR) actively identified a total of 124 infants/foetuses diagnosed or suspected of having potential congenital anomalies from obstetric wards. Other sources of information include paediatric echocardiography reports, the national obstetrics information system, the national mortality register, hospital activity analysis and hypothyroid screening. As part of the processing, validation and confirmation of congenital anomalies, over 350 hospital files of both mothers and babies were reviewed this year.

All infants born in Malta and Gozo and confirmed as having one or more major congenital anomalies until one year of age are registered in the Register. In 2011, data for 2009 were completed, validated and published on the Registry's website.

For 2009, a total of 101 infants/foetuses were confirmed and registered in the MCAR. The following table shows some selected major congenital anomalies diagnosed in these babies:

Anencephaly	1
Spina bifida	4
Microcephaly	1
Transposition of great vessels	1
Tetralogy of Fallot	2
Hypoplastic left heart syndrome	4
Coarctation of aorta	1
Cleft palate without cleft lip	6
Cleft lip with or without cleft palate	1
Oesophageal atresia/stenosis with or without fistula	1
Small intestine atresia/stenosis	1
Anorectal atresia/stenosis	1
Hypospadias	6
Indeterminate sex	1
Bilateral Renal agenesis/dysplasia/Potters sequence	4
Polydactyly	12
Total Limb reduction defects	1
Total Abdominal wall defects	3
Omphalocele	3
Trisomy 13	1
Trisomy 18	2
Down Syndrome	7
Total Births (live and still)	4,180

The Registry continued active participation in two international networks: EUROCAT (European Surveillance of Congenital Anomalies) and ICBDSR (International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Surveillance and Research). Anonymous data assent in the required format to these two international organisations for inclusion in their websites and annual reports. Through participation with these bodies in 2011, Malta data was approved for participation in several international collaborative studies.

Malta National Organ Transplant Registry

The Malta National Organ Transplant Registry website was updated with transplants having been done during 2010. During 2011 a number of notifications for transplants done in Malta, as well as for organ donations sent abroad, were received at DHIR and data is up to date as at end of June 2011. Nine corneal transplants were also carried out locally during the first half of 2011.

National Hospitals Information System (NHIS)

Data collection on hospital activity from acute state and private hospitals was continued throughout 2011. NHIS collected full record-based data from the GGH for 2011, with ongoing validation of hospital data and data entry into the GGH Activity database. This was analysed to produce a clear picture of activity at this hospital for the whole year. A report of detailed hospital activity for the GGH for 2010 was prepared in September 2011.

By the end of 2011, NHIS had validated and entered 5,395 records of the GGH clinical, episode-based Hospital Activity sheets in the GGHHAA database. To date, NHIS is still receiving data sheets from GGH for episodes of care in 2011.

Eurostat's Yearly Health Care Statistics Non Expenditure Data Requests

Throughout 2011, NHIS collected establishment data including facilities, equipment and human resources from all state and private hospitals as at end 2010. It also collected and collated 2010 anonymous record (episode) based data from all state hospitals and the largest hospital group in the private sector. These comprised MDH, GGH, MCH, SPBH and RHKG, together with St James Hospital Group. Aggregate national data was also collected on health care professionals from their respective councils. The resulting aggregated data was analysed and used to answer the Joint non expenditure health statistics questionnaire from EUROSTAT, WHO and OECD. The hospitals' record based data was used to answer part of the EUROSTAT additional questionnaire dealing with patient based episodes of care in hospitals.

Throughout the year, meetings were held with hospitals in the private sector in order to maintain and improve the collection of episode based data from these establishments.

The Joint non-expenditure questionnaire consists of a very detailed request on various levels of health employees, hospital resources, and other physical resources particularly number of beds by type of care. During 2011, this questionnaire was filled in to include for the first time the main private hospitals besides all the public entities on the island.

Throughout 2011, the DHIR also assisted the Financial Management and Control Unit with the compilation of information for the Joint Expenditure Questionnaire using the System of Health Accounts (SHA) methodology. This exercise was done as a pilot project using 2010 expenditure data derived from different entities within the Health Department. This will be the first submission of SHA data for Malta, due by March 2012.

Injury Database (IDB)

This Register collates data regarding Accidents and Injuries. Data from the Emergency and Admitting Department (E&A) at GGH is still ongoing. A member of DHIR staff retrieved data from the A&E paper Register. Till the end of the year, 3,158 episodes have been collected, checked with PAS/CDB, coded and data entered and other episodes have to be retrieved from cross-checks with National Health Interview Survey and Malta National Mortality Registry.

The data mining software that processes data from MDH E&A Department was finalised. Data for the month of January and part of February 2011 were piloted. Out of approximately 10,000 episodes, 4,396 were identified as injuries and were processed and included into the IDB.

Public Health Reporting and Research

OECD Health Quality Care Indicators 2011 - For the first time, the Directorate actively participated in the calculation and submission of the OECD health quality care indicators for 2011. This exercise involved collaboration with the National Hospital Information System, National Mortality Registry and the Cancer Registry for the calculation of national health care indicators relating to hospital admission, cancer survival and mortality.

Collaboration with Directorate of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention on Obesity and Nutrition - In April 2011, the Directorate assisted the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate by filling in the 'Direct Economic Costs of Obesity' questionnaire submitted by the WHO Europe Regional office, Division of Non-Communicable Diseases and Health Promotion.

Projection of Bed Days - In May 2011, the research section, in collaboration with a consultant from the National Hospital Information System, worked on an exercise to project the average number of bed days in 2010 for 2015, 2020 and 2025. This exercise was done for all the medical specialities, by age and gender.

An Analysis of Selected Terminal Diseases in Malta - In June 2011, the research section worked on a report in conjunction with the hospital information system, analysing the need for end of life care for

patients with selected terminal conditions in Malta. This report was compiled for Hospice Malta. The majority of this work was conducted by a public health trainee and supported by data from the hospital information system as well as projection compiled by the research section.

Sexual Health Survey: Attitudes, Knowledge and Practices - In the summer of 2011, the Directorate began to plan for a national sexual health survey. Meetings with key stakeholders and experts in the field were held to discuss the best study design for the survey and devise a questionnaire. Fieldwork is set to be started in February 2012.

Core Group EHIS Meeting held in Malta, 26-27 September - The DHIR hosted the final Core Group EHIS meeting in September. The core group was part of the ESSnet-Health project which is funded by EUROSTAT as part of the activities of the European Statistical System Network (ESS-net). The CG HIS brings together experts from a number of European Member States with the objective of providing assistance and scientific support to EUROSTAT in the development and sustainability of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS). During the two-day meeting held in Malta, experts from the CG discussed the improvement and development of the EHIS tool for the second wave of its implementation.

Application of Survey of Carers in Households - The Survey of Carers in Households – 2009/10 held in England will be adapted and applied to Malta. The DHIR was involved in filling the application by providing a framework of the methodology and sampling methods. The Directorate also presented a detailed list of costs to put together the budget to carry out this survey, which is funded by the EU. The application was submitted in September 2011. The aim of the directorate is to document the extent and the nature of informal care being provided by Maltese households.

WHO-EURO Health for All (HFA)

Data on Health Indicators for the year 2010 was submitted to WHO-EURO towards the end of 2011.

Statistics Clinic

The Statistics Clinic remained highly in demand during 2011, with around 130 attendees. While attempts were made to maintain appointments on the prescribed slots on Tuesdays and Thursdays afternoons, these days are increased during peak demand periods such as May and September.

Health Ethics Committee

DHIR continued its support to the Health Ethics Committee. Secretarial support is being provided by DHIR, together with the coordination of all its activity. A new committee was appointed from 10 August 2011 to 9 August 2014.

Reports Published by DHIR

Scientific Publications by DHIR Staff in 2011

- Predictors of vibration perception threshold in type 2 diabetic patients with proliferative retinopathy. CJ Magri, N Calleja, G Buhagiar, S Fava. *Postgrad Med J* 2011;87:658-663
- Factors associated with diabetic nephropathy in subjects with proliferative retinopathy. CJ Magri, N Calleja, G Buhagiar, S Fava. *Int Urol Nephrol.* 2012 Feb;44(1):197-206. Epub 2011 Apr 24.
- Incidence and modes of presentation of childhood type 1 diabetes mellitus in Malta between 2006 and 2010. N Formosa, N Calleja, J Torpiano. *Pediatric Diabetes* Epub 2011 Dec 13.
- Health behaviour counselling in primary care: general practitioner - reported rate and confidence. M Saliba, MR Sammut, KS Vickers, N Calleja. *MMJ* 2011 23(1):22-28.
- Factors influencing the future of paediatric private practice in Malta. V Grech, C Savona-Ventura, M Gatt, S Attard Montalto. *Pediatr Rep.* 2011 June 16; 3(2): e12.
- Gestational Age Patterns of Fetal and Neonatal Mortality in Europe: Results from the Euro-Peristat Project. AD Mohangoo, SE Buitendijk, K Szamotulska, J Chalmers, LM Irgens, F Bolumar, JG Nijhuis, J Zeitlin, the Euro-Peristat Scientific Committee. *PLoS One* 2011 6(11): e24727.

- Congenital Heart Defects in Europe: Prevalence and Perinatal Mortality, 2000 to 2005. H Dolk, M Loane, E Garne, European Surveillance of Congenital Anomalies (EUROCAT) Working Group. *Circulation*. 2011; 123: 841-849
- Development and validation of a screening questionnaire for noise-induced hearing loss. M Rosso, R Agius, N Calleja. *Occup Med* (2011) 61 (6): 416-421.

Projects

DHIR continued to participate in a number of EU funded projects during 2011. These projects, whilst requiring a commitment in terms of time and human resource effort, have provided an opportunity for growth and development of new activities as well as networking opportunities at a European level particularly on a number of activities which are relevant to Maltese health policy, as already mentioned above.

EPIDERM - The Cancer registry took part in the EPIDERM project and all the papers and results are still ongoing to be published soon.

European Community Health Indicator Monitoring (ECHIM) - DHIR represents Malta on this Joint Action Project. Malta participated in this project sending pilot data for the core health indicators in Malta – these are currently being analysed together with those of other EU Member States. Funding for the ECHIM project came to an end in 2011 and a new application for continuation of the Joint Action project has been submitted.

European Health Examination Survey (EHES) - The EHES is a two-year European project funded through a joint action which started in January 2010 and will be complete in January 2012. The project is being conducted by 14 European countries. Fieldwork for this survey was completed end 2010 and in 2011 the Directorate worked on preparing the datasets which were to be sent to the project leaders in Finland. Five datasets were compiled and sent to the data centre managing the project in autumn of 2011. Apart from this, DHIR adhered to the reporting requirements of this project by sending in regular progress reports and a final report on the project. In autumn 2011, the Directorate started to compile a report on the findings of this survey. The draft of the report was completed by end 2011 and is presently under review. It should be published in the beginning of 2012.

WHO - Global Status Report on Road Safety - The DHIR was entrusted for the second time to compile the said report by the World Health Organisation. It entailed the multi-sectoral compilation of information from various partners besides DHIR, including Transport Malta, Police Department, and the National Statistics Office. A consensus meeting was held at DHIR and the data was endorsed by the MHEC before transmission to the WHO.

Addressing Inequalities in Regions (AIR) - The AIR project has been running for the past two years and is looking into how different Member States use primary care initiatives to address health inequalities at a regional level. Malta has been actively participating in this project through various submissions.

Public Health Innovation and Research in Europe (PHIRE) - DHIR is a very active partner on the PHIRE project which is evaluating the innovation in public health research in Europe. It is evaluating all projects funded by the EAHC under the Public Health Programme during 2010.

EUROmediCAT - The MCAR is also actively involved in the FP7 funded project – EUROmediCAT – and in 2011 sent data regarding medications taken during pregnancy for mothers of children with a diagnosed congenital anomaly.

EUROPERISTAT - The NOIS register has been actively involved in the EUROPERISTAT project and during 2011 submitted data for a preterm birth study being carried out in all EU Member States; the full report is to be issued in 2012.

Joint Action – Monitoring Injuries in Europe (JAMIE) - The IDB is an associated partner on the JAMIE Joint Action, funded under the Public Health Programme, to investigate the introduction of a minimum

injury dataset to be implemented by all EU Member States for possible entrenchment in European legislation. Project negotiation has now been finalised and work on the project is expected to start soon.

Joint Action – European Healthy Life Expectancy Information System (JA EHLEIS) - The Joint Action EHLEIS is planned to research applications for health expectancy statistics in Europe. DHIR is the Maltese partner, with collaboration with the Department of Gerontology at the University of Malta. Project negotiation has been completed and the launch meeting is planned for April 2012.

Other Meetings Abroad in 2011

- European Health Examination Survey Meeting - Luxembourg - March
- ECHIM extended Core Group meeting - Luxembourg - March
- Technical Group on Health and Health Interview Survey (HIS) Statistics - Luxembourg - March
- Meeting of the EU Expert Group on Social Determinants and Health Inequalities - Luxembourg - April
- Eurocourse WP6 – Use of Cancer Registry data in clinical databases - Amsterdam - April
- EUROMED Workshop - Palermo, Italy - May
- Euromed meeting – The Role of the AIRTUM and Euromed cancer screening - Palermo -May
- OECD Expert Group on Health Care Quality Indicators (HCQI) - International Energy Agency - Paris - May
- EHES JA Cultural Adaptations Workshop - Helsinki - June
- European Partnership for Action Against Cancer Open Forum - Madrid, Spain -June
- Eurochip3 – Cancer Rehabilitation - Madrid - 16 June
- European Partnership for Action Against Cancer Open Forum – Madrid, Spain -June
- 26th EUROCAT Registry Leaders Meeting and 11th EUROCAT Symposium - Antwerp - June
- Working Group on Public Health Statistics - Luxembourg - June
- JAMIE Partners/NDA meeting on 15 September
- 38th Annual meeting of the International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Surveillance and Research - Geneva -September
- Pre Announcement EGHI Meeting - Luxembourg - December
- 5th EHES Joint Action Coordinators Meeting - Luxembourg -December

Training

- Population Dynamics and Projections - February - London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK (as part of Msc in Epidemiology)
- IRIS- an interactive system for coding of multiple causes of death and to obtain selection of the underlying causes of death - Bonn, Germany - January
- Spatial Epidemiology in Public Health - February - London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK (as part of Msc in Epidemiology)
- Regional Training of National Data Coordinators for the Global Status Report on Road Safety II - April - Geneva, Switzerland
- Risk Assessment and Management: Essential Skills - June
- Cancer survival: Principles, method and analysis - June - London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK
- JAMIE Training Event - November - Berlin, Germany
- Sexual Health Training Workshop - November

Other

Standard Operating Procedures

Eight standard operating procedures for the DHIR were finalised and came into effect from January. As part of the Quality Systems, an internal audit was carried out with the staff working on these SOPs. One member of our staff was selected to be an internal Auditor, and another as Lead Auditor. They were assigned to carry out audits in four directorates within the DGSS namely DGSS office, DPDEU, DPPM, HSTA and Entitlement Unit.

NURSING SERVICES DIRECTORATE (NSD)

Executive Summary

The mission statement of the Nursing Services Directorate is to promote excellence in all aspects of nursing and midwifery services.

During 2011, the NSD continued to consolidate its function and work delivery. The main purpose of the NSD is to ensure the provision of good quality nursing services at the national level. During 2011, the split between the nursing services provision and the services standards materialised with nursing staff moving to the SPH and the rest with the Health Care Services Division. Later on during 2011, the NSD started to form part of the Department of Health under the auspices of the CMO.

The NSD assumed the function of a coordinating directorate with regard to nursing and midwifery services across government health care entities. It was also responsible for the running of the Enrolled nurse – Staff nurse (EN-SN) conversion course, the running of the intravenous therapy (IV) course amongst others. During 2011, the NSD supported the Human Resources Directorate regarding resourcing and other operational matters such as deployment. The Directorate also supported the SPH in the inspection of health care facilities in Malta and in the Nursing Support staff sector particularly with what concerns occupational standards, and the training thereof. Collaboration with other sectors such as the Council of Nurses and Midwives and the Faculty of Health Science also continued during 2011.

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

EN to SN Conversion Course

The NSD is responsible for the running of the Enrolled Nurse to Staff nurse (EN TO SN) Conversion Course. This project entails courses where enrolled nurses (2nd level nurses) engage in studies to become 1st level nurses through a number of formal lectures, assignments and examinations over a stretch of 18 months. Every year, three courses run simultaneously where each one will be through a different phase of the course. The project was initiated in March 2003 as a continuity of the previous conversion course which was based on the Open McMillan course. From March 2003 to this date, 18 courses have been initiated and 15 courses (seven to 21) were completed successfully while three courses (22 to 24) are still running. In fact, course 24 is officially the last course intake and is due to finish in November 2012 and the students will sit for their final exam in January 2013. From the start of this project till this year, 631 candidates have started the course, in which 465 have successfully become 1st level nurses while 105 students are still pursuing the course. There were 46 students who refrained from continuing their studies. This gives an approximate 7% course attrition rate. This Directorate has witnessed a shift from a majority of level 2 nurses in the workforce, back in 2003, to a majority of level 1 nurses thanks to this continuous programme which managed to convert this number of nurses throughout these years.

Unregulated Care Providers

The NSD took the initiative to draft the occupational standards for support workers such as carers, or care workers, nursing aides, etc. The aim of the NSD was to identify the proposed roles/skills and competencies for such an important job in the clinical area. Job descriptions were updated and divided into three levels of care – depending on the level of expertise. The drafting of the occupational standards consisted of organising different skills into units of competencies that include the performance criteria together with the required knowledge in carrying out the skills. This is a project that NSD is collaborating with and leading on behalf of the SPH.

Staff at NSD form part of the working group of the Unregulated Health Providers which function is to work towards achieving occupational standards, therefore recommending minimum training requirements for such workers. During 2011, the Director (Allied Health Care Professions) joined the group in order to

include support workers to Allied Health Care Professions. Respective job descriptions and the occupational standards were also drafted for support workers. The recommended training for nursing support workers will be submitted to Malta Qualifications Council for accreditation during 2012.

Intravenous Therapy Course

This is an ongoing national project organised by the NSD to train and provide a certificate of competence to all qualified nurses who work in Malta and Gozo. The training consists of a two-day course assessed by a written test, a practical clinical assessment and a written self-assessment. During 2011, four courses in Intravenous Drug Administration were held with a total of 82 nurses completing the programme.

Expression of Interest

Throughout this year, the NSD drafted and issued five Expressions of Interest for staff nurses to work in the homes for the elderly, in the nursing administration at SPBH, Continence Unit at SVPR, as well as issued training interest for Oncology and Palliative Care and Scoliosis.

Orientation and Induction Programme for Foreign Trained Nurses

With Malta, like other countries, experiencing a shortage of nurses, and with predicted shortfalls, the Health Department changed its policy and opened the doors to foreign-educated nurses. The NSD embarked on a programme for expatriate nurses migrating from Asia. Meetings were held with administrative/nursing staff working at MDH and SVPR in preparation to provide effective orientation and guidance on the provision of adaptation.

The 60 non-EU member states nurses that were recruited throughout this year needed an elderly module which has been structured and carried out at SVPR. The course included both theoretical and practical modules. Mentors were trained and an assessment tool was formulated to be included in the Adaptation and Assessment Programme. NSD supervised the whole process as to facilitate continuity once these nurses were employed with the Health Department. The NSD assisted with the coordination of medical screening and the Maltese Language Proficiency Course that was organised in conjunction with the Employment and Training Corporation.

Students' Recruitment

NSD staff participated in the school career exhibitions held at St Aloysius College and the Higher Secondary where the necessary information regarding courses and the entry requirements were provided by NSD staff. The NSD also supported MDH and participated in the International Fair of Malta to promote nursing as a career for young people.

Discussions on a New Sectoral Agreement for Nurses and Midwives

The NSD, together with the MHEC and the Public Administration Collective Bargaining Unit, was engaged in discussions with the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses (MUMN) regarding the reviewing of the sectoral agreement between the Government and MUMN.

International Conference of Nurses (ICN)

More than 2,000 delegate nurses, mostly foreign nurses, attended the ICN conference held in Malta in May 2011 and organised by the ICN and the MUMN. The Director (Nursing Services) gave a number of speeches and presentations at various occasions. A monument to Nursing was inaugurated at Floriana near SPBH. NSD assisted with the coordination of the release of volunteers at the conference. NSD was involved in organising various informative visits for the foreign delegates in four entities which included SVPR, Primary Care, MCH and MDH.

AUDITS

- *NPICU Audit*: At the beginning of 2011, an audit was carried out to identify the situation of staff complement at the Neonatal and Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at MDH according to recommended staff-patient ratios.
- *SVPR Audit*: An audit was carried out to monitor the caring staff levels at SVPR.

DOCUMENTATION

NSD formulated the Relieving Pool Policy and provided feedback on the Blood Transfusion Standards for the SPH. Various policies/documentation that were to be introduced especially at MDH level were reviewed and feedback given. MDH set up a documentation committee which requests NSD endorsement. The Miscarriage and Stillbirths Documentation Booklet, Breastfeeding Policy, Hip and Knee Replacements Pathways were some of documents that NSD reviewed and approved.

DATABASES

From the beginning of 2011, the necessity was felt to have a number of databases highlighting all relative status and changes occurring within all entities throughout the Nursing and Midwifery Services. Templates were created from NSD and sent to all entities to achieve uniformity in the data collected. The first database that was created was that of all nurses working in hospitals (state and private) and other entities. This also gave NSD a clear idea of the distribution of staff. This also provided a useful tool to monitor attendees for the IV course. This database is being monitored and updated every month. Other databases collected by NSD were the nursing and midwifery staff's rosters within all entities and the vacancies of nursing officers and deputy nursing officers.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Deployment of Nurses

With effect from June 2011, NSD assumed a role of advising HR on issues of deployment. A number of pending requested transfers were recommended together with newly appointed nurses and midwives deployment. This process was carried out in liaison with the HR Directorate and according to the exigencies of the service.

Deployment of Nursing Officers and Departmental Nursing Managers

The NSD was involved in collaboration with the heads of the entities and the CMO office in deploying nursing officers according to the needs of the different entities at the end of 2011 when 53 nursing officers were appointed. In mid-2011 a number of departmental nursing managers were deployed across entities, leaving practically no vacancies by the end of 2011 after 17 new departmental nursing officers were appointed.

PSC Calls

By the end of 2011, there were two calls for DNOs and DMOs in process and which calls will be finalised during 2012. During 2011, the open call for staff nurses was closed and in all there are seven batches of nurses with hundreds of applications to be processed. Batches I, II and III were processed during 2011.

INSPECTION OF HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

NSD staff supported the SPH with the inspection of private hospitals and clinics. The NSD staff assisted the inspection and provided advice and feedback from a nursing and midwifery services' perspectives. The inspection of three private hospitals and five private clinics was carried out so as to ensure the

standards of care, including reviewing that all premises in question are in accordance with good and safe practices. Such inspections are needed for licence renewal.

NSD staff support the Department of Elderly with research on Quality Indicators for homes for the elderly.

OPENING OF NEW SERVICES

NSD assisted, with the deployment of new staff, the opening of two new 30-bedded wards at the Rehabilitation Hospital, the fourth operating orthopaedic theatre and Discharge Lounge at MDH. NSD assisted with the strengthening of nursing resources at the homes for the elderly. Nursing management was strengthened at both the Mtarfa and Mellieha Homes for the Elderly by identifying the nursing officers and deputy nursing officer needed at both homes and by dedicating for the first time two full-time departmental nursing managers at the Homes for the Elderly. Four staff nurses were deployed at Mellieha Home to strengthen nursing staff levels.

COMMITTEES AND ENQUIRIES

Senior Executive Committee Meetings

These meetings started in January 2011, with the aim of providing stewardship for the development of new nursing and midwifery services, the consolidation of existing services and the restructuring of services as required. The group met every three weeks to sound ideas and to provide opportunity to facilitate communication across the various hospitals and entities. The aims and structure of this group was revised in the third quarter of the year in view of the internal restructuring of the top management structure and objectives. It is intended that a consultative forum of manager nursing services is set up in 2012 to advise the DNS and provide a network for nursing and midwifery management.

Breastfeeding Steering Committee

NSD forms part of the MDH Breast Feeding Steering Committee. The aim of this Committee is to work towards the attainment of Baby Friendly Initiative Award (BFI) provided by the UNICEF. One of the NSD staff contributes as a member on the Committee and as one of the lecturers on this training programme. The 27-hour breast feeding course has been implemented by the Committee to all staff working in the Maternity Department. The Committee has formulated the breastfeeding policy on the ten steps of the UNICEF. Any other issues arising regarding breastfeeding will be dealt with within the Committee.

Libya Crisis

Various meetings were held and important decisions taken during the Libya Crisis during most of 2011. NSD immediately implemented these contingent decisions as they arose. Two examples were when the Directorate had to organise and temporarily deploy ex ITU staff nurses from different entities to work at the ITU for a certain period of time due to the opening of an additional critical area that could house 10 ITU beds. All beds were occupied for a number of weeks and taken care of by a number of dedicated ITU and ex-ITU staff. All staff received letters of recognition.

Tender Evaluation Boards

The NSD was involved in the tendering evaluation boards during 2011 in connection with nursing matters such as uniforms, recruiting agencies amongst others.

Selection Boards

Various NSD staff was appointed members of different selection boards which included recruitment, promotions, expression of interests and re-instatement of diverse hospital nursing grades.

Inquiry Boards

The NSD staff was also involved in four inquiries and boards of review during 2011. The Director (Nursing Services) chaired a number of selection boards particularly for staff nurses and departmental nursing managers and three inquiry boards. Other NSD officers were members/chair of various other boards for re-instatement of service.

CONFERENCE, SEMINARS, COURSES AND MEETINGS

NSD staff attended various conferences, seminars, courses, meetings and workshops both locally and abroad.

MEETINGS ABROAD

The Director (Nursing Services) attended the EU Chief Nursing Officers Meetings in Hungary in March 2011 and EU Chief Nursing Officers meeting and WHO Regional Meeting in Warsaw, Poland in October. He also attended various meetings in Brussels throughout this year with Joint Action in HR Workforce Planning. The Director attended also the World Health Assembly Ministerial Meeting held at Genève Switzerland in May and represented the Council for Nurses and Midwives in London in September for the Informal Network for Nursing Regulators on the revision of the EU Directive 36/2005 about the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications which is due for revision in 2012.

OFFICIAL BOARDS

The Director (Nursing Services) is ex officio member of the Council for Nurses and Midwives and member of the Institute of Health Care Diploma Nursing Board of Studies and Degree Nursing Board of Studies, and Mental Health Studies; National Pandemic Committee and the Patient Safety Committee, as well as chairman of the EN-SN Conversion Course Board of Studies.

ALLIED HEALTH CARE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

This was the first full year since the appointment of the Director (Allied Health Care Services). The Allied Health Care Services Directorate coordinated and met with various entities - allied health care professions, MHEC HR Offices, University of Malta, MCAST, KNPD (National Commission for Persons with Disability), PACBU and unions - on all issues pertaining to Allied Health Care during 2011. The potential and value of the services provided by Allied Health Care has been recognised and the MHEC depends on a vast array of these services. The significant increase in demands on Allied Health Care Services has placed issues such as sustainability and training on top of the agenda.

The sustainability of the professions has led to discussions with the University of Malta, Faculty of Health Sciences as well as research into course and training opportunities abroad. The key challenges faced by the allied health care professions relate to current staffing levels and the need to increase the workforce in terms of education, retention, recruitment and return. Several other meetings with unions, human resources and other directors and health officials on issues being faced by these services have led to a variety of discussions and proposals which are ongoing.

ALLIED HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

The work of the Director (Allied Health Care Services) has involved various meetings with all managers of the Allied Health Care Services, both collectively, as well as onsite visits and meetings with all the managers on an individual basis together with relevant meetings with senior staff and clinical chairpersons to fully understand the situations being faced by each and every service.

The services and professions that have been placed under the remit of the Allied Health Care Services are the following: Audiology Services, Clinical Perfusion Services, Dental Hygiene Services, Dental Surgery Assistants, Dental Technology Services, Dieticians, Medical Laboratory scientists, Medical Imaging services, Medical Physicians, Ocular (Prosthetic) Services, Occupational Therapy services, Optometry Services, Orthoptics Services, Orthotics and Prosthetics services, Physiological Measurements services and ECG technicians, Podiatry services, Psychology services, Radiotherapy Services, Social work services and Speech and Language Pathology Services. The services provided by professional as well as technical and other paramedical support staff such as paramedic aides and assistants has also been placed under the remit of this Directorate. Amongst these professions there are those whose services are provided largely at MDH and therefore the full annual report is included in the report given by the respective entity whilst other services are provided across Malta and Gozo and therefore a national annual report is compiled by the Manager of Services.

ALLIED HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Audiology

Audiology Services are providing a valuable service in audiological testing, neonatal screening cochlear implants. Various discussions were held related to staffing issues with the clinical chairperson, the consultant in charge of audiology, as well as the manager of Audiology Support Services. Job descriptions for Paramedic Aides (Audiology) were drawn up and three Paramedic Aides were recruited as casuals from MCAST. Calls for three Paramedic Aides (Audiology) as well as an Audiology Technician were issued in 2011.

Clinical Perfusion

The staffing levels for Clinical Perfusion services have reached sufficient levels in view of the fact that Cardiac Bypass surgery is on the decrease. The Clinical Perfusionists are exploring the future role of Clinical Perfusionists in areas such as ECMO (Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation) and platelet gel. In fact, a training visit abroad to explore future possibilities was funded by the Allied Health Care Directorate.

Dental Hygiene

Dental Hygiene service continued to be offered at MDH, as well as schools and elderly homes. Discussions took place during 2011 on the proposed Dental Hygiene course to open within the Faculty of Dental Surgery, University of Malta.

Dental Surgery Assistants

Various discussions took place with relevant stakeholders concerning employment and placement options for the Dental Surgery Assistants which will include MDH, SVPR and Public Health. Meetings were held with the Clinical Chairperson, Dental Surgeons, Dental Hygienists as well as prospective dental hygienist. The next cohort of Dental Surgery Assistants will graduate in July 2012.

Dental Technology

A call for applications for Dental Technologist was issued and discussions with the Dental department were held in view of their employment and future proposed projects in metal frameworks.

Dietetics

Discussions were held and liaison with foreign hospitals to negotiate training placements abroad as well as various meetings with relevant consultants. Proposals involving Dieticians were also discussed, such as involvement in diabetes programmes, obesity programmes, services to renal patients, Ketogenic diets, and eating disorders.

Medical Laboratory Scientists

Meetings were held with the Manager, Medical Laboratory Services on various issues including websites, training funds, paramedic aides, and paramedic course requirements used by the Pathology Department.

Medical Imaging

The Medical Imaging Department had a newly appointed manager in 2011. Various discussions were held on issues related to staffing and training. The Medical Imaging Department has made steps in reducing the waiting lists in most areas through redistribution of staff and changes in rosters in some cases. A promotional event was organised within the Medical Imaging Department as well as the VERT demonstration. Prospective students were contacted and invited to visit the department. A half-day seminar was organised by the Medical Imaging Department where graduates presented their research. An art exhibition was also held during the same week.

Ocularist

The current Ocularist benefited from various training programmes as well as accompanying patients to provide Maxillofacial after care.

Occupational Therapy

The Occupational Therapists faced an increase in the demand on their services. Outsourcing of OT services for Child Development Assessment Unit was issued and the school pilot project had to be reduced to an on demand service due to the influx of referrals. Union issues pertaining to OTs included staff issues as well as uniforms. The uniform issue was resolved through the issue of a call for quotes and were successfully delivered in 2011.

Ophthalmic Support Services

Discussions have been underway to send two persons to train in Orthoptics and one person in Optometry next year. The necessary research into possible training options, universities and required training funds were drawn up.

Orthotics and Prosthetics

This is the service which has seen the greatest overhaul and turn-around in service quality during 2011. Several meetings were carried out so as to improve the service being delivered to patients. Following correspondence with the foreign contractors, the Prosthetics contractors were asked to attend a meeting in December 2010 followed by a meeting with the Orthotics contractors in March 2011. An Administrative Manager was deployed at OPU in February 2011 to oversee the day-to-day running of the department as well as planning the foreign clinics. A team of physiotherapists and podiatrists were formed to handle urgent cases. The Prosthetic contractor sent over a prosthetist to look at quality issues and set up a

documentation system. Together with the Administrative Manager, the Prosthetist provided information and set up guidelines for patient satisfaction surveys and training options for the team. A Prosthetic/Orthotics Technicians training programme was designed with input from all the team and compiled by the Allied Health Care Directorate. Job descriptions and specifications for the Technicians as well as the Prosthetist/Orthotist were developed. Three Technician Trainees began a six-month training programme on 4 July 2011 and a Prosthetist/Orthotist was engaged on a contract for service on 1 August. The quality of service to patients has improved and positive feedback has been received from the service users. Meetings were also held to review the current contract and specifications in view of changing needs.

Physiological Measurements (Including Sleep Lab, EEG, EMG and ECG)

Meetings to discuss training and recruitment of persons to train as ECG were held. Various options have been proposed based on research on training abroad including developing Paramedic Aides (cardiographers) to carry out ECGs, training MCAST graduates and offering current ECG technicians a form of bridging course. Other meetings were held to discuss EEGs and EMG services offered. Training funds were used for echo cardiography training abroad.

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy management meetings were held on the setting up of the Hand Therapy service together with the Occupational Therapy Department, the training, joint protocols and joint referrals. Other meetings were held regarding the service delivered at the Orthotics and Prosthetic Unit and various meetings re: training funds and sponsored courses, staffing issues, rosters, rotation and unions. A major topic of discussion was the current venue of Physiotherapy Outpatient services at the RHKG and the lack of space and facilities.

Podology

Discussions with the Podiatry/Podology Department included the services offered in Diabetic screening, primary health care services, the extension of services at MDH, the placements of podologists within OPU, the foot screening, paediatric foot screening, training opportunities and the organisation of courses on the CAD/CAM by Podiatry and MCAST for podiatrist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, the Prosthetist/Orthotist and the Prosthetic/Orthotic Technician. Meetings were also held to discuss podiatric assistants.

Psychology

The Director was actively involved representing MHEC in the Collective Agreement meeting for the psychology class. Training funds were utilised for a first aid course and specialised EMDR training for a large number of psychologists and trainee psychologists. Liaison with the CEOs, MCH and MDH resulted in a psychologist being able to deliver a service at the Paediatric oncology ward. This was previously on a voluntary basis.

Radiotherapy

Meetings were held with the manager of the Radiotherapy Service at SPBH on various issues such as training and staffing issues as well as regular ongoing meetings with the Medical Administrator, SPBH as well as the with the Faculty of Health Sciences on the radiotherapy course, equipment, registrations, legislation and student training.

Speech and Language Pathology

Meetings held with the Speech Language Department related to training and utilisation of funds, staffing issues, liaison with the FHS on the subject of the proposed entry level Masters course, discussions on equipment, and assessments.

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Discussions were held on current courses being offered at the Faculty of Health Sciences as well as proposed courses for the future. These proposed courses include a BSc in Food Studies with an option to follow Dietetics in the 4th year, meetings on the funds given to the Faculty of Health Sciences by MHEC for further education for staff, and information meetings on prospective numbers of students. The Director of Allied Health was involved in a number of meetings with the Department of Radiography, Faculty of Health Sciences together with the Medical Administrator of SPBH and other relevant MHEC departments on the Radiography course which enables students to be qualified in both diagnostic and therapeutic radiography. Issues pertained mainly to equipment, clinical placements – local and abroad, promotion of the course, student training agreements and contracts as well as procurement procedures.

MCAST

Discussions were held during 2011 on the possibility of starting up courses in areas with no local course. These included Podiatric Assistants and Physiological Measurements course. Currently, the Health Care sector employs several graduates from MCAST, namely Dental Surgery Assistants. During 2011, the Permanent Secretary (MHEC) set up a working group including Director of Allied Health to take part in various discussions with MCAST to look into what could be offered as well as to discuss with the Health Care stakeholders who wish to utilise staff trained through MCAST courses. The aim is to match current staffing needs to courses provided. Meetings with various health care departments were held to discuss their current needs and whether any specific curriculum requirements are needed. The departments involved in discussions are: Medical Laboratory, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Audiology, Ophthalmology, Podiatry and Accident and Emergency.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

A number of meetings were held between PACBU and MUPP (Malta Union of Professional Psychologists) regarding the new collective agreement for the Psychology class. The Director of Allied Health Care was the MHEC representative. An exercise was carried out to collate relevant information on changes required from amongst the allied health care professions. The next collective agreement exercise will continue to be discussed in 2012.

TRAINING FUNDS

The sum of €180,000 was allocated for training to the Allied Health Care Services. This was explained to all Allied Health Care Managers and proposals with relevant justifications accepted.

CAPACITY BUILDING

During 2011, an Expression of Interest was approved and issued for part-time attachments from amongst allied health care professions to provide support on specific projects.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES, TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

During 2011, the Director of Allied Health participated in a radio programme on Careers in Health. The Directorate coordinated participation at the Trade Fair to provide information on careers in Health.

Various questions from the media were also answered by the DAHCS and passed through the Communications Officer. Following meetings between the Communications Officer, MHEC and the DAHCS, promotional bookmarks as well as adverts on Facebook and internet news websites was organised to promote Health Care careers with particular emphasis on radiography and occupational therapy in an attempt to increase intakes to these courses.

The Director, Allied Health Care Services, participated in talks at the Occupational Therapy Open Day where a presentation on the restructuring process at MHEC was delivered. The Director, Allied Health Care, presented certificates at the end of the EMDR course organised for Psychologists. The Director was also invited to the Medical Imaging Open Day, CPD events organised by the Physiotherapy and the Occupational Therapy Departments.

KNPD

Various discussions were held with KNPD regarding the ESF project, which included training of Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapist in Assistive Equipment and Adapted Driving. The Director of Allied Health Care Services is the MHEC Liaison Officer in a Memorandum of Understanding signed between KNPD and MHEC whereby MHEC Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists provided assessments and advice at the KNPD ERDF premises, the Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre at Hal-Far. The Director, Allied Health Care Services, presented the MHEC position as part of a consultation exercise on a report prepared for KNPD on Independent Living for Persons with Disabilities.

INVOLVEMENT IN TASK FORCE

The Director was involved in a task force set up by the Prime Minister, which was set up following a report which investigated the interrogation and arrest of juveniles. The task force consist of representative from various ministries as well as OPM and is headed by the Commissioner for Children.

REGULATION OF PROFESSIONS

The Director wa actively involved in a working group set up by the Superintendent of Health on regulation of health care services. This group has looked at the various professions that fall under the Director's remit such as paramedic aides, technical staff and assistants. The various job descriptions were compiled and are now in the process of looking at the key competencies and skills required so as to formulate the training that would be required to achieve such skills. The work of this working group is still ongoing.

Meetings were held with the CPCM (Council for Professions Complementary to Medicine) to discuss various issues such as unregulated Health Care Professions, specialists' lists and continuing professional development registration lists linked with recommendations for the upkeep of the warrant. During the latter part of 2011, audiologists became a profession to be regulated and listed by the CPCM.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND COLLABORATION

- Following participation in the 2nd International Chief Health Professions Officers (ICHPO) Conference held in London in 2010, the Director participated in the planning meeting for the 3rd ICHPO via teleconferencing on 28 July 2011, placing regulation of health care professions on the agenda for the upcoming meeting.
- Participated in the 3rd ICHPO which was held in Albert, Canada via teleconferencing on 3 November 2011. During this meeting, the Director gave a brief country report and update of the current situation re: allied health care in Malta. Other topics discussed included an international definition, classification of professions, deregulation and self-regulation of professions as well as the current economic situation within participating countries and the impact on the allied health care professions.
- The Directorate participated in a feasibility study – EU level collaboration on forecasting health workforce needs, workforce planning and monitoring workforce trends which was launched by the

European Commission (DG SANCO) to help define scenarios for collaboration among Member States as part of potential joint action.

POST GRADUATE TRAINING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PTAC)

The year 2011 was characterised by a number of issues which impacted directly or indirectly on postgraduate medical training in Malta. The PTAC has been very active in trying to convince the stakeholders of the importance of having a Head of training in the first place and setting up meetings with MAM and SAC amongst others; formulating a job description and terms of reference for the position in question; and lobbying the authorities to issue the call for application at the earliest.

Bilateral Agreements with Foreign Training Institutions

These agreements, which are at different stages of developments, have been fully supported by the Health Authorities.

During 2011, the speciality of Anaesthesia have been the most active on this front with at least two agreements (Kent and Grampian) having reached the final stages. Meanwhile, the PTMC is working on general MoUs with Brighton and Northampton, while at the same time negotiating specific MoUs with Imperial College London (neurology), Chelsea and Westminster (GUM) and Guy's Hospital (Dentistry). In the coming months the PMTC should be preparing an agreement with the Irish College of Ophthalmologists in Ireland (Ophthalmology). The PMTC is advising the training coordinators to have an MOU in place before sending any trainees abroad. Such formal agreements help in safeguarding trainees, our training structure and the Government of Malta which is financing the whole process. As for the already existing bilateral training agreements with KU Leuven (Belgium), Grampian (Scotland) and Oxford (UK), there are currently five trainees undergoing training in these institutions as follows: 2 trainees from Surgery and Anaesthesia in Belgium; 2 trainees from Orthopaedics in Oxford; 1 trainee from Plastics in Grampian.

Amendments to Health Care Professions Act (HCPA)

The proposed amendments to the HCPA impact directly and indirectly on the structure and function of the postgraduate training programme. The PTAC therefore actively involved itself in the discussions surrounding the subject. Numerous meetings were held within the PTAC and with the Superintendent of Public Health. The PTAC took the initiative and organised a half-day seminar with the main stakeholders i.e. Acting Head of Postgraduate training, MAM, SAC and a subcommittee of the PTAC. The meeting was intensive and had the desired result of coming up with a consensus document which was then communicated to the SPH and the CMO in November 2011.

Training in General

- *Examinations:* During 2011 the PMTC was involved at various stages with the logistics of organising the local sitting for MRCPCH Examinations in paediatrics with at least a session during every quarter, and for the first time the PMTC also served as an exam centre for ESSQ examinations in surgery.
- *Visiting Lecturers and Videoconferencing:* During 2011, PMTC has helped significantly in the organisation of visits of foreign lecturers/experts.
- *Simulators and the Simulation Centre:* Advances in training methodology meant that training simulators have now become virtually indispensable. The PMTC was instrumental, in collaboration with the various training coordinators, in purchasing and making available the necessary equipment. After nearly two years, the surgical laparoscopic simulator was delivered following a lengthy procurement process. At the same time, the PMTC bought various other smaller and less sophisticated simulators which are being used at all levels, in fact various manikins were procured for the specialities of Paediatrics, Respiratory medicine, Anaesthesia, Geriatrics and Foundation Programme. The main objective is to continue increasing the number of simulators. The main MDH canteen was earmarked as

a Simulation Centre so as to house all the simulators from the different specialties, thus avoiding duplication and saving resources.

- *Further In-house Training:* The PMTC organised the Communication for Doctors Course which sessions were repeated for five consecutive times. 118 Doctors registered for this course.
- *Video-links/Webinars/Web Symposiums:*
 - Weekly Paediatric ST lectures on both Monday and Tuesday with Yorkhill Hospital for Sick Children, Glasgow
 - RCPE Monthly Evening Medical Updates
 - RCPE Update Course in Elderly – one week event all video-linked, mainly for Geriatric Trainees
 - RCPE bimonthly web symposiums
 - Pancreatic surgery video-lectures with Professor Marco del Chiaro for Surgery trainees
 - OMED Interactive Webinars for Surgery trainees - several in 2011
- The PMTC has also helped in sending several trainees, trainers and coordinators for conferences, courses and meetings abroad.

DEPARTMENT FOR THE ELDERLY AND COMMUNITY CARE

During 2011, the Department for the Elderly and Community Care continued to address the challenge related to demographic change and aging. The increasing numbers of elderly persons require different forms of support and healthcare services. This presented an opportunity to explore ways to provide user centred care provision focusing on tangible benefits and long term care sustainability. The Department is committed to continue to support elderly person living in the community to improve their quality of life and postpone entry into long term care. The Department for the Elderly and Community Care had the following portfolio:

- providing domiciliary services to enable the elderly person to remain living in familiar surroundings within the community;
- setting up and running of day centres in various localities to enable the elderly person to continue to lead an active life in the community;
- providing rehabilitation services and the best possible conditions for health improvement in geriatric institutions;
- providing residential care to elderly persons who are unable to benefit from any of the foregoing services;
- providing modern facilities and services to the elderly persons which help them remain independent;
- provision of ongoing training to both existing staff and training directed to fill in gaps in current human resources.

The total budget allocation for the year 2011 was €1,020,000 for Capital Expenditure, and €44,969,000 for Recurrent Expenditure.

ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

Department of Geriatrics

Throughout the year, the Department of Geriatrics continued to provide a clinical service mainly on the following sites:

- RHKG – total of 212 beds (180 Geriatrics; 32 Rehabilitation) together with OP/day hospital clinics
- SVPR – 1,126 long stay beds with seven respite beds.
- MCH – 94 long stay beds.
- MDH Hospital – assessing referred consultations.

In addition to general day hospital/outpatients services, specialised clinics were held in memory, continence, movement disorders, falls, ophthalmic and tuberculosis/pulmonary disorders.

The workload of the Geriatrics Department continued to increase in 2011, when compared to 2010. During the past year, 1,141 persons were admitted into the geriatric wards at KGH (compared to 979 in 2010) of which 82.5% were transfers from MDH. 2,400 consultations were assessed at MDH compared to 1,780 in 2010.

As regards day hospital and outpatient clinics, there were 630 new cases assessed (620 in 2010) and 2,825 follow-ups (2,464 in 2010). 300 were assessed for respite at SVPR, of whom 161 were admitted. Doctors working in the Department of Geriatrics continued to participate in teaching and training for both under and post graduates. A weekly medical education programme continued to be organised by the Postgraduate Training Coordinator with a range of topics discussed.

St Vincent de Paule Residence (SVPR)

The main aim of the residence remained, during the year under review, that of giving elderly people, who are no longer able to live in the community, a better way of living in an attractive, comfortable and modern environment.

The principal objectives for SVPR are to:

- serve as a long-stay residential care centre for people suffering from chronic medical conditions
- provide medical, nursing and rehabilitative care to persons residing at SVPR
- provide social and psychological support for its residents
- provide a respite service for older persons residing in the community
- provide rehabilitation service to older persons residing in Government Homes as well as the community in order to maintain their independent function for as long as is feasibly possible.

As at the end of the year, the number of older people residing at SVPR was 1,126, of whom 800 were females and 326 males. Of these, 54 (26 females, 28 males) were below the age of 60.

Admissions and Discharges

The fact that the Maltese Islands are facing an ageing population is being reflected in the demand for admission to SVPR. An Admission Board vets applications and each application is treated on its own merits giving special attention to the social and medical conditions of the individual. The number of applications received and acknowledged up to end 2011 was 764 and the number of people awaiting admission to SVPR was 847, of whom 243 were males and 604 females. The admissions and discharges at SVPR are illustrated in the tables below:

	Total	Males	Females
Number of applications received (2011)	764	310	454
Waiting list for admission to SVPR (Dec)	847	243	604

	Males	Females
Respite Discharge	39	130
SVPR Discharge	8	5

Deaths	Males	Females
Died at MDH	7	9
Died at SVPR	141	209
Died at Respite (SVPR)	-	-
Died at Home (On Leave)	1	-

Human Resources

SVPR continued to invest in its Human Resources in order to improve on its service provision and attempt towards a quality improvement programme. By the end of December 2011, there were 1,089 employees working on a full and part-time basis.

Strengthening of SVPR Corporate Image

A lot of work has been done to make employees feel part and be proud of working at SVPR, giving particular attention to meet residents and stakeholders' needs. Members from the Senior Management Team and Hospital Management Committee, together with other health and social care professionals were invited to attend media events and programmes. Moreover, media was involved over twenty times to attend or participate in an SVPR event.

Website

The website www.svpr.gov.mt was launched in February 2011 and is a showcase of the myriad of services and activities held at SVPR. The aim of the website is mainly threefold: information purposes; strengthening corporate identity; and collection and dissemination of data.

Planning and Facilitating Change

The Office of the Hospital Planning Manager ensured that all decisions taken at a Hospital Management Committee and Senior Management Team level were translated at departmental and wards level. Change was facilitated mainly through:

- Building up better communication channels between all departments;
- Bimonthly meetings with Nursing Officers;
- More cost-effective and accountable ordering systems;
- Consolidation of the Vulnerable Resident Fund Committee;
- Introduction of the volunteer group VALUE (Volunteers Ameliorate the Life of Users through Entertainment);
- Inception of the Residents and Relatives Councils including guidelines, thus giving voice to these important stakeholders;
- Extended visitors' access hours from 10am to 8pm in order to make visiting hours more family friendly;
- Arrangements with ARRIVA MALTA to operate within SVPR grounds, thus further ascertaining access;
- Introduction of signs and better traffic management;
- Introduction of informative SVPR leaflets for residents, stakeholders and potential clients;
- more networking with NGOs and voluntary organisations;
- Inception of visiting services, together with training to volunteers, on the initiative and collaboration with Red Cross Malta;
- The setting up of SVPR Band - the band is promoting the normalisation principle whereby all wards are toured in every public and religious feast;
- With the collaboration of CARITAS, a Huntington Chorea support group was set up;
- Change of ward names, thus making names more streamlined and systematic;
- Introduction of a policy to better manage residents' remaining of pension benefits. After ensuring consultation and keeping in mind the welfare of residents, a comprehensive and complex exercise was carried out to reduce the number of residents receiving cheques at SVPR. On admission, residents are being advised to either consent social security to deposit cheques electronically in personal private bank accounts or nominate/consent resident/friend to receive cheques on their behalf.
- Investment was carried out to install TV access near each SVPR bed. By means of this project, the airing of daily mass is now visible from all wards.
- The Chaplaincy-Spiritual Care Board was set up to better meet SVPR residents' spiritual needs. Better coordination of in-wards mass has been achieved, whilst efforts are in place to offer Holy Communion to all residents on a daily basis.
- A health and safety committee was created after issuing an expression of interest. Members come from different professions and training on subject was sponsored by SVPR.

Catering Services

After carrying out the necessary studies and pilot projects, SVPR main kitchen is providing liquidised food to all residents in need of such type of nutrition. The service was highly welcomed and complements the over 2,000 meals prepared on a daily basis for SVPR residents and Meals-on-Wheels clients. In June 2011, the new staff dining room was inaugurated after an extensive refurbishment. Over 200 employees visit the new staff dining room on a daily basis.

Laundry Services

€60,000 were invested in the refurbishment of SVPR laundry. The Laundry House was inaugurated on November 2011. New practices were introduced and a top-up system was launched.

Maintenance Services

The Operations Manager and his team were responsible for more than 4,000 operations. Efforts were directed to thorough refurbishments of whole areas such as: Doctor's Quarters; Pharmacy; Main Stores; HR and Administration; Social Work Offices; Telephone Operators Room; a new Customer Care Unit; Mortuary Room; the Kitchen; Theatre; painting and plastering of all St Frances Ward 1, St Joseph Ward 3 and 4; installation of MMMU shelving; installation of a huge aluminium anti-door in Block 6.

Other projects included the dismantling and installation of an AC system at St Francis 4 and a storm water culvert and cistern in the West Wing Yard, hot water system at Ruzar Briffa, monitoring of Ward SJ 4 refurbishment, various replacements of steam pipes.

Entertainment Services

More in-ward activities were initiated this year. The Entertainment Department is guided by the principles of the social model of providing care and support, where residents are not seen as burden but as persons who can still actively contribute to society. The main activities included:

- various intergenerational solidarity activities – around 3,000 school children visited residents SVPR residents
- 600 *Skolasajf* students
- 300 residents were taken to Gozo, with the collaboration of SMOM
- 1,596 residents participated in outside mass
- *Qalb ta' Ġesù* and San Bartolomew Feasts
- Bands in wards activities
- 906 participated in outside yards activities, such as BBQs
- Over 700 books were borrowed by means of a walking library
- Over 650 residents experienced bedside reading by Entertainment staff and volunteers
- Army and Police Bands parades
- 500 residents experienced cookery sessions and other crafts
- Theatre is being used by third parties, thus offering services to SVPR residents as well
- Visits by Birgu, Safi, Valletta, Mgarr Local Councils, amongst others
- Commemoration of Pope John Paul 2 and revealing of statue at JP2 block
- A Birds' Fair, featuring over 1,000 birds

Day Clinics

- *Ophthalmic Clinic* - During 45 sessions, 354 patients were seen at the ophthalmic clinic.
- *Psychiatric Clinic* - This new service was started in August. Sessions were held on 17 dates, during which 89 new cases and 109 follow-ups were seen.

Patients residing at Government Residential Homes seen at Day Clinic

Home	Referral	Refused	Seen at Home	Deceased	F/U	Seen
Mosta	22	4	2	1	1	15
Mtarfa	30	0	2	3	0	25
Floriana	9	0	0	0	0	9
Gżira	3	1	0	0	0	2
Msida	13	2	1	0	0	10

Contenance Advisory Services

The Contenance Care Clinic is managed by a Contenance Nurse Advisor. The areas of responsibility include SVPR, St Jeanne Antide Ward at MCH, RHKG, State Community Homes, Day Centres as well as domiciliary visits for persons in the community.

Ongoing advice and guidance is given on continence promotion, prevention and management. In addition, regular nurse-led clinics are held at the SVPR Day Clinic for Contenance Assessments. Monthly audits on diapers, inco-sheets, catheters and pads consumption are held at SVPR and continence review and assessments are carried out on all clients using the community incontinence service.

The following list gives data concerning client assessments and reviews performed:

SVPR (Wards) - 219
 Contenance Clinic - 94
Domiciliary visits
 Community - 61
 Homes - 22
 ZCH/RH - 38

In-Patient Care Services

In-Patient Respite care is a service that is widely accepted as being an integral part of the community support package, the aim being to temporarily alleviate the burden on carers of older persons that are living within the community. The outcome of respite care is that carers are temporarily relieved of care in situations where they are incapable to provide such support in order to help carers to shoulder the burden of the caring role, thus avoiding or at least postponing requests for permanent admission.

By the end of the year, 302 applicants had applied for admission to respite care at SVPR, of which 161 applicants utilised the respite service (amounting to 54% of applications received). During the year, 141 applicants ended up not utilising the service for the following reasons:

- 24 applicants were not admitted as the dates requested were fully booked;
- 14 applicants applied for convalescence/rehabilitation;
- nine applicants were admitted to long-term care/hospitalised;
- five applicants were under 60 years of age;
- 87 cancelled their application after being given a booking.

Clinical Nutrition

The number of residents with PEG's, Buttons and NGT is continuously increasing and at the end of 2011 there were 80 residents receiving enteral feeding: 45 residents with Naso-Gastric Tube, 28 residents with Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy and eight residents with a Low Profile Gastrostomy.

Nursing Speciality Unit

Through continuing professional development of SVPR staff, the Practice Development Nurse continued to support and facilitate clinical performance through practice-related learning and change. The activities and initiatives undertaken by the Practice Development Nurse (Geriatrics) during 2011 were as follows:

- The response team on Peritoneal Dialysis assisted residents with peritoneal dialysis.
- The working group on the Basic life support (BLS) course changed the BLS programme in according to the European Resuscitation Council guidelines 2010. At the end of 2011, there were 12 BLS instructors at SVPR.
- Ongoing ward level reflective practice exercises in geriatric practices were held with the staff.
- Assistance and monitoring was given to nursing staff following the EN to SN Conversion Course and other staff undergoing further studies with regards to their module related to Geriatric Care.

Lectures were delivered to health care professionals on new practices and guidelines including:

- updated guidelines on blood transfusion (four sessions - 131 Nurses)
- on-call advanced glucose meter standard operating procedure (one session - 35 nursing officers/deputy nursing officers/nurse in charge)
- food hygiene principles (five sessions - 269 nursing supporting staff)
- misuse of antibiotics (five sessions - 164 nurses and 103 nursing supporting staff).

Rehabilitation Services offered at SVPR

Physiotherapy Services

The Physiotherapy Department (PTD), based within SVPR, is responsible for Physiotherapy Services provided by the Department for the Elderly and Community Care (DECC). The 2011 objective of the PTD was to provide its best possible clinical input within an inter-professional team environment and be a centre of information to the various facets of the DECC.

In-Patient Services within Long-term Care Institutions

During 2011, there was a marked influx of new residents requiring physiotherapy. The main reasons for this include both the ageing population within the homes as well as early discharge from acute hospitalisation. Services were also extended to include beds on the Public-Private-Partnership Scheme. The aim of the physiotherapy service is to improve and maintain functional mobility to each resident's maximal potential and to support his/her medical treatment, all within a multi-professional environment. To ensure that each patient receives the best possible service it is the PTD's policy to assess each new resident immediately on admission and set up a 'habilitation' programme for the individual's needs. Periodic assessments are then carried out.

Outpatient services for people over 60 years of age and staff members of the DECC. Hospital transport was provided for those older patients who could not use private transport. This was because the number of physiotherapists to the homes had to be increased owing to the increased number of beds. Also, a whole time equivalent physiotherapist was allocated to the CommCare Team.

Physiotherapy Outpatient Service												
	New Referrals			Patients			Interventions			Hospital Transport Users		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Total	132	226	365	388	614	1,002	1,359	2,110	3,469	80	149	229

Domiciliary Physiotherapy Service provides post-rehabilitation and/or long term care within the patient's home when he/she was unable to receive this in a clinical setting and/or when intervention is more

effective in the home rather than in a clinical setting. The physiotherapists from this Department are working very closely with the CommCare inter-professional team.

Physiotherapy Domiciliary Service												
	New Referrals			Patients			Interventions			Outpatients Follow-up		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Total	49	57	106	90	104	193	185	189	374	2	2	4

Health Promotion service continued to promote awareness on wellbeing to older people and younger age groups concerned with this cohort of the population outside an institutional context. Apart from talks directly to groups of old people, the Physiotherapy Department participated in TV and radio programmes on various related topics and educational programmes to professional and non-professional staff within the DECC and/or training to work with older people on matters pertaining to the geriatric field especially about physical functionality of older people. This year saw the Physiotherapy Department involved in health and safety lectures to non-clinical staff at SVP. The Physiotherapy Department was also active in organising educational programmes for bodies organising training in health care e.g. MCAST and in the training in ergonomics of non-clinical staff at SVP.

Occupational Therapy Department

During 2011, the Occupational Therapy Department based at SVPR offered occupational therapy services throughout the Department for the Elderly and Community Care. The objective was to provide quality occupational therapy services to elderly, both at community and institutional level, offering various activities to promote social interaction and improve residents' quality of life, especially to older persons with higher levels of dependence.

Resident Services

All services which had been provided in all wards at SVPR, government residential homes and the three geriatric wards at MCH continued in 2011. In addition, services were extended to include residents in private homes under the Public-Private Partnership Scheme. In March, the OTs were involved in the dependency evaluation assessments carried out for all SVPR residents using the Modified Chrichton Royal Behavioural Rating Scale. A special event this year was the Stroke Day which was organised on 7 July. On this designated day, a number of residents and outpatients suffering from this condition were given the opportunity to participate in various physical, cognitive and functional activities which were adapted to enhance their abilities.

Activities for Persons with Dementia

OT intervention with persons suffering from dementia and who are coming to the activity centre from the community continued throughout 2011. Standardised assessments of all persons attending were performed. A programme for the use of light domestic activities for functional performance purposes was discussed with the carers of the Activity Centre and later implemented. This year, apart from the various annual activities, two activities were specifically organised for persons with dementia residing at the JP II 1 and 2 wards. These activities involved the preparation of Maltese food near the seaside, as well as a fishing activity. Both therapeutic activities were a success and of great satisfaction since activities for persons suffering from dementia outside SVPR are limited.

Outpatients and Domiciliary Services

The total numbers of persons benefiting from the Occupational Therapy Service continued to increase during the year in review from 4,040 during 2010 to 4,918 in 2011, whilst the domiciliary service decreased gradually during the year as this function was taken up by the Occupational Therapy on the CommCare. More services were provided to residents in residential care:

Service	Residents Referred	Residents Seen	Sessions	Units Direct
SVPR – Wards (Clinical)	1,309	1,400	11,204	21,933
SVPR – Diversional Activity Centre	150	132	6,669	11,187
Outpatients	20	18	152	1,069
Domiciliary	5	4	19	78
Homes (Clinical)	359	481	2,633	6,500
MCH Wards (St Jeanne Antide + St Bernardette + San Gorg)	101	97	575	1,273
Day Centres (Government + Church Centres + Local Councils)	2,767 (circa)	2,767 (circa)	403	816
Activity Centre – Dementia	17	19	92	273
Total	4,728	4,918	21,747	43,129

Dental Unit – SVPR

The aim of the service is to promote and give comprehensive oral health care regarding elderly in state-run residential homes, SVPR, RHKG, wards for elderly at MCH.

Description of work:

- Full dental check-up is provided to persons attending clinic.
- Conservation treatment includes permanent restorations.
- Prosthetic treatment mainly consists of acrylic prosthesis, some splints, follow-ups and other procedures.
- When relevant persons are referred to MDH for Radiographs, consultations.
- Dental care for older persons is further complicated because of compliance, multiple pathology and polypharmacy.
- Soft tissue lesions are mainly due to trauma, denture associated stomatitis, angular cheilitis and others.
- Poor oral hygiene is still very common due to lack of motivation and education, resulting in gross periodontitis. However, improvement from previous years is significant.

Dental Treatment and Oral Care for Elderly Persons in Long Term Care	
Appointments given	1,952
Dental check-ups	390
Extractions	379
Screening Rehab Hosp KGH	491
Conservation procedures	57
Screening of Zejtun Residential Home	107
Prosthetics visits including prosthetic reviews and easing of dentures	892
Admission Ward Screening	173
Periodontal Treatment	213

Podogeriatric Unit

The main aim is to prevent foot problems, as well as screen and treat patients with foot ulcerations in collaboration with the tissue viability team. As a first measure all patients at the Admission Ward are being screened with a complete foot assessment as well as a vascular assessment, while at a community level, educational talks were carried out at various elderly day centres to raise awareness especially amongst mobile elderly for prevention of foot pathologies talks. The podiatry team at SVPR also offers its services to all state community homes, geriatric wards at MCH and during 2011 this has extended to include residents in the PPP scheme. As from the last quarter of this year, the unit has piloted a basic service at the day centres. An evaluation of this pilot study will be undertaken at the beginning of 2011, with the aim of introducing the service to all day Centres within the shortest feasible timeframe.

Speech Language Therapy Unit

The aims of the service are to:

- maximise the communication potential of the clients by identifying, modifying and enriching the communication environment in which the client resides;
- enable the staff caring for the clients to have an understanding of the clients' communication strengths and needs;
- access clients to services such as audiology and dentistry which will contribute to their communication skills;
- work as part of a total care team.

The service provided by the team at SVPR involves individual assessment and therapy to patients with communication and swallowing difficulties. Frequency of sessions depends on the nature and complexity of the problems. Group therapy in unison with occupational therapists is also carried out with patients in the psychogeriatric wards. SLPs also carry out the role of facilitating an understanding, on the part of the client's family/ carers, of the nature of the client's communication and/or feeding difficulties. Staff's skills and knowledge in interacting with/managing clients with communication and/or feeding difficulties are targeted through SLP intervention.

Interdisciplinary Services

SLPs gave 21 talks on communication to nurses (including night relievers) and nursing support staff. These were delivered over a span of six weeks, whereby attendance included 155 nurses and 144 nursing support staff members.

Speech Language Activity Report	
	Cases
Days of service provided by SLPs	467
Clients on SLP register	1,624*
Clients who attended group sessions	19
Clients who attended individual sessions	1,585
Total sessions attended	1,604
Ward Rounds	62
Case Conferences Attended	36
Workshops given by SLPs to SVPR staff	11
Meetings with family/carers	243
Meetings with other professionals	3

*Average balance at the end of the month is 135.

Radiography Unit

Although a small unit, the X-Ray Unit within SVP continued to give a sterling service to the residents at SVP and to clients undergoing a pre-admission assessment for respite care, as well as continued to provide a service to Zammit Clapp Hospital and subsequently to RHKG once the former closed. The Unit also maintained its commitment to the Health Department, in that, illegal Immigrants are screened at SVP soon after they are intercepted and brought to land.

Infection Control Unit

Initiatives carried out during 2011:

- In order to increase awareness on hand hygiene and infection control measures at SVPR, Sterilium was distributed in wards where infectious diseases are notified, to promote hand hygiene.
- Wall-mounted dispensers for alcohol hand rub were fixed in each room in wards.
- Meetings were held with all link nurses to discuss any issues and concerns regarding infection control.
- Sporadic and spontaneous ward assessments were carried out and documented.
- Hand hygiene enforcement and hand hygiene audits were carried out.
- The distribution of Triclosept for usage in treatment of MRSA was carried out by the Unit.
- Introduction of a Peripheral Intravenous Catheter Maintenance Chart.

- Introduction of a new Food Temperature Chart.
- Regular kitchen inspections and deficiencies noted were taken care of and two extra cleaners starting at 7:00am were also introduced.
- Chlorination of the water systems and testing for Legionella and Bacterial counts.

As part of the ongoing professional development, the Infection Prevention and Control Unit:

- Organised together with the infection control team the 5th Infection Prevention and Control Conference held annually at SVPR. A shield was presented to the best ward voted as the most compliant on hand hygiene measures.
- Organised in association with ETC, four Food Handling courses for the nurses at SVPR, for which 103 nurses attended.
- Delivered presentations to the newly recruited nurses as part of an induction programme.

Vaccines

As in previous years, the IPCU at SVPR managed the influenza vaccination programme for the area that it covers. Several other vaccines were also administered during 2011:

- Influenza vaccines were given to residents at SVPR (1,111) and in government homes (766)
- Influenza vaccines were given to staff working at SVPR (624); homes for the elderly (207); in the community with the elderly (129)
- Hepatitis B vaccines were administered to staff at SVPR (28); foreign nurses employed by Government (18)
- Hepatitis vaccines were given to students following the course for care workers organised by the Department (46)
- Typhoid vaccines were administered to maintenance staff working at SVPR (five)
- Varicella vaccine was administered to one of the staff who came in contact with a resident with chicken pox (one)
- Tetanus vaccines were also administered throughout the year to both staff and residents.

Needle Stick Injuries - 14 needle stick injuries were reported to this Office during the year. 13 injuries were sustained from staff working at SVPR and one from MMDNA; all necessary procedures according to the policy were followed.

Pharmacy

The pharmacy at SVPR supplies and meets the pharmaceutical requirements of both SVPR and Mtarfa Home residents. The Pharmacy is composed of two main complementary arms, one of which is the Dispensing Area, which deals with the scheduled fortnightly ward requisitions, and with any other pharmaceutical matters arising together with prescriptions pertaining to staff, the other arm being the Pharmaceutical Store, which deals with the procurement of pharmaceuticals from the Government Health Procurement Services-GHPS and proficient stock control of pharmaceuticals, for the eventual distribution to the Main Dispensary, and thereafter, for the perusal of the Residence's elderly population.

The following equipment/devices/upgrades were installed at the Pharmacy during 2011:

- Air curtain at Pharmacy entrance;
- Air conditioning unit in Drugs of Dependence and Addiction Strongroom;
- Pest control system, together with its regular upkeep and maintenance;
- Security-grids overlooking doors having access to the outside;
- Daily temperature recording of both ambience, and refrigerators housing pharmaceuticals;
- The supply and delivery of a pharmaceutical refrigerator has just been given the seal of approval by the authorities concerned.

€1,012,390 worth of pharmaceuticals were procured and delivered to SVPR pharmacy during the year. 1,168 cylinders of 1.5 cubic metre capacity, and 5,708 cylinders of 7.0 cubic metre capacity containing

medical oxygen were procured, and consumed by the SVPR complex during the year. State-run homes for the elderly are supplied by nominal quantity 1.5 cubic metre capacity cylinders, procured above. Tracking of oxygen cylinders movement is documented by the Pharmacy.

Customer Care Service

The Customer Care Service within SVP continued with its proactive measure of visiting older persons within their own wards on a regular basis besides receiving complaints from the general public and other stakeholders. The Unit received 451 complaints, of which 87% were concluded positively to the benefit of the complainant.

Residential Homes for the Elderly

During 2011, the Department continued to sustain its efforts to offer all residents in government residential homes a better environment and more effective care. In this regard, works continued to be carried out in all homes and staff were deployed accordingly in keeping with the gradual transformation of these homes into nursing homes to cater for the increasing dependency of their residents.

During the year under review, routine maintenance and upkeep of both home premises and equipment were carried out in all of our eight homes for the elderly. This included digital TV changeover from analogue to digital transmission for all homes, maintenance of AC and nurse call systems, replacement of tiles at main entrance of Cospicua Home, replacement of roof water tank and diesel storage tank at Mtarfa Home.

All Government homes were provided with the supply and fixing of curtain rails as well as the manufacture and fixing in place of curtains within all rooms. This was done in order the safeguard as well as guarantee residents' privacy. In the interest of resident safety, fire evacuation plans were drawn up for each home and evacuation signs were placed in all homes in keeping with the respective Evacuation Plan. During the period in question, all eight government homes were further provided with various variable height adjustable beds according to their particular needs through the collaboration of SVPR and MDH. The Government Homes' Meals Board continued to meet again during 2011 in order to (i) safeguard the nutritional and dietary requirements of elderly residents, (ii) offer a variety of menus and (iii) provide food according to the residents' needs and desires.

As part of an ongoing in-service training for all Heads of homes, nursing and caring staff, various courses and seminars were organised and attended to by the above-mentioned staff with respect to various topics such as Dementia Care, Continence Care, Elderly Abuse, Leadership and Management Skills and others. Mental Health Conference: A national conference for Heads of the homes entitled 'Dealing with the Elderly with mental health problems' was organised over three consecutive days in October-November.

Admission, Deaths and Transfers during 2011

Home	Admissions	Deaths	Transfers	Returned Home
Mosta	16	10	5	1
Floriana	6	6	0	1
Mtarfa	28	26	1	0
Gzira	0	3	1	0
Msida	9	8	0	0
Cospicua	19	14	7	0
Żejtun	27	24	4	0
Mellieħa	45	20	1	1

The bed status within government elderly homes as on 31 December 2011 was as follows:

Home	Males -60	Females -60	Males +60	Females +60	Total
Cospicua	1	1	34	94	130
Floriana	0	0	10	35	45
Gzira	0	0	3	16	19
Mellieħa	7	2	41	103	153
Mosta	3	1	21	43	68
Msida	0	0	12	52	64
Mtarfa	1	3	27	92	123
Żejtun	2	2	26	135	165
Total	14	9	174	570	767

Zammit Clapp Hospital

During 2011, the Department assisted the Foundation for Medical Services in the refurbishment process of the former Zammit Clapp Hospital and conversion to a 96-bedded long term nursing home. Meanwhile the Department, together with the Department of Contracts, issued a tender for the management of the Zammit Clapp Hospital Residential Home.

Public Private Partnership Scheme

The Department for the Elderly and Community Care maintained its agreements with private entrepreneurs for the provision of beds for government-referred residents in private home settings within Casa Arkati at Mosta, Villa Messina at Rabat, Casa Serena at St Paul's Bay, Central Home at Mosta and Roseville at Attard. An additional PPP agreement was made with St James Hospital for the purchase of another 19 beds at St James Hospital, and a Public-Church Partnership Agreement was also made with Casa Leone for the purchase of another two beds.

Bed Occupancy (Contracted Services)

Home	Males -60	Females -60	Males +60	Females +60	Total
Villa Messina	0	0	13	49	62
Casa Arkati	0	0	3	32	35
Roseville	2	0	22	55	79
Casa Serena	1	0	17	65	83
Central Home	0	1	15	63	79
Capua	0	0	2	17	19
Casa Leone	0	0	0	2	2
Total	3	1	72	283	359

In November, an Audit and Management Team was officially set up within the Elderly and Community Care Department to assess and coordinate the allocation of new residents in vacant PPP beds based on their dependency level and ensure that care/contractual obligations are met through ongoing audit (assessment of clinical, clinical and administrative standards).

Community Homes Advisory Committee (CHAC)

During 2011, CHAC continued to provide an integrated specialist service which promotes good quality care for residents living in state community homes and those housed in government-financed beds in private residential homes. One of the main objectives of this committee is to evaluate the structure and processes that are related to holistic care in government residential homes, with the aim of promoting good care practices and improving clinical outcomes.

During the year in review, the Team consolidated the work of the two previous years on Falls Prevention and included the finalisation of the Falls Prevention and Environmental Hazard Assessments and a

subsequent series of audit exercises to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidelines introduced over the previous years.

CHAC also embarked on a new project to help revise and streamline the Home Resident Personal Filing system in the respective homes. This included drawing up of guidelines; a pilot study at Msida Home; the purchase of new files for all residents in the six government-run homes; and a discussion with home managers on the implementation of this revision.

During 2011, the CHAC organised a Clinical Orientation Course for all Heads of Home including those within the PPP Scheme. An additional Mental Health Seminar programme was also held to all Heads of Home including those within the PPP Scheme.

Residential Care Team (RCT)

Throughout the year, the RCT continued to provide a specialist inter-disciplinary team service to government residential homes. The team continued to analyse and revise the implementation of current specialist geriatric inter-disciplinary clinical services, with the intention to maximise its effectiveness, standardise its delivery and give due regard to a more equitable distribution of resources between all homes. During 2011, 59 clinical meetings were carried out.

Clinical input concentrates mainly on referral for post-acute care, admission assessment and annual screening of those residents who have not received input by a GP for more than a year. During 2011, the homes that availed of this service were those at Gżira, Mtarfa, Mosta, Msida and Floriana.

	Ward Rounds	Yearly Medical Assessment	Medical/Rehabilitation Team Intervention
Mtarfa Home	12	16	16
Floriana Home	13	6	18
Gżira Home	10	2	13
Mosta Home	12	1	4
Msida Home	12	3	7
Total	59	28	55

Community Services

Day Centres

- In July 2011, another day centre in Msida was opened, thus bringing the total of day centres to 18. The total number of new applicants during 2011 was 158. During this year, there were 1,327 regular members - 128 males and 1,199 females. Elderly persons were involved in a variety of activities such as sewing, crafts and decorating the premises for special events. The purpose of all this is to encourage the members to use their skills and to learn new ones. They were also encouraged to take part in dancing, singing, acting, writing poems and guitar lessons and others.

Day centres also organised a Sports Day, *Jum L-Anzjan* and Annual Exhibition, where all elderly members from different day centres could participate. The elderly members also participated in the *Notte Bianca*. This provides the elderly persons with an opportunity to show their capabilities and talents as well as encourage other elderly persons to participate in future activities.

Telecare Service

The Telecare service is an emergency telephone, community service mainly for elderly persons and others with special needs. 2011 was the 20th year of operation, and as at end year, the total number of installations stood at 9,103 (8,585 in Malta and 518 in Gozo), including 144 carelink installations. Calls received at the control room amounted to 162,797, an increase of 7,012 over the previous year.

Incontinence Service

During the year, there were 213 new applications for Scheme A, while 93 others stopped the service. This means that up to the end of 2011, there were 1,119 persons making use of this service. In 2011, 815 new applications were registered in Scheme B, while 760 stopped the service. This means that a total of 2,524 benefited from the service up to the end of 2011.

Handyman Service

During 2011, the Section received a total of 1,472 new applications. 1,734 jobs were completed and 180 were cancelled (figure includes pending jobs from 2010). The most requested jobs were: plumbing (643) electrical works (418) and carpentry (476).

Kartanzjan

During the year, the Electoral Office processed 9,667 cards for new holders (60+) and (75+). During the same period, 3,082 lost cards were passed on to the same office and all cards were renewed. The total number of holders of *Kartanzjan* stood at 103,106.

Social Work Unit

The main aim of this Unit is to provide help in the form of psychological support, counselling and guidance. It also discusses all referred social cases. The work of the Unit is to take care of all assessments following requests from elderly clients in need of home-help, admission to homes, admission to SVPR, carer's pension, alternative housing, Telecare cases, and court cases.

	Social Cases	Homes	Home Help	SVPR	Carer's Pension
Cases Referred	164	603	644	438	18
Cases Worked	173	582	628	425	18

Home Help Unit

The principal aim of Home Help Service is to enable elderly people and people with disability and special needs to live as independently as possible and to encourage them to better their quality of life. During 2011, the Board of Allocation met 15 times. The role of this Board is to decide whether this service is given or not depending on the social assessment and the medical certificate. Up to end 2011, there were 2,702 households which benefited from the service with a total of 3,661 of beneficiaries. During the year, 692 new cases were presented.

Board Mtgs	New Applications Received	Cases reviewed (New and Ext)	New cases approved	Hours allocated for new cases	Approved cases for extension of hrs	Hours allocated for extension of hours	Total Hours approved
15	692	825	419	853	154	181	1,034

CommCare Assessment Unit

The Unit's main scope is to serve as 'a single point of reference' in coordinating community care. It has a regulatory function in respect of domiciliary care nursing services offered in the community and coordinates community care services around patients' needs in a person-centred holistic manner with a case management approach by involving all the team and different entities. During 2011, the CommCare Unit received 6,225 requests for domiciliary nursing care, of which 2,619 were new referrals and 3,606 were follow-ups. The total number of telephone reviews carried out periodically from Commcare call centre to service users amounted to 3,500.

Home Visits

Home visits were carried out by the different members of the interdisciplinary team according to the need. These included:

- first-time assessments for domiciliary care to coordinate care around patients' needs;
- as part of its regulatory function for nursing care services provided by MMDNA, to contain, monitor and regulate provision of service;
- to identify potential families to benefit from assistance from CommCare team (outreach service);
- for specific professional therapy sessions (nursing, social worker, occupational and physiotherapy sessions) within the patients' home.

Home visits carried out as first-time assessments

follow-ups, or regulatory purposes: 590

Home visits carried out by social worker: 95

referred from CommCare: 56

referred from MMDNA: 11

referred from other entities: 8

follow-up home visits: 20

MMDNA Visits:

General Care - 481,315

Postnatal Visits - 11,697

CommCare Outreach Team

During 2011, the CommCare Outreach Team expanded into as a multidisciplinary team with nurses, occupational therapist, physiotherapist and specifically trained personal carers. Referrals received from CommCare call centre are passed on to the Outreach team and first-time assessments are carried out and an evaluation of needs carried out via a single shared assessment. Patients may be identified as requiring solely clinical care (MMDNA) but other patients and families may be identified as potential recipients for CommCare team input so as to empower patients and families, support patients and family to regain or retain skills to promote functionality and independence and to support patients and their families during the convalescent phase for enabling. Thus, patients and their families benefited from a more complete deserved service.

During 2011, the Outreach Service continued to deliver a service in the pilot study area, which is the Msida locality. This pilot study concentrated on providing care for residents in their own home. In February, this service was gradually extended to other areas.

In the period February - December, personal carers (n=5.25) were introduced in service users' homes, for a total of (n=41) families. During the six-week enabling period the team provided enabling care by supporting patients and informal carers to continue living in their own homes, thus delaying admission into long term care and providing as good a quality of life as possibly in the patients' own residence.

Telephone Rebates

This service came into force in January 1996 whereby the client can apply for a discount on the rental charges of the telephone if one has the *Kartanzjan* and the Pink Form. In 2011, there were 282 new applications and 766 cancellations. By the end of 2011, the number of beneficiaries stood at 4,653.

Meals on Wheels Service

The Meals on Wheels service, run by the Maltese Cross Corps, remained popular with the elderly. In fact, the year 2011 proved to be a successful year whereby due to the high quality of food which is professionally prepared by the personnel at the kitchen of SVPR, its meticulous presentation in hygienic containers and its timely delivery, the requests for the service have continued to increase, and up to the end

of the year under review, 85,305 meals had been delivered. The number of new registrations for the service has reached the figure of 1,327 applicants.

Night Shelters

There are two night shelters so far, one in Żejtun and another in Mellieħa, which was opened on 24 February 2011. These shelters are aimed to provide shelter to those elderly who are still capable of living in their own homes but feel alone and insecure during the night.

The Żejtun Night Shelter is run by *Ġesu Nazzarenu* nuns, and is available only to the female gender. It incorporates eight single rooms, a dining room complete with a kitchen, a living area and sanitary facilities including a shower. There are eight females who are currently using same facilities.

The Mellieħa Night Shelter is a mixed gender shelter. It consists of a lobby, a kitchen and a combined dining room, four twin rooms with a bed capacity of eight beds, a toilet and a shower/hair salon combined room. At present four persons make use of the service, one male and three females.

European Year 2012 – European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations

The launch of the EY2012 theme was done at SVPR on the European Day for Intergenerational Solidarity, together with a stakeholders meeting in December 2011. During the former event, the National Committee was launched, comprising various members coming from different health and social care professionals, together with an older person. During the stakeholders' meeting, four focus groups were set up, representing the four main EY2012 objectives, to give voice to stakeholders and assist the Maltese Committee in preparing a comprehensive strategic plan for the EY 2012.

The four main objectives include:

- older persons participation in formal employment;
- active ageing by means of health (biopsychosocial) literacy and healthy ageing initiatives;
- older persons participation in volunteering; and
- solidarity between generations.

A website www.ey2012.gov.mt was launched in December 2011.

SIR PAUL BOFFA HOSPITAL (SPBH)

Overview 2011

- The Palliative Care Unit was inaugurated, with the first patients being admitted, in March 2011.
- A new linear accelerator was installed and commissioned, and the first patients were treated in August 2011.
- Pharmacy top-up system was introduced in two wards – Male Oncology and Palliative.
- Training across all departments commenced - Royal Marsden delivered its first course in Palliative Care locally to nursing staff both at SPBH and MDH; pharmacists attended courses abroad on Aseptic Techniques, besides other training.
- A post-graduate training programme for Genito-Urinary Medicine was also established.
- The CCTV system was installed.
- MITA donated the cabling of Wi-Fi, seven personal computers and Wii for patient use and to be launched during 2012.
- SPBH launched its patient-friendly website during June 2011, with the aim of keeping patients informed about services offered and contact details.

- Customer Care Services was launched in November to improve the patient experience and also the services offered by receiving feedback from patients. The staff identification tag system was introduced.
- A PUVA machine was installed and started being used for patient treatment.
- Launch of a social activity group for SPBH in October 2011 with the aim of team building among all the staff.
- Maintenance works of several offices including radiotherapy clinics, water systems and air conditioners, besides other routine maintenance works, were carried out.

Activity Analysis

Dermatology Department

33,088 Dermatology outpatient/day case visits were performed during 2011. This translates into a marginal increase of 0.02% increase in visits turnover compared to 2010.

New Cases	8,128	Follow-Up	6,459
Skin tags	545	Warts	3,608
Minor Ops	1,979	Leg Ulcer Out-patient	2,959
Leg Ulcer Ward	1,337	Patch Test	150
Laser	237	PUVA/UVB	4,922
GU Clinic	2,463	Total	33,088

Total number of admissions	-	97
Average length stay	-	31 days
Total Bed Days	-	3,030 days
Average daily bed utilisation	-	8.3 patients/day

Oncology Department

The Palliative Care Unit was inaugurated and the first patients were admitted in March 2011. A new linear accelerator was installed, commissioned and the first patients were treated in August 2011. The Oncology Department saw a total of 1,133 new patients. Of these, 663 received radiotherapy at the time of presentation and 424 received chemotherapy as outpatients. 165 patients were admitted to Palliative Care Unit of whom eight were day cases.

Admissions		Day Case Admissions		Total
Inpatients Male	870	Inpatients Male	81	951
Inpatients Female	930	Inpatients Female	113	1,043
Total	1,800		194	1,994

The number of treatments provided were as follows: Radiotherapy – 16,085; Chemotherapy - 8,278; Mould Room Shells – 113; Mould Room Lead Blocks – 296; Cobalt Planning – 259; Number of Patients for Field Verification – 412. The number of treatments administered in the Isotope Administration Unit were: High Dose Radioactive Iodine – 44; Low Dose Radioactive Iodine – 36; Caesium insertion treatments – 4.

The Department offers its services to GGH.

Pharmacy Department

The Pharmacy Department is composed of three sections: Cytotoxic Reconstitution Services, Dispensary Services, and Pharmacy Stores which supplies both medicinals and equipment to the other two sections. The pharmacy dispenses to both oncology and dermatology patients. The total number of items dispensed to outpatients in 2011 was 59,206. The number of items dispensed to wards in 2011 was 16,164. A total

of 13,566 chemotherapy doses were reconstituted throughout 2011 compared to 10,758 doses during the previous year; this translates to 54 doses per day.

The pharmacy top-up system was launched in two wards – the Male Oncology Ward and the Palliative Care Unit. This has proved to be highly effective in organising the medicinal within a ward and reducing wastage in expired drugs.

Two members of staff attended training abroad on Aseptic Techniques regarding chemo-reconstitution and three attended a nine-week course in Clinical Oncology with the University of Bath.

Physiotherapy Services

Throughout 2011, the oncology and palliative care physiotherapy team continued to offer their services to the inpatients and outpatients at SPBH. The team also provided services to the dermatology patients. Further to the clinical input, the team also collaborated closely with the senior management, and provided CPD activities, administrative duties, project planning and implementation.

<i>Breakdown of physiotherapy statistics for inpatients/outpatients in 2011</i>			
Total 2011	Inpatients	Outpatients	Total
No of referred patients	390	657	1,047
No of treatment sessions	3,012	2,009	5,021
No of new referrals	275	221	496

There was a 50% increase of new patients referred for physiotherapy over 2010, with a 17% increase in the overall number of patients on treatment. This also brought about a net 21% increase in treatment sessions when compared to 2010.

Psychological Services

These aim to meet the psychological needs of patients and staff in oncology and palliative care, including:

- therapy with patients and/or family members/significant others, either on an individual or a family level, depending on the needs of the clients
- bereavement therapy following the death of the patient
- staff support
- staff training/lectures
- lectures to other professionals at MDH and St Luke's Hospital
- contribution on the multi-disciplinary team
- supervision of psychologist/students

Patients		Others	
Number of new cases	114	Number of staff support sessions	35
Number of follow-up cases	28	Number of supervision sessions	46
Number of appointments	498	Number of lectures	14
Number of bereavement sessions (out of number of appointments)	119	Number of Multi-disciplinary meetings	26
Number of cancellations	86	Number of meetings (other)	42

Referrals to the psychology services are made through other professions either within SPBH, from MDH or from other agencies such as Malta Hospice Movement. Patients and family members can also refer themselves.

Occupational Therapy Department

Services offered by the Occupational Therapy department within this hospital are:

- assessment and follow-up treatment of patients in Oncology Wards and Palliative Care Unit. - a blanket referral system is used (all admissions are seen);

- assessment and follow-up treatment of dermatology patients;
- assessment and follow-up of children in Rainbow Ward at MDH (oncology patients);
- service, once every two weeks, is offered to the Malta Hospice Movement; outpatient service and home visits are carried out on referral from Hospice;
- outpatient service is offered to patients discharged from the wards and the palliative care clinic.

	2009	2010	2011
No of sessions	4,275	3,198	2,988
No of units	14,104	14,005	14,527
Home visits	77	105	130

Customer Care Department

This Department was launched in November 2011, and since then 60 complaints have been attended to. The Department, together with the Occupational Department is drafting a Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire which is being planned to be launched in 2012. The Department is also working on the patient-flow in both the Dermatology and Radiotherapy Outpatients Departments. A wheelchair bay has also been set up.

The Malta Information Technology Agency donated to SPBH all the cabling for the introduction of Wi-Fi system in all wards, seven personal computers for patients' use and a Wii. Patients will definitely benefit from such a donation. These are planned to be up and running during 2012.

The introduction of new IT systems at SPBH which include the Dakar and Access Dimension is currently underway.

During 2011, maintenance works were carried out on all air conditioners and several were procured. The hot and cold water system was inspected and the necessary maintenance works are underway. Other maintenance works included: the drainage system, several offices including radiotherapy outpatients clinics. Ongoing projects include the Female Oncology Ward, all public restrooms, an occupational therapy gym, and others.

Conclusion

2011 was a challenging year, since half way through the year the various sections and directorates underwent certain changes as part of the overall Ministry restructuring. Nonetheless, significant progress was recorded in myriad specific activities carried out by each directorate and section both in terms of operations, as well as in terms of project implementation and the development of new activities. Most activities increased across all services as a result of the increasing demand for health and long term care services arising mainly due to the impact of demographic ageing in our society.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE DIRECTORATE

The year 2011 was another busy year for the Primary Health Care Directorate which was active in reviewing the whole service provision and introducing and consolidating new services. All sectors within Primary Health were involved in an exercise to better the service provision to the general public, educate staff, introduce more screening programmes and ensure more accountability and responsibility. The directorate still operated with the eight health centres and 42 peripheral clinics with B'Kara Health Centre extending its GP services to address the people's ever-increasing demand in this area. Refurbishment continued in most health centres with a major refurbishment plan for Mosta Health Centre completed and another new plan is underway for a health centre at St Julian's to replace the one at Gżira.

More specialised services were rolled out in health centres including an orthopaedic clinic at Mosta Health Centre aided by a digital x-ray machine. A wound clinic was also opened at Floriana Health Centre which

reduced pressure on tertiary care while providing a service to patients in the community. This year also continued to see the rolling out of new GP Review Clinics in other health centres bringing down the waiting time in various GP clinics. ICT continued to be developed in all health centres with fibre-optic connectivity being used. As a direct result, all health centres have now developed a paperless, electronic, laboratory orders mechanism facilitating the procedure and decreasing unnecessary repeat tests and cutting abuse. Immediate Medical Care was strengthened by further training of staff, the purchasing of new equipment and the launch of a Major Incident Plan for any unprecedented major incident.

To address the increased demand on the podiatry services, three new subspecialty services were introduced, the staff complement was increased within this specialty and this service was extended to private elderly homes.

The Primary Health Care website was also revamped and is continuously being updated to promote and facilitate the use of the services provided, educate our clients and reduce the demands on health centre staff.

The year 2011 also saw the closing down of B'Kara and Cospicua pharmacies with the introduction of the Pharmacy of Your Choice in these areas and the extension of the afternoon opening hours in the remaining health centre pharmacies. All this, together with the decentralisation of more pharmacy items, brought less workload on the hospital pharmacy and more care in a community environment close.

The Directorate considers the continued education of staff and patients as one of the pillars for good primary health care. Several employees have been sent for training courses, granted study leave and given opportunities to research. The challenge of irregular immigration was taken very seriously and the education of staff on migrant health and cultural issues was given its due importance through seminars and lectures while more cultural mediators were trained. The Primary Child, Youth Health and Immunisation Unit also continued with its educational campaign focussing on illness prevention in children and adolescents with considerable importance given to education on sexual health. To further educate patients and promote health, another Health Awareness Clinic was opened in the south of the island to complement the one at Mtarfa. The Infection Control Unit continued to educate staff on hygiene and has initiated a project to minimise the problem of antibiotic resistance and misuse amongst GPs and patients. During 2011, ten GP Trainees finished their specialist training course while another thirteen doctors joined the training programme. This year was marked by the Primary Health Care Conference which was a huge success with the largest number of delegates ever attending.

The Directorate considers disease prevention another important pillar of Primary Health Care and in 2011 welcomed the affiliation of the National Health Screening Programme which aims to provide an effective screening in order to diagnose and treat as many cancers as possible at an early stage. The first to be launched was the Malta National Breast Screening Programme. Of the 6,541 women screened, a total of 58 malignant cases were diagnosed during 2011, justifying the project. A National Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme is envisaged to be launched in 2012.

Finally but not least, family friendly measures continued to be entertained to all eligible staff as to promote their family and their own wellbeing and avoid resignations.

The Assistant Director at the Primary Health Care Directorate worked on new management tools and processes to be adopted during 2012. These consisted in strengthening the Accounts section which will become fully autonomous in 2012 and will carry out all procurement, accounts and payments procedures in-house. This will eventually give the directorate a better control and accountability of its budget funds as during 2012 the PHCD will be responsible for the management of budget funds.

During the year under review, the office of the Assistant Director was also responsible for the setting up of a Revenue Section for PHCD following the decentralisation of the Central Revenue Section of the

department. The Section was set up and all revenue generated by the Directorate has been collected and deposited through this section.

The Procurement Section continued with the processing of all procurement transactions pertaining to PHCD, including the issue of all local purchase orders. During 2011 an approximate number of 2,500 have been issued.

The Office of the Assistant Director continued with the procurement of medical equipment. A good number of new medical equipment has been procured to furnish the health centres in order to provide a better service to clients.

Apart from this, all requests for stock items requested from General Stores, such as cleaning material, were also processed. As part of the decentralisation process, during the year, the Office of the Assistant Director was also responsible for the shifting of stationery section from General Stores to the Main Stores of PHCD. All procurement and all payment procedures were shifted from the General Stores/Supplies Section/Accounts Section of the Health Division to the new Accounts section set up within the Primary Health Care Directorate. This included the issue of quotations, adjudication, approval and issue of local purchase orders as well as effecting payment of items procured, after ensuring that all the necessary internal control procedures were adhered to. This proved to be much more efficient than the previous system as procedures were decentralised and worked more efficiently.

Other Tasks

During the year under review, the following tasks were achieved or initiated:

- refurbishment of the Paola Health Centre
- procurement of more medical equipment for health centres
- commencement of works on the new site earmarked for the Main Stores which will be shifted from its present location to B'Kara Health Centre
- continuation of the process for the updating and upkeep of the Inventory Ledger
- setting up of a Gluten Free Items Distribution Centre at the B'Kara Health Centre
- initiation of the refurbishment of the ex-Dental department at the Floriana Health Centre
- ongoing refurbishment/upkeep of the peripheral clinics (*bereġ*)
- minor refurbishment programmes in certain health centres to cater for new clinics needed in connection with new services introduced.

Accounts and Procurement Section

In 2011, the Accounts and Procurement section achieved more financial autonomy from central level. During the year, it issued an approximate number of 4,000 payments, which included the CME and CPD allowances which, till 2010, were paid by the central accounts section. The section carried out the following duties: processing and follow-up of requisitions; issuing of local purchase orders; referral/payment of invoices; preparation of various reports and replies to parliamentary questions of a financial nature; and management of petty cash payments.

Monitoring Section

This Section keeps records regarding the rent, telephony, utility and linen bills of the health centres and the district clinics; keeps track of the amount of sick leave, time in lieu and overtime of the nursing staff; takes note of the daily staff sick leave return from health centres due to the second pandemic H1N1 wave in order to closely monitor the health provider/patient demand ratio from December 2009 to February 2010.

Human Resources

The tasks carried out by this Section during 2011 included collecting employee information and updating the employee database; collating job descriptions of all staff working with PHCD; processing applications submitted by staff for special paid and unpaid leave. During the year, several employees were granted study leave in connection with training courses, lectures and conferences held both locally and abroad and for the preparation of examinations. Approvals were also granted for requests that fall under family friendly measures such as maternity leave (16), parental leave (12), telework (eight) and reduced hours working system (40), which enabled employees to find a balance between work and family.

Data Protection

During 2011, the data protection legislation within the Directorate for Primary Health Care continued to be reinforced as follows:

- The Data Protection Officer attended a conference on the occasion of the European Data Protection Day.
- A request made by a patient for a summary of his clinical notes was seen to and issued by the DPO.
- The Primary Health booklet *Data Protection for All* was updated and circulated amongst staff.
- Several queries from the administrative and non-administrative staff regarding data protection were raised and answered to the full. At times, assistance from the Data Protection Unit at OPM was sought.
- Advice as regards data protection during the update of the departmental website was given to the webmaster. There was full liaison with the Freedom of Information Officer.
- Several old departmental forms were reviewed and amended to be compliant with the data protection law.
- During the year, 15 full permissions were issued to students to carry out research. Another seven were given a provisional permission to be able to apply the UREC. No requests were refused but some students were guided to amend their research procedure to be complaint with data protection requirements.

Customer Care

During the year, 250 complaints were received by this section. All cases were investigated, of which 138 cases (55.2%) were found to be justified and corrective action was taken, 80 cases (32%) were found to be completely unjustified while in 32 cases (12.8%) the benefit of the doubt was given to the complainant although it was not clear whether the complaint was justified. The necessary action was taken. The table below gives a breakdown of the nature of these complaints:

Nature of Complaint	Totals	% of total complaints
Attitude of Employee	37	14.8%
Appointment Failure	57	22.8%
Prolonged waiting time	60	24%
Undelivered service	82	32.8%
Mistakes by employee	7	2.8%
Others	7	2.8%
Total	250	100%

CLINICAL SERVICES

The services offered are those of general medical practitioner (clinic and home visits), general nursing care, and specialised services, including:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| - Medical Consultant clinic | - Medical Imaging Services | - Speech Language Pathology clinic |
| - Schedule V clinic | - Mental Health clinics | - Occupational Health Unit |
| - ECG clinic | - Optometry and Glaucoma clinics | - Community Pharmacies |

- Gynaecology and antenatal clinic
- Well Baby clinic
- Diabetes clinic
- Pathology Investigations
- Podology clinic
- Physiotherapy clinic
- Migrant Health Unit
- National Immunisation Service
- School Health Services

GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONER SERVICES

The GP activity showed a significant increase from the previous year by 8.3%, indicating a gain in popularity while even the Prescription Clinic showed an increase, even if slight of 0.64%. GP episodes in the peripheral clinics also showed an increase by 9.86% over the previous year. This could be attributed to the extension of opening hours and the increase in GP complement in B'Kara Health Centre (Peripheral Clinic). As regards home visits, there was an increase by 8.59% from the previous year but is still less than 2009 indicating that patients are more cautious than in the past when it comes to calling a doctor at home.

Service	2009	2010	2011	% variation
GP episodes seen in Health Centres	331,751	323,415	350,251	+8.3%
Prescription Clinic by appointment	60,339	76,976	77,474	+0.64%
GP episodes in District Clinics	202,609	174,974	192,229	+9.86%
GP Home Visits by day and night	13,395	11,561	12,555	+8.59%
Total	608,094	586,926	632,509	

MEDICAL CONSULTANT SERVICES

The Service is still well taken up by the general public and showed the same level of activity as in previous years with a slight variation in different health centres. Collective efforts and flexibility by the physicians themselves has minimised the waiting lists. The three medical consultants are catering for Schedule V appointments and preventive medical consultations.

Health Centre	2009		2010		2011	
	Schedule V	MCC	Schedule V	MCC	Schedule V	MCC
Floriana	601	637	828	759	766	634
Gzira	860	1,691	401	1,171	456	840
Qormi	499	891	450	1,277	475	1,049
Mosta	1,401	1,129	1,290	1,314	1,164	1,056
Rabat	415	673	369	829	247	958
Paola	1343	821	1,296	901	1,430	1,117
B'Kara	319	831	344	852	346	630
Total	5,438	6,673	4,978	7,103	4,884	6,284

SPECIALISED SERVICES

Glaucoma and Ophthalmic Services

In January 2011, an activity was held whereby the general public was given the possibility of having eye checks. These tests included visual acuity, fundoscopy, and reading of the intraocular pressure. Anyone with positive findings was referred to their respective health centre for further investigations. The turnout of the public was massive and the opening hours had to be extended by another two hours. Another similar event was organised by the *Kunsill Pastorali* of Iklin. The intraocular pressure was tested and those found with increased pressure were referred to B'Kara Health Centre for further tests. The comprehensive ophthalmic that started at the end of last year is giving results.

Health Centre	Glaucoma	Ophthalmic Session
Floriana	947	*
Gzira	946	489
Mosta	1,076	533
Paola	929	*
Qormi	246	1,049
BKara	538	*

*No Ophthalmic Sessions available in these health centres

Other Specialist Services

Service	Attendances 2009	Attendances 2010	Attendances 2011	% variation
Diabetes Clinic	13,089	11,005	14,282	+29.7%
Obstetrics/Gynaecology Clinic	9,199	9,680	8,016	-17.2%
Well Baby Clinic	6,680	6,175	6,212	+0.6%
Total	28,968	26,860	28,520	

Other Professional Services

Service	Attendances 2009	Attendances 2010	Attendances 2011	% variation between 2010 and 2011
Nursing Care in the treatment rooms	190,216	163,321	194,512	+19.1%
Podiatry	50,910	62,991	78,073	+23.9%
Speech Therapy*	22,196	22,527	34,627	+53.7%
Blood Investigations	67,637	88,575	92,809	+4.7%
Physiotherapy	27,420	26,875	30,235	+12.5%
ECG	3,728	3,849	4,133	+7.4%
Total	367,671	364,307	434,389	

*at health centres and district clinics

Podology Services

Although the Podology Department is located at B'Kara Civic Centre, which is within the Primary Health Care Directorate, it provides services all over the Maltese Health Sector. In 2011, three new services were introduced, which are one podiatrist specialising in Podopaediatrics, three podiatrists at the RHKG, and two podiatrists at the Orthotic and Prosthetic Unit. Diverse services are offered at PHCD level as well as at state hospitals, homes for the elderly and day centres.

Major Changes in 2011

- *Rehabilitation Hospital:* A new service at the Rehabilitation hospital was introduced towards the end of 2010. Throughout 2011, the number of podiatrists working there was increased. Considering the ever increasing work load, it is envisaged that this service will continue to expand in the near future. Continuous discussions with the management team (Rehabilitation Hospital) are being conducted to improve this service.
- *Orthotics and Prosthetics Department:* Due to the recent changes at the Orthotics and Prosthetics Department (OPU), two podiatrists are now working at the OPU, which has highly improved the service, as a result of which the waiting list and waiting time for orthotics and footwear has been markedly reduced. Ways on how the service can be improved are still being assessed. The podiatrist responsible for podopaediatrics also attends the OPU twice a week.
- *Services for Older Adults:* Last year marked an important milestone in this service as now the division has started offering podiatry service to older adults residing at a private old people's home and who are sponsored by the Government. This service is currently being offered in only two homes. It is planned to extend the service to all older adults residing in private homes and who fall under this agreement.

- *Structural Changes in B’Kara Health Centre:* During 2011, structural changes were effected at B’Kara Health Centre, resulting in an increase in the number of clinics and a consequent increase in services, markedly the podopaediatrics service.
- *Podopaediatric Clinic:* A significant change which happened this year was the introduction of the Podopaediatric Clinic. This is a very important step towards a holistic service and now podiatry offers specialised services to all age groups.

Other Changes

- *Discussions with MCAST:* During the year, discussions were initiated with MCAST for the introduction of a two-year programme leading to Paramedic Aides (Podiatry). Once participants successfully complete the course, the paramedic aides would assist in the running of the division.
- *Further Education:* Throughout 2011, various podiatrists furthered their education by attending courses. Amongst others, a number of podiatrists attended seminars abroad, others started an MSc programme, whilst others attended post-graduate courses organised by the UOM. Apart from these, all podiatrists were given the opportunity to attend various local seminars/conferences.

In September, in collaboration with MCAST, a one week course on Biomechanics and orthotic fabrication was organised, whilst in October in collaboration with the Podiatry association an intensive two-day course on Steroid injection was organised. Both these courses were well attended by the podiatrists.

To further improve the service a pilot project was initiated to understand better the strengths and weaknesses of the team; this was effected by means of a patient satisfaction questionnaire carried out amongst our clients. It is planned that in 2012 the questionnaire would be carried out amongst more clients using the service so that it would be more representative.

Statistics

There was a marked increase in the number of treatments offered in 2011, when compared to 2010 as is shown in table below:

	2010	2011	Difference	% Difference
PHC	63,689	84,286	20,597	32.3%
MDH (Diabetes OP)	7,141	7,720	579	8.1%
SVPR	6,082	8,352	2,270	37.3%
Gozo	6,906	6,608	-298	-4.3%
Tissue Viability Unit	N/a	4,903	N/a	N/a
Total	84,187	111,869	27,682	32.8%

Breakdown of Patient Attendance at Health Centres

2011	Booked	Attended	Failed	% Failed	N/C	Emergencies	Total
B’Kara	12,947	10,971	1,976	15.3	2,651	323	11,294
Cospicua	5,701	5,042	659	11.6	261	1,339	6,381
Floriana	13,416	12,128	1,288	9.7	663	587	12,715
Gżira	9,838	8,166	1,672	17	1,088	777	8,943
Mosta	12,473	11,368	1,105	8.5	949	831	12,199
Paola	12,230	11,445	785	6.4	839	1,145	12,590
Qormi	12,285	9,064	3,221	26.2	1,720	2,248	11,312
Rabat	10,195	8,276	1,919	18.8	395	576	8,852
Total	89,085	76,460	12,625	14.2	8,566	7,826	84,286

Note: The number of emergencies seen during 2011 is lower than that in 2010 (from 8,241 in 2010 to 7,826 in 2011). This could be a direct result of the higher number of patients seen in the course of the year.

The average percentage of failed appointments is 14.2%, which is 4.95% less than the previous year. Qormi is still topping the list with a staggering 26.2%. On the other hand, Paola with 6.4% has the lowest rate of failed appointments.

Failed Appointments

Clinic	2010	2011	Difference
B'Kara	14.8	15.3	0.5
Cospicua	22.4	11.6	-10.8
Floriana	19.3	9.7	-9.6
Gżira	18.3	17	-1.3
Mosta	12.8	8.5	-4.3
Paola	18.1	6.4	-11.7
Qormi	28.8	26.2	-2.6
Rabat	18.6	18.8	0.2
Total	19.1	14.2	-4.9

IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE

The Primary Health Directorate continued in its efforts to ameliorate the quality of Immediate Medical Care delivered in health centres. These efforts were concentrated on: training; equipment, emergency drugs and protocols; and major incident plan.

Training

- *Basic Life Support/AED Training*: The Basic Life Support/AED course for all PHCD employees was commenced in October 2010. It is run by the Practice Development Unit. The course is based on the European Resuscitation Council Guidelines. Course material (including lecture and assessments) was prepared by the coordinator. The instructors are all fully qualified and are also PHCD employees. The ERC issued new guidelines in October 2010 and the course material has been updated to reflect the changes in the new guidelines
- *GP and Nurses CME Seminars*: A CME seminar was organised for GPs on 12 March, 26 March and 2 April 2011 by the CME group. The scope of this seminar was two-fold: to serve as a CPD forum; and to serve as a platform for the enhancement of the collaboration between GPs, hospital specialists and other health care professionals. The format included lectures as well as small group hands on sessions. The seminars were well received. A total of 42 GPs attended the seminars.

An evening seminar, entitled *Developments in the Management of Acute Cases in Primary Health* was organised for GPs and nurses in health centres. Two repeat seminars were held on 31 August and 1 September. The scope behind this seminar was to introduce new emergency equipment items, new clinical practice guidelines and the major incident plan. A total of 73 GPs and nurses attended the seminars which were again well received.

Equipment, Emergency Drugs and Protocols

This year saw the introduction of a number of emergency equipment items, as well as the introduction of a couple of clinical practice guidelines. Amongst the equipment items introduced this year, one finds the following: tissue adhesives; multi-parameter monitors for Mosta, Paola and Floriana Health Centres; nasal mucosal atomisation devices; and Boussignac CPAP masks.

The following Clinical Practice Guidelines were introduced this year: Acute Cardiogenic Pulmonary Oedema Treatment Guideline; and Intranasal Administration of Midazolam Guideline.

Orthopaedic Pilot Project

This pilot project at Mosta Health Centre was launched in January 2011. GPs now have a dedicated telephone line via which they can contact the Orthopaedic HST on call at MDH and discuss the management of patients suffering from limb orthopaedic trauma. The next step is the introduction of a plastering service.

Major Incident Plan

A generic major incident plan for the health centres was written and approved. The plan's aim is to give direction as to the actions that need to be taken in the first 20-30 minutes of a major incident until further help arrives. Most of the items required for the implementation of the plan have been procured – a number of compromises had to be made in view of financial constraints (e.g. triage tags had to be made in-house). This year, the generic plan was customised for each health centre in order to have a tailored plan for each health centre. This process involved visits to each health centre to discuss the logistics with the health centre administration staff. The plan was officially launched via two seminars entitled *Developments in the Management of Acute Cases in Primary Health* which were held on 31 August and 1 September 2011.

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy services were delivered from Floriana, Paola, Mosta, Qormi, B'Kara and Cospicua Health Centres. Physiotherapy services at the health centres cater for the treatment of acute and chronic musculo-skeletal conditions. Patients are referred by doctors and orthopaedic consultants at the health centres, from the *Bereġ* and from St Luke's Hospital. The private GP, to date, can refer only conditions effecting the foot, the ankle and the Gastrocnemeus muscle.

During 2011, the demand for these services continued to increase - a very positive thing was that there were fewer re-referrals. This was due to a number of factors e.g. the patients were made to assume responsibility for their own recovery, thus they complied in a better way. A shift was also seen where the patient could be directly involved in the management of his/her condition (through explanation and education). All this, together with regular communication with the doctors, helped to achieve this positive result.

Health Centre	Floriana	Paola	Mosta	Qormi	B'Kara	Cospicua
Total Health Centre Referrals	513	733	1,062	539	431	239
Total SLH Referrals	650	540	9	287	239	220
Total Patients Referrals	1,163	1,273	1,071	826	670	459
Total Treatment Sessions	4,126	8,058	5,526	5,796	3,723	3,041

Gynaecology

The Gynaecology Clinic in the community has provided a service throughout 2011 to our female community. The main aim of the clinic is to provide a professional medical service to women of various ages that would otherwise have to go to MDH. The Clinic also tries to provide a screening service regarding cervical pathology. It is a walk-in clinic and the women attending do not necessarily require to be referred to the clinic by any other doctor/health professional. The services offered range from normal gynaecological screening tests to a variety of gynaecological problems/pathologies. The Clinic is also responsible for the antenatal service in the community where pregnant women can opt to have their antenatal care. Postpartum patients are also seen at these clinics. The results of most of the bone density tests done at MDH are also reported in these clinics.

Speech Therapy Services

The Speech-Language Department (SLD) offers services under the auspices of Primary Health Care. The SLD has been offering a service to the Maltese client community since 1982, and is this year celebrating 30 years of service. The SLD operates from premises in Luqa and speech-language clinics in all health centres; several district clinics; ENTOP; Rehabilitation department MDH; RHKG; CDAU; GGH; SVPR; mainstream schools; local council offices, and special schools.

- *Policy Development:* The SLD developed a number of policies and an administration procedure in order to ensure that services delivered are uniform across the department.

- *Services offered:* Services offered are both direct and indirect in nature:
 - *Direct:* These involve contact with clients in individual and group sessions in a variety of settings. In addition, client programmes were developed to cater for children all over Malta and are carried out by SLPs at the Department's premises. Areas addressed include: Language development; Autism; Phonological Awareness skills; Social Communication; Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC); and, Sound Stimulation and Integration. SLD staff holds specialist clinical sessions from which both SLP staff and clients can benefit when specialist intervention or advice is required. These include specialist clinical sessions held by the Manager; Fluency Specialist Clinic; Cochlear Implant Specialist Clinic; and, the Voice Specialist Clinic.
 - *Indirect:* These include contact with carers, consultation, training and education to carers, clients themselves and other professionals. Training courses offered by the SLD include: AAC; Language and Play; Dysphagia; Autism; Key Word Signing (KWS); PECS; Social Communication Skills; Stuttering; Voice; Total Communication; and, Visual Aids and Social Stories.

Speech-language pathologists have a consultative role in a number of settings. SLPs set up client programmes and offer advice and guidance to parents empowering them in the implementation of home programmes. SLPs attend MAP sessions, IEP meetings, and case conferences.

- *Conferences, Seminars and Training:* SLPs participate in conferences and seminars that are organised both locally and internationally. The department strives to support staff in their professional development by providing different types of training. This ensures that staff is up to date with latest research and encourages uniformity of practice. The SLD organises in-house training for SLP staff. Specialist speech-language pathologists offer courses and workshops to other SLP staff on particular areas of interest to help improve their current therapeutic skills. An induction course is organised to new recruits.
- *Clinical Audits:* A detailed clinical audit questionnaire has been compiled by SLD. SLPs in health centres and district clinics are being individually interviewed.
- *SLD website:* A website www.speechlanguage.gov.mt has been developed and is accessible to the general public.

Community Pharmacy Services

The problems associated with out-of-stock items had a significant impact on the workload activity during 2011. The total patient visits due to out-of-stock items were more than 30,000. More than 280,000 patients visited PHC pharmacies between January and October. In view of the continued expansion of the POYC scheme, the B'Kara pharmacy closed down and at the time of compiling this report, the Cospicua Pharmacy was also in the process of closing down.

New Work Practices During 2011

Since May 2010, Primary Health pharmacies started to open in the afternoon from 2.30pm till 5.15pm. This has reduced the morning workload to almost acceptable limits. After reviewing the activity during these sessions it was agreed to expand this service by opening Paola from Monday till Thursday. Cospicua was also incorporated in this service on Thursdays. Luqa Pharmacy opened on Mondays, Floriana on Tuesdays and Qormi on Wednesday.

The decentralisation process was continued during 2011. Another 15 items were included. This resulted in other 1,000-1,500 patient visits per month. This was done to reduce the workload on MDH.

Migrant Health Unit

The Migrant Health Unit continued to implement its roles within the following activities at a community and administrative level:

- providing health education sessions to migrants in open and closed centres;
- assisting migrants in accessing health care through the right channels since our health system is unfamiliar and often confusing to them;
- development of a training programme for Cultural Mediators in Health Care;
- delivery of the training programme Cultural Mediators in Health Care (to date eight groups (n=45) have participated in this programme);
- supporting cultural mediators allocated at Floriana Health Centre;
- outreach service;
- drawing up of in-service studies;
- education and training for health and social care professionals and university students in cultural issues in health care;
- provision of translated materials (booklets and posters) for migrants on health topics;
- participation in EU programmes, seminars and workshops on the issue on migration and health.

Health Education Sessions

Most of the health education sessions were held at open and closed centres around the island mainly at: Lyster Barracks, Hal Far (Closed centre), Hal Far Open Centres (women and families); *Dar Is-Sliem* – St Venera (unaccompanied minors); *Dar Il-Liedna* – Fgura (families).

The topics vary from nutrition, complementary feeding, food and kitchen safety, breast feeding, child health, sexual and reproductive health and breast cancer awareness. These sessions were coordinated with the service managers/social workers or soldiers/police of the centres. This summer a project was organised together with other NGOs. The project aimed to empower women incorporating their wellbeing into the programme. This was a seven-session programme held with single women residing in Hal Far. The challenges were many as migrant women are not familiar with preventive measures in health. Another issue was that the sessions had to be carried out after office hours as some of the participants managed to find part-time summer jobs in local hotels for the summer season. Other sessions were carried out with unaccompanied minors, where learning by doing was noted to be more effective than the traditional classroom setting. A session about nutrition with these youngsters was considered successful because they were directly involved. Sessions at the detention centres were being held on accessing health care services in Malta, breast cancer awareness and sexual and reproductive health.

Cultural Mediators

Following the development of the training programme for Cultural Mediators in Health Care in 2009, eight groups have been trained to date (n=45 trainees). The training programme was revised and modified since its outset. It is an interactive course which encourages a lot of discussion about the role of the cultural mediator within a medical encounter, the boundaries and ethical dilemmas one comes across together with the grey areas of this complex role. The training of cultural mediators consists of eight sessions and attendance is 100%. Their role and their boundaries, especially with regard to confidentiality, is very well emphasised during the training. A session on medical terminology is also included within a western approach to health. Role plays and a Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) test have recently been incorporated into the training programme following a revision of the course content. The trainees must attend all of the eight sessions to be awarded the certificate of attendance. This year a group being detained in one of the closed centre participated in the training programme and successful candidates were awarded the certificate.

The five trained cultural mediators who were recruited in 2010 by Primary Health to assist migrant patients and health professionals to overcome cultural and linguistic problems during medical consultations have to date assisted over 2,050 patients.

This practice of a face-to-face cultural mediator during medical consultations has been adopted by MDH following an in-service study which was carried by the Migrant Health Unit: 'Overcoming Language

Barriers at MDH: A needs assessment in 2010'. This service has received high regard among EU project members from international universities and NGOs working in the field of migration.

Recently, two female Ethiopian cultural mediators have been giving assistance at the Plastic Surgery and Burns Unit on a daily basis to the Ghaddafi Ethiopian Nanny who was flown to Malta from Libya in September to receive medical and surgical treatment. They are working alongside the consultant's firm, nurses, the psychologist, the occupational therapist and other officials. These cultural mediators are being paid through the Libya Crisis Fund.

Outreach Services

A number of migrant patients were referred to the Migrant Health Unit due to lack of information on where and how to seek health care services. These included pregnant women who required to be booked at the maternity department and other individuals with other health issues: HIV screening, HBsAG screening, diabetic patients, migrants needing eye glasses and children needing vaccines.

Education and Training Activities

Since very few of the health professionals have been trained on how to tackle cultural issues in health care, a number of seminars continued to be delivered throughout the year; lectures to GPs following the Specialist Course in Family Medicine and nurses pursuing the BSc Community Nursing programme at the University of Malta were among the health professionals who received training and education on cultural diversity on health care. Positive feedback was received following these sessions. The cultural mediators were involved in most sessions for health professionals and their input was very much appreciated.

Other seminars were held with other agencies, departments and NGOs for stakeholders working with migrants such as coordinators working in the open centres, detention staff, welfare officers working in detention and ETC staff.

International Student Internship

A student pursuing a Masters programme at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Santé Publique* (EHESP) in Paris will be arriving in February 2012. The participation has been approved by the CMO within MHEC. The Migrant Health Unit Coordinator's role will be that of professional advisor and supervisor and also to expose the student to the different entities and stakeholders working in the field of migration.

Migrant Health Unit - In-service Study

The fourth in-service study drawn up by the Migrant Health Unit focused on the topic of Child Spacing: Benefits of Child-Spacing. This study involved sexual and reproductive education sessions mainly to migrant women. One-to-one interviews, focus groups and an educational DVD were the main activities carried out in this study.

EU Projects

- *Mare Nostrum Project* (commenced in August 2010 and ended in June 2011). This project was a joint activity through the European Refugee Fund in collaboration with the National Institute of Health, Migration and Poverty (NIHMP) in Rome, the Ministry of Justice (MJHA), the Infectious Disease Unit and the Migrant Health Unit. The project involved screening of migrants for communicable diseases and the training of stakeholders working with migrants. A total of five training sessions were carried out among different health professionals in the Department of Primary Health, SPBH and MDH.
- *COST Home Projects*:
 - 2007-2011 - Health and Social Care for Migrants and Ethnic Minorities in Europe (HOME) Action ISO603. This project commenced in 2007 and ended in 2011. Several meetings were held within this action to discuss issues on different topics pertaining to migrant health.

- 2010-2014 - Childbirth Cultures, Concerns, and Consequences: Creating a Dynamic EU Framework for Optimal Maternity Care Action ISO907. This project has been accepted by the EU Affairs at MHEC and the application of the Migrant Health Unit to participate in the activities is in progress. This action started in 2010 and will end in 2014.
- European Integration Fund for Third Country Nationals. The proposal for this project was submitted in August and was still pending approval by end-year. This project will aim to integrate East European third country nationals with the health system. Health education sessions will be carried out by Maltese health professionals and it is expected to raise the different health beliefs among these countries. Furthermore, representatives from these countries will be trained to become cultural mediators to be employed by their own communities.

Collaboration with other Stakeholders

A good working relationship has been established over the years with agencies, departments and NGOs working with migrants e.g. the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS), the Department of Justice and Home Affairs, the Detention Staff, the Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants Marsa (FSS), KOPIN and many others. Very often, collaborative work is carried out with different disciplines.

Conferences and Courses

The unit was invited to attend and participate in conferences, seminar and workshops and courses locally and abroad to share knowledge and good practices.

- Introduction to Human Trafficking, 14-16 June, organised by IOM
- Responding to boat arrivals and mixed migration flows in the Mediterranean Workshop, 10-13 May, coordinated by ICMC
- Pan-European Conference on the Integration of Migrants, Good practices on the health welfare and social services, 27-28 June, organised by PROLEPSIS
- Impact Assessment of Mental Health on Employment for Policy Development, 20 January, organised by Richmond Foundation
- Human National Event, 18 March, organised by SKOP
- ICN - International Council of Nurses, May
- Entering the Territory, 22 September, organised by the People for Change Foundation
- International Conference - Undocumented Women, December, organised by PICUM

Radio Show

A local radio presenter and sociologist invited the Migrant Health Unit Coordinator to take part in his radio show *Sahha* on Campus FM.

Primary Child, Youth Health and Immunisations

- The Unit comprises the School Health Service, Well Baby Clinics, National Immunisation Service and Youth Health Service.
- A website page devoted to Primary Child, Youth Health and Immunisations on the e-health portal is updated regularly.
- The medical coordinator of the Unit was actively involved in the formulation of a National Obesity Strategy which has been submitted for consultation and which will be launched in 2012.
- The Unit participated in the Open Day organised by the MHEC in Palazzo Castellania on 15 January 2011.
- A number of educational events were organised for staff with the collaboration of various sponsors.
- The medical coordinator of the Unit is a member of the Health and Education working group formed by representatives from each Division. The aim of this working group is to increase collaboration between the two divisions.

- The medical coordinator of the Unit attended an Experts' Meeting on Childhood Immunisations hosted by the EU Presidency in Budapest in March 2011.
- Seven members of staff attended an international Conference on Childhood Obesity held in Lisbon, Portugal and a paper on childhood obesity in Malta was presented by the medical coordinator at the same conference.
- Most of the staff members of the Unit attended a Sexual Health Training Workshop organised by the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate.
- The Unit was involved in press briefings and other publicity campaigns regarding the seasonal influenza vaccine campaign and other health promotion and disease prevention activities.

School Health Service

During 2011, the School Health Service continued to provide a monitoring and surveillance programme within the mainstream public and church primary schools. The emphasis was on the early detection of physical, social, psychological and learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as health promotion and health education. School Health teams carried out a rigorous immunisation programme throughout the year and this included the second dose of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine to all students at Year 4 level and the BCG vaccination to all Form 2 and 3 students in all secondary schools. A double cohort was catered for in 2011 as the BCG vaccination campaign did not take place in 2010, due to the ongoing influenza pandemic. Medical staff in School Health Service also took care of the clinical examinations at Well Baby Clinics. The electronic system of input of medical data collected during child surveillance and screening (CHESS) continued to be used in all cases of child health surveillance and screening in schools.

School Entry Screening

Children aged 3-4 years were seen at the school together with their parent/s for recording of past medical, family and social history, developmental screening, and medical examination. Findings were recorded in the Child Health Electronic Surveillance System (CHESS). Questionnaires were sent to the parents at Year 1, Year 3 and Year 6 levels and action was taken if abnormalities were detected in the child's development according to the questionnaire.

Vision Screening

Screening for visual acuity, squint and stereopsis was carried out at Year 1 level (4 – 5 years), and visual acuity testing is carried out again at Year 3 level (8 years) and at Year 6 level (10 – 11 years).

Scoliosis Screening

Letters of consent were sent to parents of children in Year 6 (10-11 year olds) attending primary state and church schools. Consenting children were screened for scoliosis and referrals to Paediatric Physiotherapy department or Orthopaedic Outpatients were made if scoliosis was suspected.

Immunisations

Children attending Forms 2 and 3 (scholastic year 2010/2011) in state schools were administered the Mantoux test and BCG vaccination between January and March 2011. Those attending Form 2 (scholastic year 2011/2012) in church and independent schools were administered this vaccination in October – November 2011. Children in Year 4 attending primary state and church schools were offered the second dose of MMR vaccine. The number of vaccines given during 2011 is found hereunder.

Immunisations	
MMR 2 nd dose	2,287
Mantoux Tests	6,589
BCG	6,087

Referrals

Children who require referral to other specialities are given a referral note by the doctor to such effect. The numbers of referrals carried out in 2011 are seen in the table below:

Service	No	Service	No
Medical Examinations	3,476	ENT referrals	1
Height and weight measurements	7,207	Speech/Language Pathology referrals	281
Developmental Assessments	5,021	CDAU/Child Guidance referrals	24
Visual Acuity testing	8,499	Surgical referrals	1
Injuries at school	54	Paediatric referrals	5
Scoliosis Screening	3,343	Orthopaedic referrals (inc. scoliosis)	97
Ophthalmic referrals	429	Podology	32
Dental Referrals	5	Dermatology	1
Special Learning Diff. Unit	2		

Special Projects

- Participation in the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative - Data collected from measuring the height and weight of all children attending Year 2 in primary schools in Malta and Gozo during April 2010 was sent to WHO for comparative analysis with other European countries. A comparative study between data collected in 2008, from children born in 2001 and from the same children measured again in 2010, was carried out and the paper has been published in the November issue of the Maltese Medical Journal.
- School doctors and nurses started to attend multidisciplinary case discussions at CDAU, concerning children attending their schools.
- A working agreement was set up with community paediatricians for the follow-up of children with disability attending special schools.
- A pilot project concerning foot screening was carried out in the Cottonera area by the paediatric podologist in collaboration with School Health Service. A total of 88 children attending Year 3 were screened and a number of them were referred and followed up by the Podology department at B'Kara Health Centre.
- Doctors and nurses participated in various health-related events organised by the Education individual colleges.

Well Baby Clinics

Doctors from School Health Service carried out Well Baby clinics in health centres on a daily basis according to a fixed timetable. These clinics serve the purpose of clinical examinations and developmental assessments for babies between the ages of six weeks and 18 months by appointment. Three routine visits are carried out at six weeks, eight months and 18 months respectively. The 18-month development visit is carried out by the Well Baby Clinic nurses.

This service is also offered to babies born in private hospitals. It is estimated that 83% of babies born in Malta in 2011 made use of Well Baby Clinic services. This is an increase of 13% from the previous year. The table below shows the number of babies and infants seen during 2011 per health centre:

Health Centre	Follow-ups	New Cases
Paola	1,279	944
Floriana	1,026	871
Mosta	1,108	842
Qormi	530	329
Rabat	274	185
Total	4,217	3,171

National Immunisation Service

There are eight NIS clinics in Malta and one in Gozo. The National Immunisation Service at Floriana Health Centre coordinates all the services given to the community, both through each health centre and through the Immunisation Clinic at the Floriana Health Centre. All clinics in the health centres carry out the scheduled vaccinations for infants and children and for persons at high risk for specific vaccine-preventable illnesses. The Service also supplies vaccines against payment for use by general practitioners in private practice for vaccines which are not available from retail pharmacies and provides immunisation service to various government departments, public entities and private enterprises.

As in previous years, the NIS participated in the School Health Service Vaccination programme (MMR and BCG [tuberculosis] vaccination). Defaulters from the MMR campaign receive their vaccination from the NIS clinics in their respective catchment area.

As for the seasonal influenza vaccine campaign, in 2011 as in previous years, there was a very smooth running of the campaign, coordinated from the NIS at Floriana Health Centre. This year a consignment of 80,000 vaccines was received.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccines distributed in 2011	
Health Centres	29,353
Gozo (H/C, L/C, GPs)	5,671
Local Councils (Malta)	20,561
Hospitals/Govt Homes/Departments	7,237
Health Care Staff	812
Special Schools/Blood Transfusion	896
GPs	3,906
Homes for the elderly	3,949
MMDNA	1,450
CCF/POLICE/AFM	757
Total	74,592

Staff Development

All the NIS nurses followed different conferences or seminars and updates related to Primary Health including vaccinations during 2011. On 15 January, nurses from NIS took part in the open day at the MHEC promoting services given by the National Immunisation Services. The following table shows the total number of vaccines administered in 2011, broken down by locality:

Number of Vaccines given by Locality										
<i>Vaccine</i>	<i>B'Kara</i>	<i>Cospicua</i>	<i>Floriana</i>	<i>International</i>	<i>Gzira</i>	<i>Mosta</i>	<i>Paola</i>	<i>Qormi</i>	<i>Rabat</i>	<i>Totals</i>
DTP+ Polio(Boostrix)	0	0	0	894	0	0	0	0	0	894
DT Vax	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Polio	0	11	80	0	23	15	56	8	7	200
Hib	0	0	6	2	1	2	1	1	0	13
MMR	586	258	1235	621	773	1,174	1,678	861	466	7,652
Influenza	2,782	1,525	1,098	3,458	4,375	3,938	4,062	3,419	2,123	26,780
Chicken Pox	3	3	8	60	18	12	2	57	7	170
Tuberculin/MTX	0	0	0	232	0	0	0	0	0	232
Reading	0	0	0	124	0	0	0	0	0	124
Hep A	0	0	0	1186	1	2	0	4	0	1193
Hep B	736	380	1974	1,547	1,086	1,613	2,444	1,228	627	11,635
Twinrix	1	0	0	2,856	0	1	1	4	0	2863
Rabies	0	0	0	471	1	0	0	0	0	472
Cholera	0	0	0	110	0	0	0	0	0	110
Typhoid	0	0	0	2,712	0	1	0	0	1	2714
Yellow fever	0	0	0	743	0	0	0	0	0	743
M. Meningitis ACWY	1	0	0	530	0	0	0	0	0	531
di-Te adult	10	43	2	320	135	218	328	78	99	1,233
DTP+ Polio+Hib (Pediace/Infanrix)	1,018	478	2,843	45	1,430	2,787	3,603	1,655	896	14,755

Dt+polio(Revaxis)	159	70	287	809	258	521	581	296	143	3124
Imovax Polio	1	0	15	8	3	0	0	5	3	35
Rotavirus	3	0	20	0	0	0	11	7	1	42
Infanrix Hexa	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	5
Pneumococcal	6	0	20	3	15	10	6	43	6	109
Meningitis C	3	0	7	25	2	0	0	10	2	49
Total	5,309	2,768	7,598	16,756	8,122	10,294	12,775	7,676	4,382	75,680

Youth Health Unit

The Youth Health Unit was set up in September 2010. A proposal for a school-based Youth Health Clinic is under discussion with the Education authorities.

A partnership programme was started with the Millennium Chapel in St Julians and involved Health education sessions with 4th and 5th form secondary students. A one-hour programme was carried out with these students on current health issues focusing on illness prevention. This programme was continued on a regular basis every fortnight. A five-hour programme was also designed for these students and was offered at request to the different schools that visited the chapel. A small scale study was also carried out with these students during a series of sessions related to Body Image, where the BMI of 307 students was taken. The findings of the study were presented in the biannual conference of the Primary Health directorate.

Following the launch of the Sexual Health Policy, a committee was set up where meetings are held on a regular basis. A document including a strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health Services for Young People was formulated. As part of the proposed strategy, a focus group meeting with expertise was held. The unit is also working closely with the Health Promotion Department on Sexual Health where one of the staff members attended a symposium in Brussels regarding Sexual Health of Young People in Europe. This staff member is also working on an action plan to advertise Sexual Health as an outreach service.

Following meetings with the Health Awareness Clinic personnel, work was carried out on a Health Needs Assessment tool to be used with young people. A business plan including the strategy for a Health Awareness Clinic for Young People was also proposed. A similar clinic is to be set up at the health centres.

A website related to Youth Health was also set up as a subdivision of the Child and Youth Health and Immunisation Unit.

ICT Projects carried out in Primary Health during 2011

- Completed training on the ordering procedures through iSoft Clinical Manger (iCM) in all health centres. By the end of 2011, all orders and sample submissions to the laboratories at MDH will be electronic.
- Internet connectivity at Rabat, Gzira and B'Kara Health Centres was upgraded to fibre optic. All health centres now have fibre-optic connectivity.
- Underwent a process of consultation, together with IMU, to assess the problems and needs at all health centres. This was carried out through on-site meetings with the management of each health centre.
- IMU carried out a process of updating all electronic data to reflect current users in PHC.
- IMU assigned a personal 'Home Folder' to each user in Primary Health on the network.
- IMU started the process of assigning 'Project Folders' to be shared by different users according to needs.
- Introduced internet to all professional grades in Primary Health.
- Started the procurement of multifunction printers for high-volume printing areas in health centres. However, this was put on hold in view of incompatibility problems with the Patient Administration System (PAS). The process will continue once IHIS2 is operational.
- Training for reception staff was started on a new electronic appointment system for pharmacies.

- Various members of staff were involved in the adjudication phase of the tendering process of Phase 2 of the IHIS, namely with regard to an Electronic Patient Record for Primary Care, replacement system for the Patient Administration System, medical records archiving, and Emergency modules.
- Took part in discussions in a committee involving all stakeholders in the Health Department regarding IT projects.

Occupational Health Unit

The Occupational Health (Medical) Unit continued to serve its four-fold function during 2011: periodical check for specific occupation health hazards [Periodical Medical Examinations (Cat I)], certification of fitness prior to employment/appointment/transfers/apprenticeships etc [Pre-placement Medical Examinations (Cat II)], medical assessment and certification for registered disabled persons (Cat III), and sundry requests for reports including ergonomic review cases and colour vision testing as well as assessment and advice regarding registered disabled person candidates (Cat IV). The total number of cases was 3,013, divided as follows: 710 Cat I, 1,509 Cat II, 374 Cat III and 420 Cat IV.

The Medical Officer provides a service to the Employment and Training Corporation by carrying out non clinical medical assessments concerning registration of disabled persons and he also sits on the Reserved Parking Review Panel.

Scoliosis Clinic

Analysis of statistical data obtained during the year was carried out by clinic staff. The clinic offered a screening examination to monitor for Idiopathic Adolescent Scoliosis among the Maltese population usually between ages 11 and 18 years. Sessions were held on a monthly basis at Floriana Health Centre, seeing an average of 10 clients every session. During the year, 40 new patients were examined and 140 cases were followed up.

Radiology Services

During 2011, the X-ray services at Gzira, Mosta, Floriana and Paola continued as in previous years. At Qormi Health Centre as from January 2011, the X-ray service started operating from Monday to Friday from 0730 to 1330 and Saturday 0730 to 1230 instead of three times a week. This eased the problem of waiting lists and became more patient friendly. The table below shows the level of activity undertaken by this unit:

Health Centre	No. of Patients	No. of Cases
Floriana	3,600	4,134
Mosta	8,060	9,528
Qormi	2,440	3,020
Gzira	1,703	1,987
Paola	6,463	7,720
Total	22,266	26,389

Patients and Cases at Boffa Hospital	
	<i>Total</i>
No of cases seen at Boffa	5,018
No of patients seen at Boffa	4,309
No of patients - Boffa	781
No of patients – Floriana Health Centre	3,396
Patients - Chest Unit	3,396
Total	13,707

Infection Control

The service of Infection Prevention and Control Nurse in Primary Health is approaching its 70th year in May 2012. The year 2011, similar to previous years, has involved a lot of impetus on projects, initiatives and opportunities which include the following:

- Problem solving with advice and support on infection control issues was done on a daily basis. These were tackled at both clinical and administrative level.
- Occupational injuries among healthcare workers (HCWs) and needlestick injuries among the general public were also managed. An on-call service was provided for managing such issues. Furthermore a second on-call service was also provided for any occupational injuries occurring in SVPR, MMDNA and elderly residential homes.
- In line with recommendations from the WHO, hand hygiene initiatives, new laminated hand hygiene posters were prepared for procurement and will be attached at all hand hygiene basins in Primary Health.
- Arrangements are currently underway to organise and deliver educational sessions for HCWs in PHD, aimed to start next February and topics will focus on hand hygiene and aseptic technique.
- A recent wound care seminar, organised together with the MDH Tissue Viability Unit for nurses both at MDH and PHD, has addressed issues pertaining to this speciality. This was intended particularly to inform nurses and podiatrist in PHD who regularly attend to patients requiring wound care. Random visits to PHD wound care clinics were effected to ascertain that infection control practices are maintained by HCWs in line with recommendations.
- Routine visits were done in all health centres and peripheral clinics to assess the level of cleanliness.
- Yearly infection control audits were performed in all health centres on areas including, hand hygiene, environment, disposal of waste, bodily fluid spillage, personal protective equipment, sharps handling, specimen handling, vaccine transport and storage, decontamination. Full reports with recommendations for the latter were forwarded to the Primary Health management for necessary actions to be taken.
- Routine visits and inspections to assess the level of cleanliness were done throughout the year and problems identified were rectified. This ascertained proper execution of duties by cleaning personnel according to contract specifications. Adjustments were made to the new cleaning contract according to needs or complaints following feedback from the administrative personnel from clinical areas throughout the year. Emphasis was put on more supervision and better cleaning of peripheral clinics by the contractor. Input was also given in the adjudication process for the new cleaning contract.
- The yearly infection control inspections/audit for licensing purposes of private clinics and hospitals around the island were performed and reports with recommendations were finalised and sent to the Health Care Services Standards Department. Advice was also given for the building of new and refurbishment/modification of existing premises.
- Advice and support in line with infection control recommendations on new or refurbishing of old premises in the PHD is ongoing. Projects presently include the refurbishment of Mosta and Rabat Health Centres and the proposed new regional healthcare premises in St Julian's, the latter to replace Gzira Health Centre. Other works include refurbishment of the former School Dental Clinic in Floriana and the new colorectal screening clinic in Floriana, as well as input to oversee that all is in line with infection control recommendations and is still being provided during the various phases of these projects.
- Advice was provided during the procurement phase of new medical devices or clinical equipment. This is to ascertain mainly that any reusable equipment can be decontaminated effectively thus ensuring patient safety.
- Stocking and provision of infection control items to Primary Health staff, which mainly include special items such as personal protective equipment, including nitrile gloves and high efficiency respirators.
- Record keeping and inputting of data related to infection prevention and control and waste management.
- Regular correspondence through email and attendance to meetings withheld by the PHD administration and other professional bodies/key stakeholders to ascertain effective communication and smooth running of the service.
- Liaison with MDH Infection Control courses regarding culture and sensitivity results, indicating alert organisms obtained from patient samples in PHD. This enables not only timely identification of organisms, but also targets antibiotic treatment by our general practitioners. Similarly, liaison and advice is also given to staff who reports back any alert organisms or conditions encountered during clinical

practice, since prompt proper management in such circumstances may eliminate the risk of communicable disease transmission among both staff and patients.

- Time allocation was also dedicated for researching recent literature, including attendance to relevant conferences and seminars, aimed at updating knowledge on infection control issues. This guarantees that advice and support to HCWs is evidence-based.
- An initiative is currently underway in PHD, geared at minimising the problem of antibiotic resistance and misuse. A PHD antibiotic resistance and prescribing committee was set up earlier this year. Meanwhile, the national antibiotic committee is currently aiming at introducing an antibiotic prescribing policy, which should particularly address the issue of improper antibiotic prescribing not only in acute care but also in the community setting, including PHD.
- Waste management duties were also performed and types of waste managed included clinical, pharmaceutical and paper/carton shredding. Duties included mainly, routine applications for permits from MEPA to generate this type of waste, together with other legal documentation which has to accompany the waste carrier during transportation and end disposal at WasteServ Malta and other waste treatment facilities. On-site inspections to ascertain that waste is being streamed as per policy were done and also disposal under supervised incineration where necessary such as in the case of pharmaceutical waste.
- During the Libyan war crisis, for one month, duties were relocated to the Intensive Therapy Unit at MDH to assist with nursing of injured individuals.
- Infection control duties were done with the Disease Surveillance Unit in an effort to contain the recent scabies outbreak.
- All staff at Primary Health administration were offered and vaccinated with the seasonal influenza vaccine offered to all healthcare workers by the directorate.

Specialist Training Programme in Family Medicine

The Specialist Training Programme in Family Medicine (STPFM) was launched in July 2007. The year 2011 was marked by work on consolidation and improvement of the training programme. The exit examination was awarded accreditation for the MRCGP (INT) by the Royal College of General Practitioners of the UK for another two years.

Administrative

The official STPFM website (www.stpfm.ehealth.gov.mt) launched last year was maintained and updated, effecting a number of modifications recommended by the Health IMU.

One major project under development is the e-Portfolio. Work on the e-Portfolio has progressed - the framework sent by NHS Scotland was reviewed and feedback sent; a number of teleconferences were held in order to outline the STPFM's requirements. The next step of the project is the signing of the contract for the initiation of e-Portfolio building process.

An STPFM-Malta intranet folder was set up on 16 November 2011 on the Primary Health Care project server as a 'Project' folder, which will contain all the relevant programme documentation and information. This will be administered by the training coordinators, and made accessible to the GP trainees and the GP trainers. Training placements were evaluated and monitored, and feedback received was reviewed in conjunction with respective Clinical Chairpersons.

Training courses and seminars

An introductory seminar for Foundation Programme Trainees was organised by the coordinators on 16 and 17 March 2011. A total of 21 participants attended and the feedback received was overall very good.

In May, the coordinators also gave a presentation about the STPFM during a meeting organised by Primary Health for visiting healthcare professionals on the HOPE Exchange Programme.

Thirteen GP trainees were accepted into the training programme in June 2011.

Annual Appraisal

Four groups of trainees were appraised during 2011 – the January 2008, the July 2008, July 2009 and the October 2010 cohorts. Four trainees whose appraisal was not satisfactory were referred to the In-Programme Appeals Board who evaluated the progress of the trainee including any deficiencies present. The necessary remedial action was taken and the trainees were thus able to progress to their next year of training.

One GP Trainee from the July 2009 cohort did not manage to reach a satisfactory level despite being reviewed three times by the In-Programme Appeals Board. The final decision taken by the Board was that the trainee should restart the programme. However, the trainee decided to resign from the training programme in June 2011.

Final Assessment

The exit examination for the cohorts of January 2008 (six trainees) and July 2008 (six trainees) was held in July 2011, under the supervision of the Royal College of General Practitioners' External Development Advisors (EDAs). The Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) was held on 4 July at the Medical School, MDH. The Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA) was held at Qormi Health Centre on 10 July. In August, these trainees were informed that 10 of them had passed the examination whilst two of them failed the AKT and were invited to retake the examination in one year's time. On 15 August, the Medical Director MRCGP[INT] announced that the 'the MRCGP (INT) Board met and have endorsed the re-accreditation of the Malta MRCGP (INT) examination for the recommended period of two years.'

Work with Lead Training Coordinator and Postgraduate Medical Training Centre

The work of the Coordinators with the PMTC and the Lead Training Coordinator included:

- surveillance of the RCGP accreditation process;
- the e-Portfolio;
- input to the setting up by the Postgraduate Medical Training Centre of an e-Library for Postgraduate Medical Training in Malta;
- contributing to the drafting of an initial plan for the Core Skills Training Programme;
- monthly meetings to discuss the core skills training programme, the new simulation centre, the Leuven and Brighton exchange programmes;
- intervening with the PMTC to support the MCFD Teachers' course being organised by the Malta College of Family Doctors in early 2012.

Specialist Training Committee in Family Medicine

Issues discussed by the Specialist Training Committee which met twice in 2011 included:

- allocation of trainers to the August and October 2011 trainees;
- situation of trainers to be assigned to trainees in October 2011;
- review of STC ruling in May 2010 regarding the proportion of trainers in health centres as opposed to trainers in private practice;
- review of the Trainee-Trainer Allocation Process;
- guideline regarding training requirements of GP trainees in preparation for retake examinations;
- allocation of trainers to the trainees needing to retake the Applied Knowledge Test in 2012.

Quality Assurance

Following the August 2010 report by the Royal College of General Practitioners' External Development Advisors (EDAs), the coordinators took action on the following points for improvement that concerned them:

- *Lower performance in the 2010 Exit examination as regards the Management Domain:* a whole Clinical Leadership Module consisting of six half-day release course sessions was organised.
- *Annual Quality Assurance Report on the Work Based Assessment:* the coordinators issued their first report Quality Assurance report in February 2011. The conclusion of the report stated the following: 'The coordinators' review of Educational Portfolios as part of the Annual Appraisal process has confirmed that a significant amount of quality and meticulous work is being carried out by the GP Trainees under their Trainers' supervision. However, more attention from all the stakeholders concerned (the MCFD, the GP Trainers and the GP Trainees) will certainly result in a more productive and rewarding training programme.'
- *The use of Consultations Observation Tools (COTS) and Case Based Discussions (CBDs) should be increased in line with the MRCGP (UK) (i.e. 24 of each over a three-year period):* the coordinators notified the Malta College of Family Doctors (MCFD) about this issue. The College Council issued a ruling in 2010 that the number of COTs should be increased to 16 (in three years) and that the number of CBDs should remain at 16. The new MCFD council (elected in 2011) reviewed the situation and on 19 July ruled that the number of COTs and CBDs should be increased to 24 as from July 2011 (as had been recommended by the EDAs).
- *Consider further involvement of trainees in planning the content and teaching of the Half Day Release Course (HDRC) Programme:* the trainees' advice regarding the HDRC is sought regularly. They are also encouraged to participate in the HDRC and in fact the HDRC programme for Oct 2011 - June 2011 will include the participation of at least three GP trainees. This is a marked improvement from last year's programme in which no GP trainee participated.
- *The curriculum board work closely with the Specialist Training Programme Coordinators to link the content of the curriculum to the HDRC and the Work-place Based Assessment:* on 10 November the MCFD informed the Coordinators of the set up of the College's Committee for Management and Review of the Curriculum.

During 2011, the training programme was monitored systematically through the regular and obligatory feedback received from the trainees and trainers after each placement. Any action deemed necessary was taken. Attendance and punctuality of the trainees to the various activities which form part of the programme were closely monitored. Random visits were performed by the coordinators to check for latecomers and early leavers – the stipulated sanctions were applied where deemed necessary. On 11 November, a STPFM memo was issued regarding the prompt submission by trainees of hospital placement attendance sheets.

On 12 September, the coordinators wrote to those GP Trainers not actively teaching within the HDRC as required by their contracts, so that these regularise their positions. This initiative was successful with all defaulting trainers booked to facilitate teaching sessions during the 2010-2011 HDRC.

The coordinators met the UK Royal College of General Practitioners' (RCGP) External Development Advisors (EDAs), Dr Nigel Cartwright and Dr John Wrouth during their visit to Malta in July 2011 to oversee the Summative Examination process. The implementation of the recommendations made by the RCGP last year was reviewed and the programme's structure in general was discussed.

Practice Development Unit

- Venepuncture policy revised and pending review by haematology specialist nurse. Reviewed and approved by infection control nurse for primary health.
- Administration of nebuliser treatment guidelines – piloting of documentation pending the acquisition of paediatric pulse oxymeters in the smaller health centres.
- Injection techniques guidelines.
- Wound care policies, issued by tissue viability unit for standardisation of care and applicable to all health settings. These policies and all educational material pertaining to wound care were disseminated to all health centres and explained during the visits.

Standard Operating Procedures

- Standard operating procedures for urinary catheterisation were formulated for the smooth flowing of clients who may fluctuate between the community, primary health and secondary care depending on their needs. Currently working with practice development nurse for A&E and with Commcare agency to agree on the referral criteria between departments as well as individual remits.
- SOPs for the referral of clients to Primary Health from MDH to receive the administration of rheumatology drugs were jointly worked upon by the Practice Development Unit and the rheumatology specialist nurse.

Information Leaflets for Service Users

- *Venepuncture Leaflet:* The Practice Development Unit produced an information leaflet for members of the general public on venepuncture. In view of the large number of appointments set for phlebotomy services everyday at the health centres, the need for an information leaflet was felt, to inform clients of what to expect on the day of their appointment as well as what information they may need to give nursing staff to avoid any complications. The leaflet was forwarded to nursing management for review.
- *Health Awareness Clinic Information Leaflet:* As a result of frequent enquiries on the services offered from the Mtarfa primary health premises, the PDU developed a leaflet that includes information on the health awareness clinic. The leaflet gives a detailed explanation of what clients can expect and what will also be expected of them when attending for their appointment. Furthermore, any necessary documentation to be brought by the client for the first appointment is also explained.

Ongoing Projects

- *Urinary Catheterisation:* The training project to update primary health nurses continued this year. Routine changing of urinary catheters of persons can be carried out within the health centres, thus avoiding unnecessary usage of community nursing services and avoidance of unnecessary referrals to the A&E Department at MDH. Two cycles of practical placements for primary health nurses were organised in 2011 at SVPR in collaboration with the continence specialist nurse. The placements were aimed at the continuation of the practical component of training following on from the theoretical component of training delivered previously.
- *Administration of Rheumatology Drugs:* The theoretical aspect of training in the administration of rheumatology drugs was finalised for the majority of nurses, with further training seminars taking place at MDH as well as through informal sessions held at the health centres. Practical placements continued throughout 2011 with one placement every week and a maximum of two primary health nurses per placement. The number of nurses who required training has been increased in order to allocate the same nurse to the client who attends the health centre on a weekly basis for the administration of rheumatology drugs and to consider the availability of trained nurses being on duty in view of the number of shift workers in every health centre as well as other manpower issues. The service has already commenced at B'Kara Health Centre and is expected to expand to other health centres.
- *Ear Syringing and Routine Changing of Endo-Tracheal Tubes:* Discussions were held with the ENT nurse specialist to discuss the possibility of nurses receiving the theoretical and practical training in the above. These would have two implications, namely that nurses would be expanding their skills and competencies whilst clients would also be offered services within their community particularly with reference to ETT changing.
- *Renal Services in the Community:* A proposal on expanding the role of nurses in delivering renal services in the community was forwarded to the Director (Primary Health Care) in 2010. Talks had been held in 2010 with no conclusion, and the proposal was pursued again in 2011. The implications in terms of the nursing staff required to man such a service are currently being evaluated by nursing administration.
- *Collaboration with Sedqa for the Cospicua Project:* Following on from the training delivered by Sedqa professionals to health centre reception staff employees, a report was drawn up by Sedqa professionals on the issues raised by the primary health reception staff. During a meeting held between primary health nursing administration and Sedqa officials, the idea to set up a joint project in an identified area

of need was discussed. For this purpose, the PDU is currently working with the Sedqa Operations Director to coordinate the training of nursing staff at Cospicua Health Centre in caring for clients with substance misuse issues.

- *Primary Health Conference 2011*: The 6th biennial primary health conference was held on 11 October. Work on this conference commenced in January and ran throughout the year. A multidisciplinary committee was formed through a call for expression of interest. The conference was attended by 230 delegates, all health professionals from primary, secondary and tertiary health institutions as well as from the private sector, in which 15 papers and two key note speeches were delivered, as well as four poster presentations were displayed. The conference was partially sponsored by four pharmaceutical companies. Feedback received from evaluation forms provided (58% response rate) was positive, with 91% of these claiming that they would attend another future primary health conference.

Organisation, Running and Marketing of Health Awareness Clinics

- *Health Awareness Clinic, Mtarfa*: In January 2010, the Health Awareness Clinic at Mtarfa commenced operations offering the service of a health needs assessment to clients, who refer themselves from the community of the Rabat Health Centre catchment area. In 2011 the PDU promoted the service through radio interviews and television appearances as well as a write-up on the nature of the clinic and the service offered in *Gwida* magazine. Further to this, participation at community events such as the MHEC Open Day in January also gave the opportunity to invite interested members of the Rabat and Żejtun catchment areas to make an appointment at the clinic. During 2011, there was a total of 66 appointments (16 new cases; 50 follow-up).
- *Health Awareness Clinic, Żejtun*: The expansion of the health awareness clinic was launched in the Żejtun district clinic in January 2011 and is open to those clients hailing from the Żejtun area. Five nurses man the clinic on a fortnightly basis along with the senior general practitioner for Cospicua Health Centre. Protocols and guidelines for the clinic were agreed upon as being the same as those for the Mtarfa clinic. The administrative aspect of the running of the clinic is the responsibility of Paola Health Centre nursing administration.

Participation at Community Events

Participation at community events, such as the MHEC Open Day in January, also gave the opportunity to invite interested members of the Rabat and Żejtun catchment areas to make an appointment at their respective health awareness clinic. Other activities representing the Primary Health directorate, were a meeting with the President of Malta on invitation by the Mtarfa Local Council in June 2011 and a meeting with the Archbishop November 2011, at the invitation of the Mtarfa parish. The meetings served to inform the Mtarfa community of the services offered at the Mtarfa primary health premises.

Other Teaching/Delivery of Presentations

A presentation was delivered at the health awareness clinic, Mtarfa, to a delegation of representatives from the HOPE project in view of this year's topic which concerned 'Primary Health'. The lectures were delivered to nurses who are currently reading a Certificate course in community nursing at the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Malta during the first and second semester. Further lectures were also delivered to the first and third year students who are currently reading for a degree in community nursing.

NATIONAL HEALTH SCREENING PROGRAMME

Overview

The National Breast Screening Programme (NBSP) has now successfully concluded its second year of operation, having been launched in October 2009. The current target cohort population is women in Malta and Gozo aged 50-59. At the current capacity, this cohort will be screened over a three-year cycle, which is set to conclude end 2012/early 2013. The uptake has increased gradually through 2011, with an average

uptake rate of 60% of women invited, compared to 56% in 2010. Following an initial investment of €1.6 million as capital outlay, recurrent operational expenditure is expected to average about €0.75 million per year. The National Cancer Plan launched in February 2011 outlines the launch of the National Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme in 2012. This will be closely modelled on the National Breast Screening Programme and will offer organised population-based screening for colorectal cancer to males and females age 60-64.

Performance Review and Analysis

The National Breast Screening Programme is based on the European Guidelines for Quality Assurance for Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis. Quality is critical for the programme's success and all staff members are offered training and re-skilling on a regular basis both locally and abroad. Training was offered to all NBSP staff in assertiveness, internal and external communication, customer care, telephone skills and teamwork dynamics. Clinical training was also supported, with two radiographers completing a Post Graduate Certificate in Mammography and two others currently completing their Masters.

The NBSP provides ongoing educational opportunities regarding the importance of prevention and early diagnosis, both at the Screening Centre and through the media, lectures and other events in the community, such as groups, associations and local councils.

The NBSP participated in the first Open Day held at the MHEC on 15 January. Educational talks and materials about breast health and breast awareness were presented, and more than 60 women were provided with free breast examinations. The NBSP was also present during the first Women's Health and Beauty Expo held over three days in April 2011 at MFCC, an opportunity which helped to educate the younger generations re breast health and examination. The NBSP was also strongly represented in the 10th Europa Donna Pan-European Conference held in Malta in October 2011.

Two educational seminars on Empowering Family Doctors and their Patients: Screening for Breast Cancer were organised in February and May. Both events were accredited CPD points by the Malta College of Family Doctors and the turnout and feedback were very positive, encouraging an ongoing dialogue between the screening service and family doctors.

2011 saw the completion of the first local Post-Graduate Certificate Course in Medical Imaging (Mammography) through the joint efforts and collaboration between the National Breast Screening Programme and the University of Malta. Key lectures were delivered by NBSP senior staff with the aim of strengthening and improving local capacity and expertise in mammography. Lectures about the importance of screening and the role of the Family Doctor were also provided to Family Doctor trainees in November 2011. Information initiatives through the media are ongoing.

NBSP management was also involved at EU level in the drafting of the first edition of the European Guidelines on Quality Assurance in Colorectal Cancer Screening and Diagnosis, which was launched in March 2011. The NBSP also facilitated Malta's representation and active participation in the European Working Group for Pathologists in breast cancer screening and diagnosis.

Government has continued to invest in the IT infrastructure that is required to support this service. The BSPM portal is a custom-built screening software modality that enables the screening service to build its demographic database, schedule appointments and clinics, generate invitations, recall and outcome letters, reports and other functionalities pertinent to health screening services. Phase 2 of the system was concluded in 2011. Work is currently underway with regard to connectivity with MDH systems as well as the colorectal cancer screening programme.

The invite system works strictly on basis of date of birth, ensuring nation-wide cost-effectiveness, fairness and transparency, and has been very well received by both the general public and family doctors. The screening software has generated significant interest in other countries and in February 2011, the NBSP

was very pleased to be visited by a senior delegation from the Cypriot Health authorities, who expressed a strong interest in ‘borrowing our good ideas’. This visit was facilitated through the close collaboration with the Breast Care Support Group (*Europa Donna Malta*).

Malta actively participates in European networks for cancer screening programmes. The Euromed Project on Cancer Screening and Early Diagnosis aims for ‘Capacity building in developing cancer screening and early diagnosis programmes’. The project aims to achieve a sustainable strategy framework for cancer control in the Euro-Mediterranean region, and to offer high-level training to Public Health decision makers. NBSP was represented in the first workshop of this project, which was held in Rome in June 2011. The exchange of expertise and good practice, experiences and particular approach to solutions may benefit the wider Mediterranean area, eventually merging minds beyond frontiers and establishing international networks.

In 2011, the NBSP together with the Department of Genetics, University of Malta was successful in bidding for Phase 1 of a project under the Italia Malta 2007-2013 Priority Axis 11 – environment, energy and risk prevention (European Regional Development Fund European Territorial Cooperation 2007 – 2013). ImaGenX is a cross-border network of users, health providers, administrators, and researchers from Sicily and Malta tasked to promote Breast Cancer surveillance. By integrating interdisciplinary expertise in epidemiology and molecular genetics and through client empowerment it aims to strengthen the structured care and surveillance of women at risk from breast cancer. ImaGenX will create the required infrastructure to scrutinise putative environmental and genetic factors involved in malignancies in the central Mediterranean. Health initiatives including preventive educational campaigns, biochemical, diagnostic, and bespoke IT screening and medical interventions can then be precisely targeted. The project, if approved, will encourage communities to take greater responsibility for their health and rationalise state-of-the-art technologies and resources found in regional bodies. It aims to consolidate their scientific potential and foster the growth of the life sciences industry within two prime regions in the central Mediterranean.

In October 2011, the Head of the NBSP was nominated to attend a three-week International Visitor Leadership Programme (IVLP) in the United States, through the US Embassy in Malta and the US Department of State, together with the Avon Foundation. The programme focused on breast cancer awareness and outreach and consisted of exposure to several experts and internationally acclaimed centres of excellence for breast cancer and care across the US. Malta was part of a group of 43 different experts in the field which shared experiences about the respective roles of the government and the private sector in promoting breast cancer awareness, domestically and internationally; examined public health campaigns, advocacy initiatives and breast cancer prevention strategies by NGOs and national associations; discussed scientific research, treatment options and support services for breast cancer patients, and participated in an Avon Foundation Breast Cancer Global Congress to network with professional counterparts.

The breast screening service adopts a multidisciplinary approach and collaborates closely with the breast care team at MDH to provide a seamless service to screening customers. The Screening Facility currently also accommodates specialised assessment clinics for patients referred from MDH that require further assessment, carried out in dedicated sessions outside of screening hours.

Statistics

- During the year, 10,944 women were invited to come forward for screening; 6,541 of these attended for their initial mammogram while 4,403 did not attend. The following is a breakdown of these figures:

Attended scheduled appointment	5,385	Did not turn up	3,411
Recent Mammogram	575	Officially refused invitation	304
Re-appointment requested	581	Insufficient details	304
Unclassified	384		
Total No. of invited women accepting invitation	6,541	Total No. of non-responders	4,403

- A total of 70 recall clinics/sessions were performed: 56 for screening, and 14 for MDH patients (referred through multidisciplinary team meetings for specialised assessment at the Lascaris Facility).
- 623 screening clients were recalled for a second appointment and offered further investigations. The average recall rate for 2011 was 11.7%
- A total of 672 clients were scheduled for review in 2011, including 45 pending from the end of 2010 and 6 who did not attend.
- There were 127 biopsies performed in 2011 for NBSP clients: 94 under ultrasound guidance and 33 under stereotactic guidance.
- A total of 58 malignant cases were diagnosed in NBSP clients, as follows:

Histology Type	No of Cases
Ductal carcinoma in situ	15
Invasive ductal carcinoma	37
Invasive lobular carcinoma	3
Other Invasive carcinoma	3
Total	58

(There were 40 clients pending screening report or recall at the end of 2011, who will be seen in the first two recall clinics of 2012).

- In 2011, the Breast Multidisciplinary Team discussed the first true interval cancer in a patient who had a screening mammogram in 2010 and a missed cancer in a patient who had a screening mammogram in 2011.
- 30 MDH patients were referred to the NBSP for further evaluation and investigations. In these, 24 biopsies were performed, of which three were under ultrasound guidance and 21 under stereotactic guidance.

MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH CENTRES AND PERIPHERAL CLINICS

Works connected with the following were carried out:

Mosta Health Centre Refurbishment - finalisation of plans for refurbishment of all arches; drafting of plans for temporary premises during refurbishment
Qormi Health Centre - a ramp to be constructed in basement in St Edward's area; gypsum partitioning to create adjacent room for filing; general maintenance of clinics; recolation of new orthopaedic clinic instead of the former dental clinic
Gzira Health Centre - relocation and refurbishment of ophthalmic and diabetes clinics to be functional in 2012; drawing up of preliminary plans, filing for MEPA permits and consultation on proposed regional hub in St Julian's; general maintenance
Paola Health Centre - refurbishment of 2 nd floor; installation of new motor lift
Cospicua Health Centre - works on 11 balconies; replacement of old soft stone bollards (<i>balavostri</i>); introduction of POYC and removal of ex-pharmacy furniture; laying of new membrane; general maintenance; initiation of feasibility plans for re-use of ex-pharmacy
Rabat Health Centre - finalisation of architectural plans for refurbishment; submission of project dossier to Department of Contracts
Floriana Health Centre - finalisation of plans for full refurbishment; ordering of supplies
B'Kara Health Centre - works at level -1, so that patients can pick their Gluten Free products from B'Kara; gypsum partitioning in Podology Section; preparation of plans for use of stores in level -1
Żebbuġ Clinic - removal of dangerous roof and reconstruction of new one
KNPD - fixing of stainless steel rails in other 10 <i>bereġ</i>

Mosta Health Centre

- Refurbishment works were carried and new equipment procured.
- Training and Continuing Education: several members of staff undergoing academic studies and attending/delivering training; effected standby duties at various local conferences.
- The Minister for Health, the Elderly and Community Care opened the new X-ray room; the X-ray service times were extended
- A protocol regarding the ambulance service was drafted and accepted by A&E, Primary Health authorities and MUMN and ambulance staff at Mosta Health Centre.

- Ordering of blood investigations is now taking place through iSoft Clinical Manager.
- A Blood Investigation Results Clinic was set up via an appointment system.

Paola Health Centre

- The diversity and load of work in the Paola Health Centre are very extensive - the catchment population of the health centre amounts to 87,000 persons within the south area of Malta, which increases up to 105,000 when Cospicua Health Centre is closed.
- GP Service: Due to increase in intake of GP trainees, the GP service at the centre improved, decreasing the waiting time for patients. Apart from walk-in GP clinics, this centre provided a prescription clinic, GP Review Clinic, and Diabetic Clinic. Most doctors availed themselves of study leave to attend conferences and seminars both locally and abroad, and attended Life Support Training. Doctors and nurses received training in the use of iSoft for ordering blood investigations. The introduction of this new method in March eliminated the use of blood investigation forms and also afforded GPs access to many more investigations.
- Nursing Services: Two Orthopaedic sessions which started to be held weekly were run by nurses. The health awareness clinic in Żejtun continued functioning. A good number of nurses also attended conferences, seminars and courses to further their knowledge.
- Treatment Room: Emergency cases such as traumas, minor injuries, nebuliser treatment, chest pains and acute illnesses are managed by the GPs and nurses. Blood letting appointments are being shared with Cospicua Health Centre so that the waiting list has been reduced from seven to four weeks. New equipment was procured.
- Redecoration and structural alterations: a major refurbishment of the health centre was performed in the first two months of the year.
- Special Clinics: Two sessions of orthopaedic outpatients which started in April are managed by the nurses. In the absence of a consultant at the Cospicua centre, the Medical Consultant clinic at Paola is still providing service to patients from the Cospicua catchment area. The Ophthalmic Clinic is still functioning from Qormi Health Centre. The Glaucoma Clinic is being held three to four times a week, including a session for diabetics. Weight management and Smoking Cessation clinics are held in the evenings.
- Initiatives: Paola Health Centre participated actively in the following campaigns: World Diabetes day, Glaucoma Day and Smoking Cessation Clinics. The Influenza Vaccination campaign started in late November this year.

Floriana Health Centre

- Floriana Health Centre covers the central district with a catchment area of circa 56,000 people, which increases up to 160,000 when the Qormi and Gzira clinics are closed. The total of clients seen at FHC in 2011 was around 250,000.
- GP Service: Services offered include walk-in GP clinics, a prescription clinic, GP Review Clinic, and Diabetic Clinic. Most doctors availed themselves of study leave to attend conferences and seminars both locally and abroad, and attended Life Support Training. Doctors and nurses received training in the use of iSoft for ordering blood investigations. The introduction of this new method in March eliminated the use of blood investigation forms and also afforded GPs access to many more investigations.
- Nursing Services: A good number of nurses also attended conferences, seminars and courses to further their knowledge.
- Treatment Room: Emergency cases such as traumas, minor injuries, nebuliser treatment, chest pains and acute illnesses are managed by the GPs and nurses. Blood letting service was given to a minimum of 60 patients daily. As from 2011 the Wound Management Clinic was introduced separately from the Treatment room. New equipment was procured.
- Special Clinics: An Intra Ocular Pressure and Fundoscopy clinic for diabetic clients was introduced in October. Weight management and Smoking Cessation clinics are held in the evenings.

- Initiatives: Floriana Health Centre participated actively in the following campaigns: World Diabetes day, Glaucoma Day and Smoking Cessation Clinics. The Influenza Vaccination campaign started in late November this year.
- Peripheral Clinics: Measures were introduced to decrease the next available appointments especially for the Żurrieq and Mqabba *bereġ*. An extra Wednesday session was introduced to solve this problem. Re-plastering and general maintenance was carried out routinely on all peripheral clinics.

Gzira Health Centre

- Refurbishment: The two rooms at ground floor level were refurbished and equipped to host the diabetic clinic and the ophthalmic clinic. The immunisation clinic at first floor will be incorporating a small room with facilities for mothers to breast feed their babies during waiting and also to avoid congestion in the narrow corridor. Plumbing and security measures were implemented.
- Information Technology: In line with the departmental policy to have a paperless system for requesting and reproducing laboratory results a system involving software and hardware was installed. All medical and nursing staff received the necessary training to be able to operate the iSoft system in order that there will be electronic requests for blood investigations and also to have labels printed with patients' particulars on each sample. This system is working very well and also has resulted in decreasing the use of request forms.
- Energy Saving Initiative: Energy saving measures were taken to avoid useless consumption namely, maintenance of all air conditioners, instructions to keep all windows closed and switching off unnecessary lights.
- Launch of Shared Care Programme in Diabetes: The current shared care programme has now been well established and audited in the Gzira Health Centre. Through this programme, another two services were commenced namely comprehensive Podiatry and Retinopathy screening. Patients attending the diabetic clinics at their respective health centres are offered yearly foot screening as well as comprehensive eye assessment. This project brought together health care professionals from different fields such as podiatrists, nurses and doctors working as a multidisciplinary team. Fundoscopy is performed by the general practitioners attending the diabetic clinics and the nurses are carrying out parameters such as glaucoma screening, visual fields, ant and posterior chamber evaluation. In case of identified pathology, these are fast tracked to MDH. All the diabetic clinics in all health centres have a computer linkage system whereby they are linked to the Diabetic Clinic of MDH.

Qormi Health Centre

- Blood Letting System: The ICM system of blood ordering on line was introduced. This system will facilitate and eliminate unnecessary paper wastage.
- Patient Educational Activities: Several patients and their relatives attended educational sessions which were held in lecture room. A group of diabetic patients also attended several sessions where lectures were given to educate the patients about their condition and how to prevent complications, by a group of professional service providers from the same health centre.
- Educational and Health Awareness Activities: Nurses participated during an educational and health awareness activity held at Żebbug parish square, organised by Żebbug Local Council. During this activity, interested people were given the opportunity to do a walk-in check-up to evaluate their health status.
- Weight Reduction Programmes: Nurse-led sessions were provided to a group of patients.
- Radiography Services: During 2011, radiography services were offered on daily basis from Mondays to Saturdays to accommodate patients who may require such urgent or elective services.
- Staff Continuous Development Programme: Staff was encouraged to attend several seminars organised locally and abroad, to enrich their knowledge in their profession so to be better able to provide quality holistic services to patients and relatives.
- Refurbishment: Replacement of shelving system; maintenance of fire fighting equipment; routine maintenance of interiors and furniture; installation of new submersible pumps at pump room pit and lift pit; replacement of leaking ceiling at Żebbug local dispensary's rest room; commencement of refurbishment of Siggiewi local dispensary.

Cospicua Health Centre

- **POYC and Pharmacy:** The Pharmacy of Your Choice Scheme was introduced in the Cottonera area with subsequent closure of the pharmacy in the health centre. As a consequence of the introduction of the POYC system, which caters for a two-monthly supply of medicines instead of three, it has been necessary to increase the daily quota of appointments for the prescription clinic from 25 to 40 to accommodate clients. The service users are being encouraged to make use of the peripheral clinics for better convenience.
- **Health Awareness Clinic:** The Health Awareness Clinic which was initiated in the south of Malta in January 2011 operates from the peripheral clinic of Żejtun on alternate Thursdays. It is attended to by the Cospicua Health Centre SGP and a nurse from Paola Health Centre. Its objectives are those of determining the risk of certain health problems, screening for illnesses, providing access to health services and preventive care and educating and supporting citizens towards healthier lifestyles. From January till October, a total of 64 clients attended for a questionnaire and given advice on a healthy lifestyle and medical treatment.
- **Patient Information and Education:** Cospicua Health Centre embarked on a patient information and education project whereby powerpoint presentations on topics such as Cospicua Health Centre Services, Tips on a Healthy Diet, the Effects of Smoking and Cholesterol are screened in the waiting areas. These complement the clips supplied by the Health Promotion department.
- **Participation in Activities:** During the year, the Cospicua Health Centre collaborated both in activities and programmes organised by the MHEC and its departments e.g. influenza vaccination, diabetes shared programme and World Diabetes Day and also contributed in activities by other entities such as local councils, e.g. *Birgufest*. Staff was encouraged to attend various conferences and seminars organised by the Primary Health department.
- **Maintenance and upgrading:** refurbishment of the first flight of stairs; treatment of humidity in the staircase and in GP Room 2; replacement/repair external works; regular maintenance of lift, generator, air-conditioning system, smoke-detectors and fire-extinguishers; upgrading of generator.
- **Taster weeks:** Eight medical doctors doing their housemanship attended Cospicua Health Centre for a week to have a 'taste' of the work involved in a health centre setting.
- **Appointment System:** The appointment system was introduced in the Treatment Room for change of dressing.

B'Kara Health Centre

- **General Practitioner Services:** Since August 2011, B'Kara Health Centre has been offering full GP services which have been very well received by the residents.
- **Furniture and Accessories:** Following the full rollout of the POYC Scheme, the pharmacy at this health centre was closed down.
- **Continuing Education and Training Programme:** Several nurses and nursing aides attended various local and foreign training programmes, seminars and conferences.

Rabat Health Centre

- From GP and nursing services that were offered when it first opened, the Rabat Health Centre nowadays follows a multidisciplinary approach service.
- In view of the increase in clients at the centre, a process to implement structural changes was initiated in 2011, so that services will be more efficient and sustainable and health risks mitigated. MEPA permits were issued and the reception area was refurbished.

MATER DEI HOSPITAL

2011 was a year with mixed fortunes for MDH. Hospital statistics have shown that the demand on services from the hospital has continued to increase. 2011 saw an increase in outpatient services, an increase in the number of elective surgeries and also more in-patient management. Length of stay (LOS)

has improved slightly from 4.0 days to 3.6 average ward stays. These improvements are significant and may be difficult to maintain.

	2010	2011	Change
Total Outpatients Seen	New Cases: 179,677; Follow-ups and Walk-Ins: 316,826; Total Seen: 496,503	New Cases: 172,980; Follow-Ups and Walk-Ins: 524,660; Total Seen: 524,662	Increase of 28,159 (+5.7%)
Total Inpatients Managed	50,167	52,239	Increase of 2,072 (+4%)
Total Elective Surgical Interventions	35,347	36,799	Increase of +4.1%
ALOS	4.0 average ward stay; 5.3 average total hospital LOS	3.6 average ward stay; 5.4 average total hospital LOS	Decrease of 0.4 days in AWS; Increase of 0.1 days in ALOS
A&E Patients Seen	107,102	110,279	Increase of 3,177 (+2.9%)
A&E Patients Admitted	24,377	24,673	Increase of 296 (+1%)
A&E Patients Admitted %	22.8%	22.4%	Slight Decrease

MDH still maintains its state-of-the-art status in terms of equipment set-up and infrastructure. The cost of running the hospital hovers at around €500,000 perday.

Whilst the infrastructure has improved, in several areas the systems used have not changed much from the times of St Luke's Hospital. The main reasons for this are several, but can be categorised into three:

- The absence of a management organisation or structure (currently there are only a few purely managerial posts – DNMs, a Manager in Medical Imaging and a Bed Manager) that looks for improvement in hospital systems. Currently the management set-up is aimed and focused entirely on getting the day to day running of the hospital as smoothly as possible.
- The fact that most, if not all, employees in key management positions are nurses by profession who have been trained in nursing but have studied management, primarily because it is currently the only feasible career path for nursing. There are no purely management graduates working in the hospital. In the few positions where they are, they have obtained their masters in management and had to leave their nursing or medical profession to do practice management.

Action was taken in order to address these issues. Some progress was registered in particular areas whilst others require to be worked upon further.

PROCESS AUDITING

A lot of good ideas come up from key employees time and again, mostly through formal teams or committees. We have a catchment method, which is publishing such policies on KURA, but there is no closed loop mechanism to ensure that whatever is published on KURA is implemented effectively or improved accordingly. Work to resolve this aspect has already commenced. Two formally trained process auditors have now started to audit the effective implementation of each sizeable and significant contract for services that MDH has with third parties. At the same time, several cohorts of professions will be trained in process auditing, so that each profession will start to audit processes that their department is supposed to be implementing effectively. The current cohorts undergoing training and those planned are a team from pharmacy, all the team of Infection Control, all the Practice Development Nurses and a team of HSTs. Once this is done, progressively MDH can start to audit all the policies and procedures related to the Departments. It is intended that some trained auditors may audit aspects that are outside of their Department as well.

JOHN HOPKINS INTERNATIONAL (JHI)

MDH undertook a gap analysis exercise with JHI, one of the most reputable organisations worldwide that runs and operates hospitals in line with international standards, typically like the ones of the Joint Commission International (JCI). The gap analysis is aimed at carrying out:

- a review and evaluation of MDH performance;
- an analysis of the existing organisational structure and operations, including an appraisal of structures, controls, procedures, and processes;
- a thorough analysis and understanding of the challenges faced by MDH and of potential opportunities;
- a review to outline possible knowledge transfer mechanisms between MDH and JHI;
- establishing a baseline of resources required to successfully operate and manage a healthcare facility of comparable size.

The expected reports were:

- a comprehensive report via an operational audit of MDH which includes the (i) identification of priority gaps (ii) the establishment of performance baselines (iii) performance indicators with the objective of applying these to the advancement of Maltese healthcare resources (iv) recommendations intended to address areas of concern; and to establish target measures;
- a comprehensive report specifically focusing upon the existing operational framework employed at the Accident and Emergency Department;
- a comprehensive report specifically focusing upon the implementation of a management framework intended to reduce the longevity of waiting lists for elective surgery across clinical specialties;
- a workforce plan for MDH;
- a plan assessing the current and future capacity of the facility including actions necessary to meet future workforce needs, in order for this facility to be successful in achieving measurable efficiencies.

The JHI team that carries out such work is made up totally of experts in the field who have spent most of their career working in their area of expertise. Hence, the JHI review was made by experts in the particular clinical fields. All the visits by the various JHI consultants were carried out between July and November of 2011. The final report is awaited.

Some notable findings so far were that they found a workforce which was very receptive to change and improvement. There are also some areas, such as cardiology, which are close to if not totally fulfilling the requirements of JCI. At the same time, some practices, for example the way medicines are distributed in the wards, are 50 years old. There are also several other areas where the consultants came up with innovative and proven methods of management that MDH should consider taking on.

The JHI review was a positive and healthy exercise for MDH.

LIBYA CRISIS

In collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister and MHEC, MDH accepted a number of badly injured Libyan patients. This was a major exercise for MDH as it mobilised all the resources that could be mustered to handle and take care of these patients. All patients were ITU patients and a provisional ITU was set up near the day surgery resuscitation area. In order to do this, and do it efficiently, the 'Critical Event Mode'¹¹ of the hospital was activated. There was also a significant effort to manage these patients from a security and life-safety standpoint, so access to the patients was strictly controlled throughout all their stay. The area where MDH suffered most in this exercise was in providing the right amount of ITU trained nurses to man the provisional ITU and give proper care to the 11 patients taken on in it.

¹¹ This is what was previously known as the Major Disaster Plan. This name was changed since there is already a Major Disaster Plan for Malta and hence now the protocol for a Major Disaster for Mater Dei is called the critical Event Guide.

Most of these patients carried a bacterial strain that is very resistant to most antibiotics – KLPC). This in turn made MDH trigger more stringent infection control measures throughout the hospital. By the time that this strain was discovered, it had already spread to the normal ITU and also to two particular wards.

By applying a very stringent Infection Control policy, including mandatory training to all medical and surgical clinicians, as well as the addition of carers in the ITU to have dedicated one-to-one care for the patients which had the bacteria strain, the hospital managed, slowly but surely, to fight the strain out and now there are no more traces of such a bacteria in the hospital.

OBSERVATION UNIT

The Observation Ward had been used as a normal ward since the start of MDH in 2007. The original brief for this ward was to keep patients for a maximum of 24 hours and then discharge them or take them in as inpatients. For the last four years this had not been the case and all suspect patients were being taken in as inpatients. The Observation Unit has therefore been organised, through defined and documented protocols under the control of A&E, to operate as a proper and effective Observation Unit. The current utilisation of this 10-bedded ward is an average of 8.5 patients at any one time with a bed stay of just over 16 hours on average. The numbers can be improved and in 2012 the admission protocols will be reviewed and audited so that more patients can be taken in this ward. There was full co-operation from the A&E Consultants to manage this ward. Based on a safe estimate that patients who could have gone for a 24-hour observation, were previously being admitted as inpatients and that in many cases, by the time bloods and checks are carried out and they are reviewed for progress, 2.5 bed days would have passed from entry to discharge, approximately 4.5 beds per day have been gained with the current utilisation of the Observation Unit. This figure should improve in 2012.

BED STATE – AREA 2 AND PAEDIATRIC CORRIDOR

This is by far the aspect that takes up most of management's time, energy and resources. With the exception of the shoulder months of April to June and September to November, during the rest of the year there were no beds for acutely ill patients coming into hospital from A&E. Some patients had to be housed on stretchers in the Day Care Unit, in A&E Area 2¹² and in the Paediatric Corridor. Steps were taken to reduce this impact primarily by reducing the number of bed blockers (social cases) that are destined for rehabilitation at RHKG or discharged for long term care at SVPR or in other PPP facilities that government purchases from time to time. In May 2011 the number of bed blockers was 78. In December 2011, the number of bed blockers was 28. Whereas the problem with bed blockers is widespread in most hospitals in Europe, one should not give up trying to sort it out. The main disadvantage at MDH is that bed occupancy is often 100% (if ring-fenced wards are not included). A healthy occupancy ratio should be closer to 85% to be able to absorb fluctuations in demand. In order to give acutely ill new patients a more decent service when coming in through A&E, the decision was made to take up a significant number of beds from the day care areas (30 out of 44 beds) as well as dedicate the Paediatric Day Care beds (12) for incoming inpatients. These changes were still not enough at the end of December to avoid using A&E Area 2 and Paediatric corridor at that period.

Admittance rates from A&E in this period of time were not higher than other years (300 patients more over the whole year when compared to 2010). Four times as many patients under medicine are admitted as is done in all the other specialities put together. A study of the LOS for medicine patients did not show any notable differences in LOS per type of disease treated. There may be the occasional cases where some patients are brought early for tests like MRI's, ultrasounds, X rays or blood tests but the data available so far does not show a change in practice that is resulting in less available beds.

¹² This area has effectively never been used by A&E for A&E work. The JHI study revealed that working with Area 1 only as an A&E acceptance area is too small for the average 340 patients that are seen every day at A&E.

SYSTEMS REVIEW BOARD

This is a new board that is tasked with looking at where systems fail when a medical incident is reported, primarily focusing on incidents where patients' safety was put in jeopardy. The Systems Review Board is there to examine where systems have failed and to instruct changes in practice and systems to reduce the possibility that the same error(s) happen again. In its first three months, the Board covered six incidents. This Board does not replace peer reviews or inquiries. The decision to carry out a peer review or an inquiry or a systems review or all of these types of investigations lies with the CEO in conjunction with the incident Committee. It is expected that the output of systems reviews would be change in practices, modification or institution of new SOPs and changes in equipment or methods.

CUSTOMER CARE

In 2011 the focus was turned around on the customer and all operations defined in SOPs. The department now has an Operations Manual and SOPs against which it is run and continuous improvement of processes implemented. The Customer Care department can now handle all customer issues. It is envisaged that in 2012 the department will start going into customer care aspects that deal with other departments in the hospital such as A&E and outpatients, with a view to see how the interface between MDH and customers can be improved.

The plan is to beef up the department by adding a PR arm which would also take care of updating the website of the hospital and also start making direct PR activities.

INDUCTION TRAINING

Take-up of induction training increased to 93%, from 65% since attendance is now compulsory for all new employees. Employees coming from subcontractors are also being trained, something which was not being done in the past.

MAJOR INCIDENT PLAN

A massive effort, led by an A&E team, was done to update the Major Incident Plan such that all the action cards for all the essential players in a Major Incident were updated, discussed, explained and distributed to each key employee. As already mentioned, the name of the Manual has been changed from Major Incident Plan to Critical Event Guide. In September, the major incident plan was fully updated to the needs and requirements of MDH as they currently stand. The Libya Crisis was taken as an opportunity to test this plan and the receipt of such patients was managed based on the new Critical Event Guide.

OUTSOURCING OF CT ANGIOS AND MRIS

The outsourcing of CT Angios and MRIs is now progressing. All MRI slots were taken and a new agreement needs to be put in place. The selection of patients for CT Angios is not a simple exercise and the CT Angios rate of tests is lower than that for MRIs since clinical analysis is required on each patient before they are sent to SJH for the CT Angio. Both contracts are being audited internally by MDH to ensure that both MDH and the private contractor are conforming to the agreed conditions.

Child Care Centre

The new Childcare Centre has been set up at the Birkirkara Oratory.

HYPERBARIC UNIT

The Hyperbaric Unit received its latest equipment upgrade and can now be used correctly for any type of dive-depth that can be encountered in Malta, which was not the case prior to the addition of this equipment. The unit is also certified yearly to the requisite safety level. The consultants working in this area are now all on Contract A and they have proposed that they bring the business of foreign divers' medical tests to MDH.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2012

In 2011, the MDH mission statement was reviewed and now is: 'To consistently provide holistic, acute, quality patient care, in a safe, effective and dignified manner'. In November 2011, following consultation with all the key members of the top management team of MDH, a number of hospital-wide objectives were identified to be given focus and tackled in 2012.

LEGAL OFFICE

It is more than a year ago that the legal office within the Health Division moved to the new offices at MDH. This move brought about an increase in workload as now doctors working within hospital are making full use of the services offered by the office. The demand for legal guidance and direction has increased as has increased the direct involvement in decision-making processes initiated by MDH senior management.

Despite the physical move to MDH, legal office is still providing legal assistance to the Health administration, government hospitals, health centres and other institutions within the health sector. This assistance consists of various forms such as legal advice, drafting both primary and subsidiary legislation, legal assistance in superior, inferior courts and in arbitration tribunals. This legal assistance consists also of the drafting and processing of contracts of patients and other third persons.

The pending civil legal cases are various and unique from each other. The facts under dispute range from alleged professional negligence, health and safety issues, promotions, to money due by and or from the Division. Another particular service is that of the affidavits. This service is very beneficial for doctors as they have the opportunity to give evidence without being present on court. It is also beneficial to the institution as doctors' absence can disrupt the health service.

A new service which was introduced during 2011 was that police officers do not seek out the doctors in hospital or at home in order to affect the service of such summons. These documents are now being handed over to legal office and the doctors may either pick them up themselves or in some cases delivery is affected.

The office has also embarked on conducting peer reviews when an undesirable incident has occurred in hospital. The peer reviews replaced the Boards of Inquiry. The reaction from doctors was very positive and cooperation was forthcoming. It was very encouraging to note that there was an increase in the reporting of incidents and staff has in the majority welcomed the legal recommendations made. It is also being noted that this approach is instilling a proactive attitude and staff feel empowered and responsible to effect the changes necessary.

On a different note, when one compares the previous years with 2001, the legal office received a considerable increase in claims re negligent allegations in the health sector, for the access of medical records, allegations of unauthorised treatment on minors and claims of breaches in health and safety at work. It is being noted however that, since a more effective and efficient customer care office has been in place, many complaints are being tackled on an administrative level and this approach has stemmed some of the blood flow.

The following list shows the paper work done in relation to court:

Pending cases

Civil Court First Hall	40
Court of Magistrates (Malta)	1
Court of Appeal – Superior	12
Court of Appeal – Inferior	1
Court of Magistrates (Gozo)	1
Civil Arbitration	4

Others

Judicial letters Magistrates Malta	37
Affidavits (Doctors)	557
Affidavits (plaintiffs or defendants)	22
Judicial letters (Civil Court 1 st Hall)	17
Concluded Cases	7
Garnishee warrant	18
Garnishee Counter warrant	3
Civil Court 1 st Hall applications	29
Criminal court applications	58
Court of magistrates applications	20
Applications for jurors	26
Court of Appeal applications	5
Health Inspectors applications/replies	55
Civil Court 1 st Hall Counter Protest	10
Civil Court 1 st Hall Defendant note	12
Civil Court 1 st Hall reply	20
Civil Court 1 st Hall Submission notes	8
Court of Magistrates Submission notes	4
Civil Court 1 st Hall schedule deposits	20
Civil Court 1 st Hall withdrawal schedule deposits	16
Health Inspectors replies	17
Court of Magistrates Counter Protest	17
Legal letters	450

MOUNT CARMEL HOSPITAL (MCH)

2011 continued to be a year of change and progress in the field of psychiatric services. Despite a number of challenges, MCH continued to strive towards consolidating its existing services while continuing to expand community services and improving the standards and quality of care across the board.

During 2011 there were a total of 1,278 inpatient admissions, of which 458 were first admissions. Community mental health services in various localities including Psychiatric Outpatients, Qormi, Cospicua, Paola, Kirkop, Mtarfa, Floriana and the roaming clinic saw a staggering total of 1,545 new cases out of a total of 13,397 active cases currently being followed by these teams. Out of all these cases, the teams managed to keep admissions to MCH or Psychiatric Unit to a minimum, with a commendable 132 admissions (0.98% of active cases).

Great investment continued to be made in the human resources of the mental health services, through supporting and encouraging various professionals at all levels in their continuous professional development, the consolidation and growth of the Nurse Education Unit as well as through various courses and training sessions organised by the various departments as well as the MCH Staff Training Centre.

The community department reached a milestone through the introduction of the Crisis Intervention Team in December 2010, which continued to go from strength to strength during the past year. In fact, the team took on 928 patients experiencing a psychiatric crisis during 2011, of which only 99 were eventually

admitted, with 817 patients eventually being admitted to Psychiatric Outpatients, or one of the existing community teams.

The Projects and Maintenance Section dealt with approximately 3,500 work requests from both the hospital, as well as various community centres around the island. Besides these routine maintenance works, a number of important projects were completed, namely the refurbishment of the Psychology department, the Reception area, administration areas, as well as a number of wards. Further to this, IT networks were installed outside the hospital gate in order to allow wards located there to have access to the government IT network. Two other major projects involved the foundation works for the new Female DDU, as well as the procurement and installation of the first cluster of emergency generators.

In 2011, the Finance department started an exercise to consolidate its financial position in order to reduce the cash deficit and increased liabilities accumulated over the years.

Psychiatric Department

The total number of inpatients receiving care within MCH was 2,299. There were 1,278 persons admitted (884 male or 69.17% and 394 females or 30.83%). Of these admissions, 458 were first admissions while 820 were re-admissions. 59.86% of these admissions were informal, 39.20% were compulsory (emergency, observation or treatment order of MHA 1976) while 0.94% of the admissions were cases referred by Court. There were 1,246 (867 males or 69.58% and 379 females or 30.42%) discharges during 2011. During their stay at this hospital, 61 patients (14 males or 22.95% and 47 females or 77.05%) were temporarily transferred to other hospitals. 38 patients (24 males and 14 females) died during their stay at MCH in 2011. The diagnostic categories of the 1,278 admitted patients are listed in the table below:

WHO ICD-10 Diagnostic Categories	No.	%
Organic including symptomatic, mental disorders (F00-F09) (incl. senile dementia)	25	1.96%
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol (F10) (alcohol abuse and dependence)	93	7.28%
Mental and behavioural disorders due to (non-alcohol) psychoactive substance use (F11-F19) (incl. drug abuse and dependence)	349	27.31%
Schizophrenia, schizotypal and delusional disorders (F20-F29)	240	18.78%
Mood (affective) disorders (30-F39)	233	18.23%
Neurotic, stress related and somatoform disorders (F40-F48)	213	16.66%
Behavioural syndromes associated with physiological disturbances and physical factors (F50-F59)	3	0.23%
Disorders of adult personality and behaviour (F60-F69)	47	3.68%
Mental Retardation (F70-F79)	33	2.58%
Disorders of Psychological Development (F80-F89)	6	0.47%
Behavioural and Emotional Disorders with onset occur in childhood or adolescence (F90-F98)	27	2.11%
Other (not specified or no psychiatric disorder)	9	0.70%

Dual Diagnosis Unit (DDU)

A total number of 126 patients were admitted during 2011. For 25 patients, this was their first admission to DDU. 29 patients were referred from Sedqa (Detox OP), 22 from Caritas while the remaining 75 patients were referred either by general practitioners or transferred from other wards/units (mostly from Secure Unit). 109 patients were admitted on an informal basis, two patients under emergency order, nine patients under observation order, while the remaining six patients were sectioned as treatment order. 54 patients were discharged against medical advice; 13 were transferred to other wards/units. The remaining 59 were either referred to respective agencies (mostly Caritas) for completion of programme or discharged home.

Young People's Unit (YPU)

The Young People's Unit is an eight-bedded, mixed gender unit catering for youngsters with emotional and behavioural psychiatric problems up to the age of 16. Both day and residential services are offered.

This Unit uses a multi-disciplinary team approach and its therapeutic milieu to help youngsters. Weekly assessment/therapeutic monitoring sessions are held. A total of 84 sessions were held at the YPU, of which 38 were case conferences and 46 were case reviews. There were also two meetings with parents only. Other *ad hoc* review sessions were held whenever deemed necessary according to the residents' progress.

Bed Occupancy

The YPU occupancy on 31 December 2011 was 12 clients, consisting of six females and six males.

Admissions

During 2011, there were a total of 14 admissions, as opposed to five admissions during the previous year. Three male youngsters admitted to YPU were living within their family while another two were transferred from another ward (Mixed Admission Ward). Another two clients had been transferred from MDH. For both clients this was their first admission to YPU. The female group included three clients living in foster care, another living with a foster family while the fifth youngster was living with her natural family. Another two clients were transferred from an adult ward at MCH (MAW) as soon as there was a vacancy at YPU.

Compulsory Admissions

Amongst the total admissions, three male youngsters were admitted under an Emergency Observation Order, two female clients were admitted to the YPU on an Observation Order (one directly, the other by transfer from another ward) and one male client was transferred from an adult ward on a Treatment Order.

Day Users

At the end of 2011, there was only one female client who had been admitted as a day case and who had remained so throughout her YPU attendance. She was receiving mainly Educational and Occupational Therapy sessions and is now on leave. Another male youngster benefited from a short day programme of three weeks earlier in the year. He was then discharged home.

Discharges

The year 2011 yielded a total of 14 discharges (six males and eight females), which contrasts well with the eight discharges of the previous year. These discharges include the two male youngsters who were transferred to MAW and Secure Unit respectively and one female youngster transferred to MAW. These transfers are considered as discharged from YPU since they had either outgrown the YPU or their behaviour was no longer containable there. Apart from the aforementioned three permanent transfers, the outcome for the rest of the discharged youngsters was as follows: three males returned to their natural families, while another youngster was admitted into a children's home while seven female clients returned back to their original place of residence. There were no discharges against medical advice.

Child Guidance Clinic

The service caters for emotionally and behaviourally disturbed young people under the age of 16 years. The following table shows data on cases handled by the Child Guidance Clinic during 2011.

	Males	Females	Total
Child Guidance Clinic			
New cases	169	83	252
Follow-up cases	1,225	521	1,746
Cases closed	111	54	165
Transferred to Psychiatry Outpatient for follow-up			32
Transferred to Learning Disability Unit	3	1	4

<i>Learning Disability Unit</i>			
LD clinics held			47
New cases seen at LDU	29	11	40
Follow-up cases	351	182	533
Discharged	17	9	26

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Clinic

	Males	Females	Total
Clinics held			53
Parental skills courses organised			2
New cases	437	199	636
Discharged	16	6	22
<i>Coaching sessions</i>			
<i>With one parent</i>			88
<i>With both parents</i>			26
<i>Adolescents</i>	63	14	79
<i>Continuation of questionnaires</i>	18	4	22
<i>Others</i>	15	5	20

Short Stay Psychiatric Unit

This unit is located within MDH and is intended for short periods of admission. Of the 282 admissions during the year, 85 were referred from medical wards at MDH. A total of 23 patients (eight male and 15 female) received 225 ECT treatments during 2011.

Gozo Psychiatric Services

Long Stay Ward at Gozo General Hospital (GGH)

At the moment, this ward accommodates 32 patients (12 female and 20 male). The ward had 28 admissions and 27 discharges/transfers during 2011.

Short Stay Ward (Psychiatric Unit) at GGH

This ward, located within GGH, has 12 beds and accepts patients including one seclusion room. The ward accommodates an average of nine patients per night. Eight male patients were discharged against medical advice.

Admissions in the Ward			
	Female	Male	Total
Gozitans	16	65	81
Maltese	0	7	7
Foreigners	7	3	10
Total	23	75	98

The admissions were diagnosed as follows:

Bipolar Disorder	7
Anxiety Disorder	4
Addiction/Alcohol	10
Addiction/Heroin	2
Aggressive Behaviour	4
Behavioural Disorder	5
Court Cases	6
Depression	26
Depression/Suicidal Attempts	5
For Observation	8
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	2
Schizophrenia	14
Social Cases	5

Consultations

105 (56 male and 49 female) consultations from other wards of GGH were made.

Outpatients at GGH

Three consultants attended the Outpatients clinic at GGH, where a total of 1,229 patients were seen. An additional psychiatrist held a child guidance clinic where 111 patients attended. 118 patients attended psychology sessions with attending professionals. In addition to these services, Depot and Clozapine clinics are held by the nurse in charge on a regular basis.

Laboratory Services, Pharmacy and Para-Clinical Departments at MCH

Laboratory Services

MCH continued to offer basic laboratory services during 2011. The total amount of test requests were: 23,584 in 2011 (23,779 in 2010; 22,431 in 2009).

Pharmacy Department

The Pharmacy department is constituted of three main sections:

- *Dispensary*, which deals with the dispensing of medicines including methadone and medical devices to MCH wards, hospital staff and to patients discharged on leave. Transactions carried out rose to nearly 90,000, a 14% increase compared to 2010. However, the net cost of pharmaceuticals and medical devices dispensed during 2011 decreased to €1,200,000.
- *Pharmacy Stores* cater for the stock ordering and management including redistribution to other government pharmacies so as to avoid items from expiring. The total value of purchases of medicinal products and medical devices for 2011 amounted to €1,011,231 while the total value of expired pharmaceuticals amounted to a negligible €204 (0.02%).
- *Clinical Pharmacy Section*, which processes and issues approvals for psychiatric protocol-regulated medicines and for replying to drug information requests. The number of new approvals issued for the main protocol-regulated items used in psychiatric treatment was 1,015. Risperdone depot injections were included in the formulary as psychiatric protocol regulated medicines.

Physiotherapy Department

14 psychiatric inpatients were referred for physiotherapy from the wards, 70 being new referrals. A total of 5,835 treatment sessions were carried out. Treatment sessions took place either in the respective patients' wards or in the Physiotherapy department. A further two psychiatric outpatients were treated, one of them being a new referral and with a total of 79 treatment sessions being carried out.

Psychology Department

Psychologists are attached to the 11 teams and every consultant psychiatrist refers clients for assessment and/or therapy as the need arises. The psychologist's intervention latches onto the services of the multi-disciplinary team as a whole, hence the full benefit of a multi-disciplinary approach is achieved. The Psychology department offers its services in several contexts, including the Child Guidance Clinic, Community Services, GGH, MCH, MDH and others. The department also offers staff support sessions as and when necessary. Psychologists provided 7,598 sessions to 2,430 clients, whereas two trainee psychologists working under supervision provided 513 sessions to 245 clients.

Occupational Therapy Department

Excluding Occupational Therapy in the community day centres, 11 occupational therapists and 15 support staff were delivering a service geared towards the acquisition of independent living skills, be it for the client in the acute stage or for the chronic patient.

Occupational Therapy Home Visits			
	Home Visit	Male New	Female New
Total	121	378	380

The OT department organises a number of annual events. Two prominent events for which specific members of the general public are invited to participate are the Awareness Day which focuses on vocational rehabilitation, and the OT Day. In 2011, secondary school adolescents were invited to participate in a workshop about Mental Health and Occupational Therapy. OT staff also participated in activities organised by the MCH Management. These included activities related to the 150th anniversary of the hospital, Mental Health promotion during *Notte Bianca*, and the Mental Health Day. The Occupational Therapy department also organised several cultural, educational and leisure activities for patients throughout the year.

Social Work Department

Social Work Activities	
New referrals	856
Home assessments	1,340
Court visits	47
Meetings with other agencies	432
Office based interviews (over 45 minutes)	1,557
Psychosocial reports	529
Clients assisted in finding employment	98
Clients assisted in community living arrangements	94
Repatriated back to the native country of client/hospital abroad	3

Other Activities

- Giving talks to the media help combat the misconception that surround the area of mental health in Malta.
- Organising sponsorships for clients' outings.
- Coordinating financial assistance and donations of furniture, household goods, clothes and groceries for needy families etc.
- Acting as fieldwork teachers to social work students reading for BA (Hons) courses at University of Malta.
- Acting as supervisors to care work students (MCAST, Malta and Gozo) reading for a National Diploma in Health and Social Care.
- Lecturing in induction courses for new recruits at MCH
- Lecturing on Social work to Trainee Psychiatrists
- Acting as supervisor of social work student's dissertation as part requirement for BA (Hons) courses at University of Malta.
- Sitting on Selection Boards (MCH); Richmond and MCH Housing Allocation Committees.
- Organising in-house Mental Welfare Officer training course for new MWOs.

Nurse Education Unit (NEU)

Together with the nursing management, this unit is helping in the upgrading of patient care. Post-registration and post-graduate courses in conjunction with the University of Malta have been ongoing. A number of staff members have successfully completed a BSc in Mental Health Nursing. The care workers in mental health course has been organised for the second year running. 31 carers qualified from the first

course. The number of selected students for the ongoing course is 25. As part of the process to upgrade CPR assistance, all wards have been furnished with an emergency trolley complete with a suction pump. A process by which all these trolleys will be standardised and identical in set-up is being finalised.

Customer Care

The nursing administration also handles a Complaints and Compliments Section dealing with all incoming complaints from patients and relatives.

Other Responsibilities

Ever since the appointment of a nurse in charge of the Forensic Unit, the Maximum Security Unit and the Asylum Seekers Unit, the nursing care delivered in these units has continued to improve.

Improvements in Wards/Units

Decorations and upgrading in wards was ongoing throughout the year. The Juvenile Ward had a new kitchen fitted as well as new doors installed. Current refurbishment works on MW8 will be finalised in the coming weeks. Further structural and refurbishment works were done in the YPU, HWH, MW3B. With the help of the NEU, new practice guidelines have been introduced in the ASU, as well as decorating the place with new pictures, signs and symbols to help relieve communication issues with non-English/Maltese-speaking patients. The staff now can make use of a newly refurbished sports club with the installation of new gym equipment.

Community Mental Health Services Department

During this year a total of 14,771 service users have benefited from the range of services offered by all the teams. The following sections give more detailed information on each team's endeavours.

Community Service	Currently Registered Service Users	Services offered and patients benefitting
Qormi Health Clinic	730 (of which 85 new referrals; 92 followed by primary team and 638 by secondary) 22 admissions (18 to MCH; 4 to Short-stay Psychiatric Unit) 37 discharged (7 from primary; 30 secondary team)	892 home visits, 8,623 telephone interventions, 2,467 drop-in/office visits, 608 psychological sessions, 662 depot injections to 49 service users; support groups and recovery programmes; various community talks to promote services and mental health.
Qormi Day Centre	77 (F: 31, M: 46) (of which 12 new referrals) 5 admissions to MCH 31 discharged	Individual and group interventions focusing on personal and instrumental activities of daily living, social and socialisation skills, outings, creative and cognitive activities, vocational sessions; psycho-education group throughout the year; interventions and support groups for relatives of service users.
Cospicua Health Clinic	208 (F: 134, M: 74) (of which 33 new referrals; 118 followed by primary team and 90 by secondary) 14 admissions to MCH/PU 2 discharged	200 social work interventions, 507 nursing interventions, 57 sessions with trainee psychologist, 95 psychology sessions, 76 home visits, 36 hospital visits, 150 support interventions to service users who dropped out of the clinic. Participation in activities to promote clinic services and mental health.
Cospicua Day Centre	28 (F: 17, M: 11) (of which 9 new referrals) 3 admissions to MCH/PU	Training in daily living and independent living skills, occupational therapy, social work services, counselling, home visits and mentoring, assistance during outpatients/psychiatric appointments, crafts and creativity sessions, outings and recreational activities, educational skills training. Liaison with ETC, Social Security,

		Appoġġ etc. 13 referrals for other services e.g. MMDNA, Meals on Wheels, Home Help.
Paola Health Clinic	683 (of which 443 new referrals; 21 followed by primary team and 662 by secondary) 8 admissions to MCH/PU 8 discharged	580 secondary team reviews, 289 home visits, social work interventions to 40 service users, psychologist interventions to 33 users, 545 support interventions to users who called without appointment. Extensive telephone support/intervention. Promoting mental health and clinic services.
Paola Day Centre	56 (F: 37, M: 19) (of which 40 new referrals) 5 admissions to MCH/PU	individual and group sessions, intra/interpersonal skills, vocational skills, social and leisure activities, crafts and creativity. Liaison with entities to organise talks on various topics (smoking cessation, hair care, care of pets, first aid). Home visits. Regular telephone support and monitoring.
Floriana Health Clinic	564 (F: 317, M: 247) (of which 78 new referrals; 7 followed by primary team and 557 by secondary) 9 admissions to MCH 19 discharged	331 depot injections to 48 service users, 47 benefitted from 196 psychological sessions, 79 home visits, support interventions to 63 users. Promoting mental health and clinic services, involving visits to 70 organisations, pharmacies, schools.
Floriana Day Centre	44 (of which 42 new referrals) 4 admissions to MCH/PU 12 discharged	individual and group sessions, intra/interpersonal skills, pre-vocational skills, cognitive sessions, social and leisure activities including those involving relative/main carers.
Kirkop Health Clinic	52 (F: 30, M: 22) (of which 48 new referrals) 1 admission to MCH	78 psychological sessions (22 users), 30 social work interventions (18 users), 37 home visits, 577 telephone interventions. Psycho-education and counselling offered to main carers. Promoting mental health and clinic services. Liaison with number of entities.
Mtarfa Health Clinic	292 (F: 168, M: 124) (of which 95 new referrals) 29 discharged	115 medical reviews (47 users), 332 psychological sessions (85 users), 83 social work interventions (38 users), 1,500 telephone interventions, 42 home visits. Meetings/talks to promote mental health and clinic services.
Żejtun Day Centre	45 (F: 27, M: 18) (of which 15 new referrals) 12 admissions 1 discharged	98 sessions of domestic/personal activities of daily living, 164 sessions on inter/intrapersonal skills, 34 sessions on money handling/budgeting, 30 sessions on numeracy, 61 crafts sessions, 94 counselling sessions, 16 talks, 1,179 informal office visits (30 users), 36 home visits (9 users), 1,603 telephone interventions. 25 referrals (15 users) to other services e.g. KNPD, Richmond, etc.
Outreach teams (working from service users' homes)	146 (F: 93, M: 53) 81 admissions to MCH/PU 31 discharged	8,883 patient contact sessions, including home visits and follow ups, and accompaniment to appointments. 750 indirect patient contact sessions consisting of interventions carried out on behalf of users. 63 referrals for other services.
Psychiatric Outpatients	10,252 active files registered (of which 740 new referrals) 66 admissions to MCH/PU	12,162 attendances (F: 6,453, M: 5,709). 24 users were offered depot injections and 86 regular Clozapine. Team involved in Sectorisation Project, transferring some 794 users to respective community clinics, namely Bormla, Gżira, Mosta, Floriana, Kirkop, Mtarfa, Qormi, Paola Health Clinics.
Roaming Health Centre (reviews service users at Gżira/Mosta Health Centres)	616 (F: 391, M: 225) (of which 23 new referrals) 11 admissions to MCH/PU 11 discharged	regular depot injections to 47 users, 1,045 attendances, 14 home visits, 136 telephone interventions, support to 121 drop-in users.
Crisis Intervention Team (operates at MDH)	12 active users 99 admissions to MDH/MCH/PU 817 discharged to Psychiatric OP	interventions to 928 service users (F: 522, M: 403). Offers intensive case management, including care coordination and supportive counselling by nurses/social worker, and psychological and psychiatric consultation services.

Half Way House

This 24-bedded unit receives referrals from various units at MCH, and its services are geared towards the rehabilitation of their service users, providing training, support, assistance and empowerment for a successful reintegration into the community. Throughout 2011, this service shifted to the Community department. 50 service users are registered with it (F: 22, M: 28), including service users who are on leave but who are still followed up extensively by the Halfway House team. In addition, they also offer support to an average of five day users daily. 15 service users were referred in 2011 from other units at MCH, and 21 service users were discharged to their homes, flats or hostels. Interventions include group sessions led by psychologists; daily occupational therapy sessions focusing on activities of daily living; social work interventions; home visits; and organisation of outings and other cultural activities. Nurses are on duty 24/7, and are able to give ongoing supervision of treatment, and monitor the service users' progress and mental state. The team liaises with various service providers in the Community, such as Richmond Foundation, Appogg, and community hostels, for the additional benefit of their service users.

Projects and Maintenance Section

During 2011, the maintenance section dealt with approximately 3,510 work requests carried out in various wards and other sections including community centres. The hospital also outsourced certain works including:

- Maintenance and repairs of passenger lifts.
- Maintenance and repairs of domestic type air-conditioning units.
- Laying and repairs of water-proving membrane.
- Servicing of fire deduction alarm systems, nurse call systems and electrical installations at SJAW, SGPW and SBW.
- Maintenance for automatic cylinders on medical gas systems.
- Part of the regular section duties were:
- Maintenance and repairs on the domestic hot water boilers.
- Preventive maintenance of water pumps feeding all storage tanks
- Preventive and maintenance program of the main kitchen equipment.
- Regular maintenance of wards, departments and other common areas.

Refurbishment works were carried out in various sections, including the Psychology department, the Reception area, the Juvenile Ward, Half Way House, female staff toilets, an electrical overhaul at the main garden as well as repairs on the main fountain. The main yard entrance to Male Ward 1 was also refurbished, repairs being carried out on the fountain, plastering and painting of all surrounding walls, electrical installation and fitting of reflectors. The Training Centre extension forming part of MW1 was completed and works included alterations of the electrical system, painting, carpentry repairs of doors, windows and insects screen. Painting and re-decoration works were carried out at the Floriana Day and Mental Clinic. At the MSU, structural alterations were carried out to fit a new security door. Other refurbished wards and sections were MW3A, MAW (Females), as well as the visitors' canteen, the Main Stores Office, the DNMs office, while SNOs and MSU corridors were redecorated. Emergency works were required in a number of wards, namely FW1, MW2 and Male Wards 3A & B. In 2011 procedures were also started for the installation of emergency electrical generators for the whole of MCH, and the required concrete plinths were manufactured and fitted at the JW and YPU. In addition to this, a tender is currently in progress for the replacement of two domestic hot water boilers at MW3A-B and MW1.

REHABILITATION HOSPITAL KARIN GRECH

The Rehabilitation Hospital Karin Grech (RHKG) has seen through a number of achievements over 2011. Primary amongst these was the refurbishment and opening of two new wards catering for an additional 59 persons requiring inpatient rehabilitation services, bringing the total bed capacity of the hospital up to 212 beds. This expansion allowed for the continued strengthening of provision of rehabilitation services at a

national level. The increase in bed capacity occurred in two phases, in May and August 2011, and resulted in an increase in admissions to RHKG by 198 over the previous year. This year has also shown that the RHKG forms an important link in the overall health care service and that strengthening of this link has important implications on other areas, in particular acute care. The statistics below show an increase in admissions to RHKG from MDH by 259 over the previous year.

The work carried out by management and staff in 2010, in relation to creating a vision and mission for the hospital, was consolidated in 2011. A seminar was held to develop a strategic plan for the hospital in line with the vision and mission statements. This strategic plan focuses on the achievement of excellence in rehabilitation services, the upgrading of the physical environment at RHKG and the attainment of the necessary human resources, the consolidation of RHKG's unique identifying characteristics, that is, rehabilitation, interdisciplinary and person-centred care and the need to attract and retain graduates from all health care professions to this field of practice. All professional, administrative and management staff were included in this exercise and the strategic plan focused on development of rehabilitation services at all levels, be it inpatient, outpatient or community services. This exercise highlighted RHKG's staff commitment and dedication to providing the best possible rehabilitation service possible.

RHKG looks forward to the next year with optimism. Several issues, such as the continued refurbishment of the hospital and the improvement of human resource issues will be the focus of attention over the coming year. RHKG remains committed to provide the best possible rehabilitation service and to work collaboratively with other entities within the MHEC to strengthen care provision at a national level. RHKG has been expanding ever since it opened in 2007. Because of the increased demand for rehab beds, wards were added and long term cases migrated to MCH in December 2009. In 2010, Zammit Clapp Hospital closed its doors and patients were transferred to RHKG after a new Day Hospital and Medical out-patients were fitted out at RHKG. The new wards necessitated major refurbishment of unused areas, which in turn meant an injection of capital investment. From 2008 to 2011, €2.2 million was invested in refurbishment at the hospital with €650,000 being invested in 2011 alone. Wards were gutted, rewired, new bathrooms were fitted as well as new fire doors for safety. New furniture was bought as well as new fittings such as doors and grab rails. A new service lift was installed. The new wards meant that the recurrent expenditure of 2011 had to accommodate the expansion. Naturally the expenditure was projected as higher than that of the year 2010. Below is the actual cost of an average ward, which is approx €990,667. What the hospital actually incurred however was an extra €364,910, over 2010 expenditure and €214,277 of this added expenditure was made on medical equipment. This saving was mainly due to the shutting down of a thin fuel oil boiler and its substitution with electricity. The saving in thin fuel oil was €217,846 in a year.

Clinical Services

The report for 2011 represents the second year since all Rehabilitation Services were transferred to one site now referred to as the RHKG. The scope of the RHKG is to provide assessment and post-acute care and rehabilitation to a wide range of persons including younger adult patients (between 16 and 60 years of age) and the elderly (60 years and above). As in previous years, all post-acute patients received an opportunity for maximal functional recovery. The ultimate goal remained that of encouraging patients to remain living in the community and to support relatives in their caregiver role.

Total Number of Beds at the Rehabilitation Hospital Karin Grech (RHKG) in 2011					
Date Opening/Migration	Previous Ward Name	New Designation	Type of Bed	No. of Beds	Total Bed Complement
	M3	M3	Geriatric Rehab	31	153
	M4	M3	Geriatric Rehab	31	153
9 April	M1 (30)	G2	Geriatric Rehab	31	154
9 April	M2 (30)	G3	Geriatric Rehab	31	155
4 May	-	MW1	Geriatric Rehab	28	183
3 Aug	-	RW8	Geriatric Rehab	28	211
5 Oct	M8 (31)	RW7	Physical Rehab	32	212

The above table shows the total number of available beds at the RHKG. On 9 April 2011, two wards (M1 and M2) were relocated into the newly refurbished wards of G2 and G3 respectively increasing their bed complement by one bed for each ward. Two completely new wards were opened on 4 May and on 3 August, each having a total 28 beds and increasing the total hospital bed capacity to 211 beds. In October, M8 was relocated to the refurbished RW7 with a complement of 32 beds. The total bed capacity by the end of 2011 was 212 beds. The total hospital capacity over the whole year totalled 67,471 bed days.

PERFORMANCE STATISTICS FOR 2011

Inpatient Admissions

- In 2011, there were a total of 1,498 admissions to RHKG - 1,141 to the six Geriatric Rehabilitation wards and 357 to the Physical Rehabilitation ward.
- The average age of inpatients was 78.7 years.
- A total number of 1,289 patients were transferred from MDH (86.0% of all admissions).

Inpatients Admission demographics						
	2010			2011		
	Geriatric	Physical Rehab	Total	Geriatric	Physical Rehab	Total
Total New admissions	979	321	1,300	1,141	357	1,498
Mean age (years)	80.4	75.5	79.2	80.3	73.6	78.7
No / (%) admissions from MDH	726	313	1,039 (79.9%)	942	347	1,289 (86.0%)

The following figures show the total number of new admissions by ward. The difference in the levels of admission of certain wards is attributed to refurbishment and/or transfer to other wards.

	Total
G2	157
G3	148
M1	98
M2	98
M3	215
M4	208
M8	274
MW1	144
RW7	83
RW8	73
Total	1,498

Inpatient Discharges

- The table below details the outcomes for the 1,445 discharged patients in 2011 (the difference between this figure and the admissions is attributed to the increase in bed capacity in 2011).
- 53.6% of patients were discharged to a community setting (own residence/carer's residence, private or church homes) as compared to 53.1 % in 2010.
- 26.1% of discharges were to new state-funded long-term care settings (SVPR, government homes, PPP homes or wards for the elderly at MCH).
- Mortality rate was 12.8 %.
- Mean length of stay for all discharged patients in 2011 was 42.7 days as compared to 38.3 days in 2010. This figure incorporates any additional stay due to delayed discharge (vide following section on long-term care needs).
- Mean length of stay for geriatric wards was 46.4 days and for the physical rehabilitation ward 31.8 days.

Discharge outcomes for RHKG				
Discharge Destination	2010		2011	
	Discharged Patients Combined ZCH/RHKG	%	Discharged Patients RHKG	%
Home	589	45.3	678	46.9
Private Homes	64	4.9	67	4.6
Church Homes	38	2.9	30	2.1
Government Homes	20	1.5	49	3.4
SVPR	204	15.7	173	12.0
SJA/SGP/SBT	35	2.7	32	2.2
PPP Homes	142	10.9	123	8.5
Transfer to MDH/other hospitals	78	6.1	108	7.5
Deceased	131	10	185	12.8
Total	1,301	100	1,445	100

Long-Term Patients

Delayed discharge of patients from RHKG continued to remain a challenge throughout 2011 and this was the main reason for inadequate patient flow through the system. A total number of 433 were registered as long-term care patients (32 patients more than in 2010). Notification of long-term decisions were communicated to the Department of Social Security for subsequent deduction in pension/income from the date of registration. Applications for entry into a government institution were then submitted, together with social reports, for further consideration by the Admissions Board.

In 2011, functional assessments continued to be carried out on all long-term patients to determine appropriate placement. The Barthel Index, the Mini-Mental State and the Medical Status was used to identify the patients' needs. Out of the 433 long-term patients identified in 2011, 76 were still at RHKG at the end of the year. The destinations for the discharged 405 LTC patients in 2011 (48 LTC patients remaining from 2010 and 357 LTC patients from 2011) were as follows:

- 165 to SVPR
- 121 to PPP schemes
- 30 to St Jeanne Antide, San Ġorg Preca and Santa Bernardetta Wards at MCH
- 25 to Government Community Homes
- One to Private Home; 13 to Own Home
- 50 deceased while at RHKG.

Any differences between the discharge outcomes in this LTC database and the actual 2011 discharge outcomes represent patients that did not appear on the LTC notification register. Reasons for this include either being already in the process beforehand or representing a readmission, thus appearing only once on the LTC database but more than once on the hospital discharge list. The average length of stay for LTC patients was 28.6 days for the initial rehabilitation phase (from admission to the notification of long-term decision) and an additional 49.2 days until discharged from RHKG.

Mater Dei Hospital Consultations

A total number of 2,406 consultation requests from MDH were dealt with in 2011. This represents a considerable increase of 628 consultations over the previous year. The majority of cases were referrals from the Department of Medicine (1364), Neuro-Medical Ward (138), Neuro-Surgical Ward (45), the Department of Orthopaedics (512) and the Department of Surgery (282).

All patient referrals from MDH were followed up until transferred or discharged. At the end of the year, there were 10 patients at MDH waiting to be transferred while another 37 patients were not being considered for transfer. 521 were discharged from MDH, while 263 were deceased while still awaiting transfer.

DAY HOSPITAL AND OUTPATIENTS SERVICES

The Outpatients department continued to function as two separate services of a Day Hospital and a Medical Outpatients from the time of migration to RHKG on 19 May 2010. The Day Hospital retained the 30-place Day Service by an interdisciplinary team to patients over the age of 60 years. A specialised Geriatrics Clinic was scheduled four days a week (each consultant holding a clinic on alternate weeks) where an average of six new cases and four follow-ups could be assessed. The Medical Outpatients was developed mainly for assessment of patients requiring solely the doctor's input, such as patients with HT, CHF, Hypercholesterolaemia, DM and those requiring extended medical follow-up. Consultant Geriatricians held sessions five days a week (each consultant attending every alternate week, and one additional clinic by one consultant). In August 2011, a Consultant Psychiatrist with a Special Interest in Geriatric Psychiatry started providing consultation service to the Day Hospital and to Inpatients. A weekly clinic was established on Thursday where patients requiring psychiatric review could be seen. As of 2010, the medical office started keeping a register of all referrals to Day Hospital and Medical Outpatients in order to keep track of waiting times. In all, there were 668 new case appointments given with the Consultant Geriatricians (n = 630) and the Consultant Psychiatrist (n = 38) in 2011. The average waiting time for a geriatrics assessment at the Day Hospital was 33.4 days. There were also a total of 2,861 follow-up appointments (861 at the Day Hospital, 36 by the Psychiatrist and 1,964 at the MOP).

TEACHING/TRAINING

As in previous years, RHKG continued to provide teaching services, consisting of clinical placements, tutorials and site visits for local students and overseas visitors at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Undergraduate students from all health care disciplines continued to attend regularly for tutorials and clinical placements. Postgraduate students participating in the long-term course in Geriatrics and Gerontology, organised by the University of Malta, also spent some time here. Participants of INIA's short-term courses continued to attend for site visits whilst doctors from RHKG took part in teaching sessions and workshops. A CPD programme for doctors organised by the postgraduate training coordinator for the Department of Geriatrics included case presentations, audits and reviews of the main geriatrics and rehabilitation curriculum topics.

NURSING SERVICES

As in previous years, the Nursing department continued to work on improving care practices to ensure quality care delivery through continuous review of its policies and procedures. The nursing management team reviewed and updated the Drug Administration policy, the policy for use of pressure relieving mattresses and the Waterlow Chart policy. The team also formulated and implemented various policies and procedures such as care of supra-pubic catheters, respiratory support through use of BIBAP machine, use of alternating pressure cushions, and a Blood Transfusion policy. Additionally, focus groups such as the Nutrition Committee, Infection Control and Wound Management teams have continued to evaluate specific areas of care.

Patients in the Day Hospital are followed up by the primary nurse while those in the MOP are consultant led. Patient attendance at the Day Hospital for 2011 was 8,154 compared to 8,114 in 2010, whilst at the Medical Outpatients, attendance for 2011 was 2,263 as against 1,306 in 2010.

The role of the Community Liaison Nurse is to ensure that patients are coping well in the community and to offer advice when required, thus preventing re-admission to the hospital and social collapse. There were 1,038 community visits, including 148 new cases compared to the 1,004 community visits and 210 new cases in 2010, resulting in an increase of 34 follow-up visits but a decrease in new cases of 62 when compared to 2010.

The Infection Control department is managed by an Infection Control Adviser complemented by team members who have been delegated specific infection control duties. During 2011, the Infection Control

Unit was notified of 163 cases of communicable diseases amongst patients at RHKG compared to the 152 cases reported in 2010. It is important to note that 140 out of the 163 cases notified were from patients admitted from MDH.

2011 was the first year following migration of Zammit Clapp Hospital to the RHKG where efforts to improve the nursing services could be consolidated. Two new wards were opened in May and August leading to an increase in bed capacity of 183 and 211 respectively. All part-time nursing aides were given a full-time post on the new wards while a number of nurses were seconded through Care of the Elderly to RHKG.

The Nursing department places a lot of importance on staff professional development. Educational opportunities were provided for nursing and nursing aides and other interdisciplinary team members through three study mornings dealing with preventing injury in health care setting, nutrition, dieting and weight control, and wound care management in addition to monthly presentations and demonstrations on a variety of topics.

Outcome measurements enable the hospital to continually measure how well the services and programmes offered are leading to the desired results. As in previous years, the outcome measurement indicators used included the Patient Discharge Questionnaire and the Barthel Index score:

- The Patient Discharge Questionnaire had a response rate of 45.6%, an improvement on the 42.34% in previous year. Analysis of the questionnaire shows a 95.6% satisfaction compared with 96.6% patient satisfaction rate in 2010. As in previous years, patients perceived greater improvement in their condition than relatives did i.e. 91.5 % of patients felt they had improved by discharge, while 61.7% of relatives perceived an improvement in their relative's condition, an increase of 56.7 % from 2010.
- The Barthel Index (BI) Scale is a simple index of independence to score the ability of a patient. The scale ranges from 0 for total dependency to 20 for maximum independence. The mean BI score on admission was 6.24 while the discharge score was 11.46, an improvement of 5.22 from the 4.24 improvement in 2010.

PHARMACY SERVICES

The Pharmacy Department is responsible for the procurement and distribution of drugs and medical devices within RHKG. 448 orders were placed at GHPS in 2011, the expenditure on the corresponding supplies totalling €528,378. An extensive topping-up service is in place for drugs on the wards. To complement this service, 7,652 repacks were done for drugs procured in bulk packs. Medical devices are supplied to the various departments against scheduled orders which totalled 728 in 2011. €527,275 worth of stock was distributed, and the clinical staff was provided with monthly reports on their department's expenditure. A total of 1,459 prescriptions were dispensed to hospital staff and to patients attending Day Hospital. Pharmacy staff verified the Certificates of Conformance for all oxygen supplied to RHKG. This included 30 liquefied oxygen tank refills (73,970kg), and 141 cylinders delivered to the various departments. The Influenza Vaccination Programme at RHKG was again coordinated by the Pharmacy department. 148 staff members and 291 patients were vaccinated in 2011.

Clinical Pharmacy services were provided on all of the seven wards. 1,498 patients had their drug histories checked through an interview following admission. A patient profile was kept for each and used to identify care issues and to document any interventions and subsequent changes made. An audit of these interventions was also carried out. Three key priorities for implementation were identified for future audit. Pharmacists participated in 622 interdisciplinary ward rounds and conferences. Counselling sessions were held with 960 patients and/or their carers on discharge. Each was given a discharge pack consisting of a seven-day supply of medications and an individualised medication information sheet. 697 applications for free drugs and medical devices were filled according to entitlement criteria. Weekly drug administration trolley checks by the Pharmacy staff on the wards involved 8,934 cross-checks of the individualised patient drug treatment with the corresponding ward prescription record sheet followed by their topping-up.

The ward emergency trolleys were inspected daily for any used drugs and topped-up accordingly. The drug inventory in the pharmacy and on all the wards was checked monthly for any expired items that needed replacement. An effort to reduce the cost of expired drugs and medical devices was deemed successful after cutting it down by 55% to €7,335 as compared to the previous year.

Pharmacy staff contributed towards the formulation of the Drug Administration Policy and the Medicines Storage Guidelines that were reviewed at RHKG in 2011. The department continued to develop the quality management system by drafting 11 SOPs for the Administration and Logistics Services within the Pharmacy. These are currently being tested for applicability prior to their implementation. The validation stage of their development involved a lot of intradepartmental staff meetings bringing their total to 36. After having implemented 17 SOPs for the Clinical Pharmacy services in 2010, audit tools were developed for seven of them and started being used to audit the works' processes. Performance appraisals of the Pharmacy staff were also carried out.

The department continued to function within various focus groups which operate within RHKG with the aim of improving the quality of care practices. As members, pharmacists participated in 12 Infection Control Committee meetings, 12 Wound Management Team meetings, and one Nutrition Committee meeting. They were also involved in activities held on Day Hospital for the patients and their carers during the Natural Falls Awareness Week and the Memory Class Programme. The Head of Pharmacy Services represented the department in 22 Heads of Services meetings, eight Steering Committee meetings, 17 interdepartmental meetings and nine meetings held outside of RHKG. Following the issue of an operating licence for the Pharmacy in 2009, the Medicines Authority conducted an official inspection of the premises in RHKG. All standards have been met and the licence was subsequently renewed.

SPEECH LANGUAGE UNIT

Throughout the year, 577 new clients were referred to the Speech Language Unit. 4,732 individual sessions were carried out – an increase of 935 sessions over 2010. Group sessions amounted to 25 with around 200 patients being targeted in groups.

Specific Objectives Set for 2011

Patient and administrative objectives were targeted throughout 2011 as follows:

- Use of standardised documentation to audit the SLP service for clinical outcomes;
- The setting up of Standard Operating Procedures for different clinical conditions;
- Restructuring of service delivery to make best use of HR in view of caseload increase;
- Active involvement in indirect clinical duties such as CPD activities (organisation and participation);
- Regular intra-disciplinary meetings to ensure team liaison, to discuss administrative and clinical issues as well as monitor progress of targets being implemented;
- To obtain, create and adapt the required equipment/materials needed by the SLP unit;
- To achieve a proper location for the Unit and an adequate location for service delivery.

Results/Achievements For 2011

Clinical Audit - A clinical audit for 2011 was carried out, the aim being to obtain a performance evaluation of the effectiveness of SLP clinical intervention. Information was systematically compiled through and extracted from the SLP IPCD. Apart from general data on patient stay, average age and most common medical and SLP diagnosis, this audit correlates data on patients' communication and swallowing abilities between date of first assessment and discharge date.

Role of Specialised Divisions, Standardised Intervention Programmes and SOPs - SLPs at RHKG form part of three of the specialised divisions within the SLD. Work was also initiated on standardised intervention programmes and SOPs for a number of clinical areas.

Restructuring of SLP Service Delivery - Every SLP was assigned approximately 40 beds (1½ wards each). However regular covering of wards was still necessary. DH services were restructured so that patients are followed in community clinics. Guidelines were set up to ensure smooth liaison between community SLPs and DH. DH/MOP patients who require urgent SLP input still benefit from an immediate SLP assessment and advice prior to being referred to the community. SLPs were also directly involved in the planning and organisation of the Dementia and Parkinsons Disease classes. New roles taken on by staff members (such as administrative roles and specialists' positions) have increased indirect client related duties to a total of 495 hours. Liaison with caregivers, staff and community SLP amounted to approximately 742hrs. Student supervision amounted to 122 hours. SLP Input is also being given in the Nutrition Committee as well as in the Social Activities Committee.

Clinical Placement: - Meetings were held by the Manager SLD with the objective of homogenising services across hospitals. A system of clinical placements was established whereby SLPs from MDH, RHKG and SVPR rotate across hospitals on a clinical placement.

CPD sessions for SLPs, other professionals (within and outside RHKG) were planned and delivered. Areas targeted include dysphagia (at ward level for nursing staff) and aphasia (workshops for SLPs). SLPs also attended several workshops organised by SLD. Two SLPs are following an MSc course and another SLP is following a clinical supervision course.

Speech and Language Pathology Activity Statistics

	<i>Accumulated 2010</i>	<i>Accumulated 2011</i>
Balance 1 Jan 2011/1 January 2012	95	132
Number of new cases referred to unit	584	577
Total cases	679	709
Discharges from RHKG during the year	454	490
Referrals to community or homes	93	150
Total balance on 31 December 2011	132	69
Number of booked/attended group sessions	1	24
Total number of clients in booked/attended groups	2	194
Number of booked individual sessions	3,797	4,732
Sessions cancelled	175	35
Home visits	8	7
Ward rounds, Ward Conferences and Meetings	332	389
Liaison with family/carers/community SLP	403 hrs	598 hrs
Liaison with staff	517 hrs	953 hrs
Intradepartmental meetings	9	13
Interdepartmental meetings	12	26
Other duties (in hours)		
CPD attended and delivered	380 hrs	498 hrs
Report writing and other indirect patient related duties	1,753 hrs	1,998 hrs
Meetings	583 hrs	525 hrs
Administration duties	560 hrs	1,137 hrs
Student supervision	140 hrs	122 hrs

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

The year 2011 presented several transitions and developments including opening of wards, expansion of services, recruitment and training of staff and procurement of new equipment to meet the new demands and changes in client population. Occupational Therapy (OT) was provided on all the wards, on the Day Hospital at RHKG, in the Outpatients department at SLH and in the community.

Inpatient Services

OT recommendations were made for the refurbishment of all the ward bathrooms and toilets, as well as dementia-friendly ward environments including signage, appropriate colour schemes and pictures/landmarks for orientation. A variety of rehabilitation and patient equipment was received this year. These included specialised wheelchairs e.g. tilt-in-space, lightweight and adjustable w/chairs (G7, Breezy relax, Breezy 300), a variety of pressure relief cushions, positioning and bathroom/shower equipment, a variable height motorised kitchen, rehab furniture and tools. It was decided that one of the ward therapy areas

would be converted into a rehabilitation flatlet to allow patients the experience of 'living at home'. Other ward therapy areas in the different wards were also upgraded and equipped for more efficient use of time and patient comfort.

Outpatient Services

At the outpatients OT Department, the number of seating assessments increased to 30 assessments (referrals from wards, outpatients and MDH), using the pressure mapping system. Joint sessions have been carried out between Occupational Therapy and Orthotics and Prosthetics Unit staff for common patients with regular attendance of the Occupational Therapy at the visiting prosthetic consultant's clinics. The demand for assessment for access arrangements for adolescents sitting for their MATSEC or for university exams increased this year (28 assessments in total). Patients referred to MDH Occupational Therapy services from the speciality wards were officially channelled to the outpatients Occupational Therapy services at RHKG due to the inability of Occupational Therapy MDH staff to cater for all the wards. This increased the number of referrals to outpatients.

Community Services

Home visits and community support services (instrumental home visits, work site visits and community skills training) were provided. A memorandum of understanding between the KNPD and the MHEC has been drawn up whereby OTs will provide services at the Independent Living Centre for patients requiring in-depth seating assessments, driving assessments and equipment. Patients from the DH, wards and outpatients are given an appointment and are accompanied by the therapists to the independent living centre.

Day Hospital Services

The Parkinson's and Memory team programmes were both provided in 2011. Input was also given during an educational programme for carers of persons with dementia. The OT department participated in the Falls Awareness Week by providing information and talks to clients and carers on the Day Hospital. Referrals for physical, cognitive and perceptual OT interventions were received.

Activity Analysis

At Inpatients, a total of 1,653 ward patients received OT intervention amounting to 32,450 sessions (62,547 units). The intervention also included 233 home visits and 196 family training sessions. The number of patients seen on the wards increased by approx 200 patients and was reflected in the number of treatment sessions which increased by 7,156 and the number of treatment units by 13,444. The number of home visits and family training sessions also increased which indicates that there were more patients that returned home.

At the Outpatients department, 394 patients attended OT sessions which amounted to 4,655 interventions (10,788 units). A total of 76 home visits (team and instrumental HVs) were carried out. The referrals increased by approx 100 patients but there was a higher turnover with 408 discharges as compared to 284 in the previous year. The Day Hospital OT department received a total of 416 patients which were provided with 6,390 sessions (12,293 units). 36 home visits were carried out and there was a drastic increase in group therapy interventions with a total of 152 group sessions for 1,117 patients (from wards and DH). On the DH, the total number of patients seen and referred remained constant but the treatment sessions offered increased as did the total direct units in spite of a decrease in one member of staff in this area. Administrative duties amounted to 27,784 units and include attendance at meetings, clinical programme development, continuing education, administrative tasks, coaching and mentoring, supervision and training of staff and students as well as PR activities.

ORTHOTICS AND PROSTHETICS UNIT

The Orthotics and Prosthetics Unit (OPU) at RHKG offers both orthotic and prosthetic services. Such services offer a specialist assessment and review, prescription, provision and maintenance of prosthetic limbs and externally applied devices (orthosis) used to modify the structural or functional characteristics of the neuromuscular and skeletal systems.

The main objectives for 2011 were to:

- develop a more comprehensive and effective management system
- enhance the quality of various services offered at OPU
- develop an effective team to accomplish OPU goals agreed upon during the beginning of 2011.

Activities

- In 2011, OPU received 1,853 referrals for orthotics: 208 referrals more than in 2010.
- Number of attendees at OPU was 4,879 compared to 3,117 attendees during 2010.
- 2,052 patients were seen during orthotics clinics. A total of 4,008 orthotic appointments were given.
- 242 patients were seen during prosthetic clinics. A total of 876 prosthetic appointments were given to these patients.
- A total of 33 patients were seen in wards either at RHKG or MDH.

Achievements during 2011

During 2011, a number of changes were implemented with the aim to enhance the service delivery at OPU. Two podiatrists started working from OPU, assessing patients who require insoles and diabetic footwear. A new foreign prosthetist started giving his service. In July 2011, three Orthotic and Prosthetic Technician trainees started their six-month training programme. Two of these trainees were sent abroad for training: two weeks at Otto Bock and another two weeks at RSL. Another podiatrist specialising in paediatrics started giving his service from OPU for children under 16 years old requiring insoles and/or footwear. From 1 August 2011, a new resident prosthetist/orthotist was given a one year contract to start giving both orthotic and prosthetic services to OPU. During November and December, OPU carried out a Patient Satisfaction Survey with the aim of helping the OPU management to identify areas within the unit which require improvement.

PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICE

Inpatients

Physiotherapy Services were provided to all admissions in line with goals set on initial assessment and ongoing evaluation in collaboration with the inter-professional team. During the year under review 1,498 new admissions received a total of 67,111 treatment sessions (as compared to 56,349 sessions in 2010). Additionally 224 group therapy classes were carried out with inpatients (total number of attendances: 2,151). An on-call service was available to inpatients after normal hours of duty on a daily basis.

Day Hospital and Medical Outpatients

515 new patients were referred to day hospital physiotherapy services from consultant-led daily clinics, medical outpatients and ward discharges. These patients received a total of 9,359 treatment sessions (as compared to 5,871 sessions delivered in 2010). A specialised interdisciplinary Parkinson's Class programme organised by this department was held between September and December (11 sessions). 11 patients and their main carers attended this programme. This service is currently under evaluation for impact and development. A total of 178 home-visits, 140 family training sessions and 2,119 family contacts were carried out at inpatients and day hospital.

Activities

As in previous years, activities involved ongoing service evaluation; policy development; induction training in moving and handling; supervision of local and foreign students; attendance to CPD events, organisation of awareness campaigns namely Move For Health and Falls Awareness Week in collaboration with Age UK, and delivery of a study morning open to all healthcare workers entitled Preventing injury in the workplace. Physiotherapists at RHKG are actively involved in various committees such as the hospital's Steering Committee for Practice Development, the Infection control team, the National Amputee Task Force, the Council of Professions Supplementary to Medicine, and Professional Association assignments, namely the Mapping Process outlining the future of physiotherapy in Malta and the CPD Advisory Board.

Day Hospital Report		Inpatients Data Report	
	Total		Total
Patients on Treatment	2,526	New Patients	1,498
Treatment Sessions	9,359	Treatment Sessions	67,111
Cancellations	865	Patients for Follow-up	503
Treatment not Advised	24	DH Follow-up	147
Pending Sessions	397	SLH Follow-up	231
Clinic Assessments	254	SVPR Follow-up	126
New Patients	515	GGH Follow-up	1
Day Clinics	269	Home Visits	177
Ward Follow-ups	105	Family Training Sessions	140
Medical Outpatients	125	Family Contacts	1,571
Other	16	Discharges	477

Amputee, Neuro and General Rehabilitation Outpatients

As in previous years, there was an increase in the number of newly referred patients, as well as the number of treatments. Physiotherapists from the Amputee Rehabilitation Team gave a significant, continuous contribution to the planning and running of the Visiting Prosthetist Clinics organised this year. The team was and still is very closely involved in the changes taking place in OPU and the amputee and prosthetic rehabilitation services.

The total number of new referrals to combined Amputee, Neuro and General Rehabilitation Outpatients for 2011 was 740 new patients, most of them from MDH. This shows an increase of approximately 5% over 2010. The total number of treatments delivered in 2011 was 9,445 sessions (8,973 sessions in 2010). The significant increase in treatment sessions was due to: the increase in new referrals; higher quality treatment focused to better address patient needs; and due partly to the more demanding nature of patients being discharged from MDH, necessitating more outpatient treatment sessions to achieve effective re-integration into the community.

A total of 142 domiciliary visits were performed for patients with amputation or with neurological conditions. Most of these visits were planned together with other health professionals and include school and workplace visits, in line with developing a comprehensive outreach service to support rehabilitation programmes focused on real patient needs in the community.

A total of 3,670 hospital transport bookings were made to transport patients to and fro for treatment.

Neuro Rehabilitation and General Rehabilitation

Patients with neurological and general mobility deficits are seen by this unit. This caseload involves lengthy treatment times as most patients require hands-on motor re-education and adaptive rehabilitation. Treatment may also involve spouses, families, and other health professionals from RHKG and other hospitals, with ongoing collaboration with other agencies. During 2011, there were 556 new patients

referred to this unit (542 in 2010). 401 of these were neurologically impaired patients, the other 155 were General Rehab cases.

The number of patients attending for review purposes was significant, following an in-house workshop and review of rehabilitation and discharge planning criteria. Patients on treatment in January 2011 stood at 678 as compared to 461 on treatment in December.

Source of Referrals

- The majority of referrals (474) arrived from MDH wards and clinics.
- A 20% increase in new referrals from Community.
- A 30% increase of referrals from RHKG, mostly from M8.

Communication with referring physicians/health professionals from other hospitals and the community follows a procedure and is maintained by report writing, telephone contact as well as occasional meetings when appropriate.

Spinal Cord Injury

In 2011 there were five new SCI referrals, and four patients who successfully completed their rehabilitation programme.

Congenital Disability

Patients born with congenital disability are transferred to adult rehabilitation upon reaching 14 years of age. Although the number may be small, the input can be intensive and wide-ranging. The parents are closely involved in their management, as are the facilitators, teachers, and other health professionals. Most of these patients are retained for periodical reviews, keeping in mind that although stable, their condition is subject to change with growing and the ageing of parents as well. They usually needed special equipment re-assessment and possible prescription at least once this year.

General Rehabilitation

A total of 155 new referrals could be classified as General Rehabilitation cases. These are patients who developed post morbidity mobility difficulties following a stay in MDH due to medical or surgical intervention. Outpatient physiotherapy intervention to these patients may well be avoiding unnecessary stay in MDH with repeated costly admissions or preventing application to residential homes.

Multi Disciplinary Approach

Multi disciplinary case conferences for patients with complex needs were held regularly three times weekly in the Physiotherapy Outpatients department. The team is made up of a rehabilitation consultant, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers, the patient and his/her carers, and others, as needed. These organised regular meetings are part and parcel of a comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation service.

Outreach Service

Home visits formed an integral part of the rehabilitation programme of a number of patients. The number of collaborative visits performed with occupational therapists and social workers from RHKG remained constant. Visits this year were again extended to schools, places of work and recreational areas, as needed.

CPD Activities

- ESF ILC project - Special Wheelchair and Seating Assessment Malta Course - A 7-day course about wheelchair and seating was attended by some members of staff.
- First Aid courses - All staff members attended first aid courses.

- ILC ESF project conference - most members of staff attended the closure event of this project implemented by KNPD.
- ESF ILC project- Ottobock seminar - attended by senior members of staff.
- ESF ILC Project – 3-week visit by senior physiotherapist to Oxford Enablement Centre, UK.
- Other CPD courses - several other courses were attended in Malta.

Amputee Rehabilitation Unit

The Amputee Rehabilitation Unit is the main amputee rehabilitation service in Malta and Gozo, both for those patients needing and those not needing prosthetic rehabilitation. The service is wide-ranging - from assessment, care and treatment of the stump, care of the intact leg, assessment for prosthesis and prosthetic prescription, to prosthetic rehabilitation and re-integration, to periodical review of the rehabilitated amputee patient after the rehabilitation programme is complete.

- *Amputee Figures:* There were a total of 264 new referrals to ARU. Most referrals were for patients discharged home from MDH. While the number of whole limb amputations remained the same, there was a significant increase in the number of TMT and toe amputations. The number of treatments was 3,900 in 2011 (3,467 in 2010), the significant increase being due to the markedly increased input in OPU - 798 sessions in 2011 (383 in 2010), spread over six Prosthetic clinics at OPU. The number of Domiciliary Outreach Visits was 61 (45 in 2010), in line with meeting patient needs in their own environment.
- *Femurette:* This year a femurette was purchased. This early mobility aid was used for the first time locally and has proved to be very useful in the rehabilitation of transfemoral and bilateral amputees.
- *Education Booklet for Amputee Patients:* The Amputee Rehab Team worked in conjunction with physiotherapists from surgical wards, MDH and occupational therapists from surgical wards, MDH and the OT educational committee to publish a detailed information booklet for persons with major amputation.
- *Amputee Task Force and National Amputee Database:* Physiotherapists from the Amputee Rehabilitation Unit were instrumental in organising other meetings, and ensuring the management of the Amputee Database.

Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Outpatient Department

552 new patients were treated in the pool at Rehabilitation hospital during 2011. This translated into approx 9,880 sessions. Six classes weekly of six patients each, as well as an average 18 daily individual patients sessions are offered every week by two fixed members of staff. An additional weekly class of six patients and an average eight patients are seen on Tuesday by the 3rd rotating staff member. As in previous years, the range of patients presently benefiting from the hydrotherapy pool are almost all musculoskeletal (approx 85%) with few rheumatologic cases (15%). In strong contrast to previous years, referrals were mainly from Outpatients Rheumatology, Back, Amputees, Neuro gym and General Musculoskeletal divisions (90%), and only few directly from medical firms (10%). Treatment is either exclusively application of hydrotherapy for patients or in conjunction with land therapy (during or after). There were no KGH inpatient referrals in 2011.

Back Unit

- Formal assessment of patients referred for back pain including for hydrotherapy-classification into treatment protocols; distributed into groups if possible.
- Classes being taught for those patients classified as needing posture re-education, core stability and strengthening .
- Hydrotherapy classes for chronic back pain including complex patients who could not manage land class.
- Individual treatments given as per assessment findings, which include manual/or electrotherapy. Some patients attend group sessions and also manual/electrotherapy. Patients from other musculoskeletal physiotherapists also attend group or individual sessions.

- Patients are referred on within the MDT as necessary and/or discharged within a set period of time (if possible). Certain patients (within specific criteria) are seen for longer periods of time and may graduate from manual therapy to classes or hydrotherapy.
- The practical part of the back study concluded and is now being prepared for publication.

Rheumatology Unit

- Services provided:
 - Management of rheumatology specific conditions and her soft tissue injuries
 - General Back Exercise Classes(Land)
 - Fibromyalgia Classes (Pool)
 - Educational Role (SLH/MDH) – physiotherapy students and prevocational students
- Activities/Meetings/Talks: Regular meetings with rheumatology consultants *vis-a-vis*:
 - Ankylosing Spondylitis Classes/Record keeping/Difficult case
 - Higher Specialist Orientation programmes
 - Physiotherapy and the Arthritic Knee (ARAM activity May 2011)

Orthopaedic Unit

	2010	2011
Patients Referred	1,609	2,043
Treatments	9,704	9,860

	Patients Referred	
	2010	2011
Total Knee Replacement	280	458
Total Hip Replacement	90	111
Arthroscopies	306	596
Anterior Cruciate Ligament Repair	58	73
Manipulation Under Anaesthesia	46	44
Removal of Metal	31	30
Other	122	156
Single Fractures	560	497
Multiple Fractures	62	49
Sports	54	29
Total	1,609	2,043

- The above figures show a constant increase in the number of new patients being referred. There was a drastic increase since May 2011, since more elective surgery started being carried out. This will continue to increase since operating theatres started functioning, even on Saturdays now. In fact, the major increase were in TKRs and Arthroscopies which increased by 100%.
- Space is always a major issue within the Orthopaedic Gym. In fact, for the unit to function effectively and safely, it is estimated that an area of around 500m² is required. At the moment there is no privacy when treating patients and relatives are not allowed to enter treatment areas, unless really necessary.
- 25% of the new patients referred were seen by the musculoskeletal staff, the reasons being because of space and staff required. All patients referred to the Orthopaedic unit are classified as urgent and thus all receive an appointment within one week.

Pain Unit

In 2011 the number of patients referred was 125, a decrease of 68 over 2010, mainly due to the interaction which exists with consultants during the pain clinic. A number of patients are being assessed by the physiotherapists during the clinic itself. These are given an exercise programme and discharged. Patients suffering from chronic low back pain form the majority of patients that are referred to this unit. In 2011, a number of patients with Osteoarthritis knees were also referred. These were mainly patients over 65 years of age who were not eligible for surgery.

	Sports Injury	Back Unit	General					Ortho Unit	Pain Unit	Rheum. Unit	Total	
			Fractures	Soft Tissue		Neck	OA					Others
				Priority	Non Priority							
Total	23	1,552	669	809	2,116	335	195	22	2,016	136	617	8,490

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

The Social Work Service within the RHKG aims to build a reciprocal trusting relationship with client/s (the patient and their family). When patients are admitted to RHKG, social workers carry out an in-depth assessment with clients to identify their expectations, wishes, concerns, challenges and needs, by enabling and empowering clients to resolve those issues which can be resolved; help the families to come to terms with the presenting situation, bridge their differences and look for new/alternative ways of coping; encouraging the carers to participate in the care process, accept support and look for support; understand that their own health and wellbeing is also important; helping clients plan for short, medium and long-term needs regarding the care process, various community services, possible changes and/or alternative living arrangements.

Throughout 2011, social workers intervened with 1,179 out of 1,445 inpatient clients, of whom 869 were new clients. The majority of cases (284 cases) were problematic but were resolved. It is interesting to note that 1,034 inpatient clients prior to hospitalisation lived in their own home. However, only 510 clients returned to their own home, as some clients returned to live with their carers or opted for residential care. The latter is reflected by the number of application forms for Government Residential Care and the number of Long-Term Care Reports completed (229 and 321 respectively).

Throughout 2011, social workers were involved in 223 home visits and 174 family training sessions. The Social Work Service received 99 referrals from the Day Hospital, Medical, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Outpatients.

DR NATASHA AZZOPARDI MUSCAT
Chief Medical Officer

Financial Management and Control Division

FINANCE CONTROL AND MONITORING UNIT

The Financial Control and Monitoring Unit (FMCU), within the Financial Management and Control Division, is responsible for the overall finance matters at the MHEC. The main responsibilities of the FMCU cover Payments, Revenue, Salaries, Financial Monitoring and Reporting, and Travel.

Payments

During the year under review, MHEC Centralised Accounts Section which resided at St Luke's Hospital underwent major restructuring. MHEC's Financial Governance structure, based on responsibility accounting principles, was created and followed during 2011. MHEC moved from a centralised accounts financial model to controlled decentralised units within its major service provider entities. A centralised accounts office was set up at Head Office to cater for the budget responsibilities of the non-service providers and/or support units falling under the responsibility of the Permanent Secretary and the Directors General. The same department also provided financial support for the offices of the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary. Consequently, this facilitated transparency, instilled further internal control mechanisms and increased accountability. This restructuring also resulted in a more efficient payment process and better reporting and accountability structures internally amongst budget holders. The total recurrent expenditure payments processed through the FMCU, covering also payments effected and batched by Central Procurement Unit, MDH and SPBH were as follows:

Operational Payments	2011	2010
	€	€
Utilities	8,590,182.07	7,829,874.84
Materials and Supplies	3,484,341.28	4,750,276.41
Repair and Upkeep	957,467.73	1,621,766.53
Rent	507,942.94	475,721.90
International Memberships	68,481.60	87,183.91
Office Services	402,412.31	491,060.95
Transport	842,312.48	896,692.66
Travel	437,591.25	366,115.58
Information Services	172,449.53	21,493.55
Contractual Services	17,434,565.57	16,203,539.07
Professional Services	1,197,301.23	1,093,420.62
Training	307,196.21	299,823.70
Hospitality	67,330.29	11,157.85
Incidental Expenses	39,349.38	50,626.82
Improvements to Property	0.00	4,900.46
Equipment	5,480.38	36,533.00
Total	34,514,404.25	34,240,187.85

Note: Data as per DAS (13.01.2012)

A comparative analysis of operational payments processed in 2011, to those effected during 2010 under the same expense category, shows a slight increase in expenditure covering mainly the processing of old dues outstanding from prior years. Statements received by suppliers were essentially reconciled and settled in full where the liability was recognised. Apart from this recurrent expenditure, FMCU also processed payments pertaining to various Programmes and Initiatives, which altogether amounted to a material sum of €91,715,063 (2010: €80,426,290). Other payments that were deemed necessary were also

affected from the various operational and special purpose below-the-line accounts. The total balance of the below-the-line accounts as at end of 2011 amounted to €5,201,035 (2010: €5,367,728). In line with the MHEC decentralised financial strategy, during December 2011, FMCU also liaised with MITA to create separate datasets for Primary Health Care and MDH. The objective was to increase financial autonomy and administrative efficiency when processing payments effected by both entities through Treasury.

Revenue

During the year under review, the Centralised Revenue Section was also re-engineered. Similar to the payment structure, each department/cost centre or health care entity in question was made responsible for the collection of its own revenue, as from 2012. This initiative has proved very beneficial and resulted in reduction of arrears in revenue by each entity. MHEC entities which generate revenue are the Entitlement Unit (*at Head Office*), Primary Health Care, SPBH, MDH and the Public Health Directorate. The revenue collected during 2011 from all the Health Directorates was as follows:

Source of Revenue	2011	2010
	€	€
Miscellaneous Licences	26,794	23,335
Attest. Cert. Permits etc	26,377	28,659
Miscellaneous Fees	3,454	3,791
Services to Third Parties	-	9,751
Ambulance/Funeral Exp	6,829	5,651
Sale of Medicines	325,572	237,048
Hospital Fees	175,456	258,896
Cleaning of Grave Sites	6,162	7,777
Miscellaneous Receipts	758,449	660,792
Total	1,329,092	1,235,700

Note: Data as per DAS (13.01.2012)

FMCU also provided technical expertise to the Entitlement Section, falling under the remit of the Chief Medical Officer. In fact, a financial, operational and technical systems' review of the embedded IT system and operational processes was carried out to ensure that financial regulations are adhered to. Old dues by Member States covering the service provision to foreign patients' treated locally were also delved into, analysed, reconciled and greatly reduced.

Salaries

Although non-service provider entities' salaries are computed in Gozo, FMCU has full responsibility of personal emoluments reconciliation including salaries computed within service provider entities like MDH, SPBH and PCH all of which have dedicated payroll units. Also, FMCU is the body responsible for the ongoing personal emoluments reporting to the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment (MFEI) and Treasury including explanation of variances from budget and deviations from previous years. During 2011, the salaries expenditure was as follows:

	2011	2010
	€	€
Holders of Political Office	82,228	0
Staff - Salaries and Wages	85,563,793	83,961,287
Bonus	1,313,854	1,298,876
Income Supplement	1,183,306	1,186,213
Social Security Contributions	7,041,160	7,591,088
Allowances	35,451,371	36,003,513
Overtime	4,558,158	5,031,344
Total	135,193,870	135,072,322

Note: Data as per DAS (13.01.2012)

Financial Monitoring and Reporting

FMCU is also responsible for the compilation of various reports and returns submitted to MHEC senior management, the MFEI, the Treasury Department and to the National Audit Office. These reports focus on recurrent and capital expenditure, revenue, below-the-line accounts, accruals, debtors and creditors, overtime and other financial matters.

Another FMCU responsibility is the collating of answers for parliamentary questions of a financial nature. FMCU liaises with the different departments and entities to consolidate financial replies, so that these can be duly presented in Parliament.

FMCU is also responsible for the preparation of the consolidated budget of the MHEC, as well as for the subsequent monitoring of the trends of recurrent and capital expenditure during the operational financial year. Moreover FMCU's team of financial experts, who now reside within the various health service provider entities, together provide the financial expertise required and assist the CEOs and/or officials/directors responsible to provide the required service within budget.

Travel

The Travel Bureau within the FMCU is responsible for the travel arrangements and for ensuring that the policies set in the Public Service Management Code are adhered to. During 2011, FMCU carried out a restructuring exercise within MHEC's travel desk and managed to close off well over 700 travel claims which were back log and/or unsettled claims from previous years. Also, an additional 367 travel cases costing €433,465 were processed during 2011. There has been an increase equivalent to 15% (€56,475) when compared to the previous year's expenditure (€376,990). The majority of these cases (72%) were conferences in connection with the European Commission, Council and Presidency. Other conferences to which MHEC participated were those organised by WHO, HOPE and training to professionals.

Finance: Mater Dei Hospital (MDH)

Treasury Management

During 2011, MDH was allocated a substantial €134m recurrent budget and in view of the ever increasing operational demands management managed to:

- take advantage where possible of the maximum credit period allowed for payments to contracted suppliers/service providers;
- utilise cash balances available in the below-the-line account. During 2011, circa €525,000 of these funds were used to invest in, mostly, capital assets;
- fully utilise the €2.3 million fund allocated for the purposes of reducing waiting lists;
- utilise funds better by moving funds between votes, identifying in the process excess funds in some votes and transferring them to the depleted votes. This measure was adopted in line with MFEI guidelines and protocol.

In the end, practically all available funds were utilised including the previously mentioned amount from the below-the-line account. As expected however, the year ended with a much increased creditor value (especially where contracted service providers are concerned).

Accounting and Reporting

During 2011, two very important outputs were registered:

- The full set of financial statements covering the year 2010. These accounts are on a departmental basis allowing further development to be made as to accountability/reporting from within those quarters;
- The System of Health Accounts for 2010 on a trial basis. This deliverable is a first for Malta and will help the country to move out of the unwarranted category of 'Non Participating Countries' with the

OECD and Eurostat. This result is particularly important as the EU is currently working on a Regulation aimed at defaulters.

The inputting of accounting data for 2011 is in full swing and the aim is to issue the 2011 financial statements by the end of the first quarter of 2012.

During 2011, the Accounts Section processed 11,458 different payments to suppliers and staff (in relation to CPE/CPDs) and raised 7,092 local purchase orders to suppliers. All these were inputted into both DAS and the Access Dimensions accounting systems, as the section is still running on the two systems in parallel.

Billing/Revenue/Debtors

Early in the year, a new Coordinator joined the Section. The staff at this Section was also augmented further through restructuring at Central Accounts Head Office and at other sections of the MDH Finance Directorate. For the first time, the Section now has a special sub-unit charged with debtors recording and chasing. The challenge of space at the MDH Billing Office was also ameliorated.

Following an enhancement of the iSoft Billing functionality, the A&E Reception staff started inputting foreign patient details directly into the hospital patient administration system (PAS). Previously, patient details were put down in writing on a form which would then be referred for inputting into the system by the Central Billing Office. The ensuing problems of illegibility, incomplete or lost forms and delays in data update in the system have thus been addressed.

During the latter months of 2011, the Debtors Sub Unit was also tasked with coordinating the introduction and maintenance of the system of recording of long term care patients housed at MDH and liaising with the Department of Social Security/MITA for the relevant deductions to be effected from pensions. This, following the amendment of the relevant Legal Notice with such a system became effective as from the 1 December 2011.

During the early months of 2011, it was ensured that all debtors recording and reporting was as comprehensive as possible. Thus, older 2005 and previous balances regarding patient treatment bills at St Luke's Hospital were also taken over by MDH, similarly the older balances, with regard to overpayments of salaries and legal expenses. These previously were handled by the Head Office Accounts Section at G'Mangia. By end of April 2011, all such older debtor balancers were integrated within MDH lists. The total figure outstanding at that time was €1,788,018. At the end of the year, the balance was of €1,767,652. During 2011, Patient Treatment Bills (i.e. excluding cash sales) amounted to €603,948, billing for pharmaceutical sales €91,816.76, and miscellaneous billing €43,351.50.

Cost Efficiency

During the year, a number of efficiency gains measures originally proposed by MDH management started being implemented. A number of measures related to streamlining of costs on security related activities were planned and implemented. Similar measures were taken in the activity of cleaning with a number of government cleaners not being replaced upon resignation, retirement or transfers out of MDH. Other measures included the cutting down on dinners to already discharged patients in the morning and rationalisation on ordered food from business areas. The envisaged award of tender and new contract for the maintenance of MDH did not materialise during 2011 and is not envisaged to happen before the end of the 1st quarter of 2012. This meant that the projected increase in maintenance costs for 2011 did not occur.

Others

As usual the Directorate participated in the annual budgeting exercise with a number of submissions which were included in the Ministry's submissions to the MFEI. The 2012 funds allocation sees a small increase

in the recurrent funds allocated to the hospital. During the year, the Finance Directorate at MDH submitted numerous reports on a monthly basis, these being related to cash flows, contractual services, recurrent/capital updates, debtors ageing amongst others. Other submissions related to the drafting of replies to the various parliamentary questions related to the financial matters of MDH.

Systems

The preparations for the rolling out of the Dakinet System continued. The first phase relates to the enhancement of the personnel modules. Requirements were reviewed and testing of proposed new facilities was made by the Personnel Section. Following this testing, various features were pinpointed for improvement or even missing features.

During the year, Clinicom PAS and Patient Billing applications were enhanced in order to allow A&E Reception to enter directly onto the system deposits, issue invoices and prepare receipts. Previously, these were made manually. User screens were updated to improve the eligibility determination process. With this update, billing information regarding lab tests and medical imaging can now be taken directly from the electronic databases RIS and LIS. Information regarding the treatment value to eligible patients is now being filed and can be accessed separately.

Finance: Mount Carmel Hospital (MCH)

During the year, MFEI increased MCH budget allocation by a further €1 million, in support of the increased mental health services within the community in general and the ever increasing demand for same service. The significant changes in expenditure noticed in MCH in 2011 were mainly due to the following:

- The increase in salaries is minimal during 2011, as it represents the increase in the cost of living adjustment that was relatively less than the one in previous years. This was compensated by salary savings since 12 government employees retired during the year and were not replaced through the Civil Service.
- The higher utility costs are due to ever increasing fuel prices, high water and electricity rates and expanded Community Mental Health Services.
- The increase in material and supplies is due to the expansion of the Community Mental Health Services; inflation and a lower figure in the comparative year 2010, which included one-off stock adjustments that decreased the overall figure.
- Increased repair and upkeep is due to the ever increasing need for maintenance in a hospital whose structures are older than one hundred years old.
- The increased rent is due to the rent of new community centres and community residences.
- The increased contractual obligations are due to increased number of contractor employees to replace retiring government employees and increased rates of contracts for cleaning services, care-working services and nursing services.

Capital and Refurbishment Projects

During 2011, MCH kept on embarking on capital and refurbishment projects to upgrade its facilities and relatively old structures. The following projects were completed during the year:

- *Replacement of a passenger lift at Male Ward 2* – required in order to conform to health and safety regulations with a total investment of €37,000;
- *Upgrading of administration areas* – various areas, particularly the main reception and the surrounding areas with an investment of €8,000;
- *Upgrading of the Juvenile Ward* - painting and modernising with a total investment of €10,000;
- *Upgrading of the Female Ward 1* - upgraded with further security measures at a total investment of €15,000;
- *Upgrading of the Psychology Department* - conversion of a unit that was entirely structured to accommodate an open floor set-up to a modern set-up that has room for private counselling clinics.

This will improve the quality of the service delivered to the patients particularly that related to the patient's privacy. The total investment adds up to €15,000;

- *Networking outside the Hospital main gate* – installation of network cabling and equipment to allow the premises that are located outside the Hospital's main gate to have access to the Government IT network. This project totalled an investment of €75,000.
- *The procurement of the first cluster of emergency generators* – during the year, the process of installing emergency generators at the Hospital was approved and the procurement process of the first batch costing €95,000 was concluded. The installation and commissioning of such generators will take place during 2012. The remaining clusters are expected to be procured during 2012 with an estimated cost of €470,000;
- *Refurbishment of the Female Wards 3A and 3B* - this project commenced in 2010 and works with a value of €65,000 continued during this year. However, this project was kept on hold for the time being due to the need for a re-scoping of the entire works that need to be carried out.
- *Construction of the Female Dual Diagnosis Unit* – During the year, the process to construct this unit kicked off. This project refers to the construction of a new female forensic ward which offers appropriate and dignified quarters to patients referred to MCH from the Corradino Correctional Facility. Currently, MCH does not have a designated ward for such female patients. Consequently these patients are being treated in a small two bedded unit which is not intended for this purpose with consequential professional, ethical and security issues which are of a significant concern to the Management. Works are expected to commence in 2012 with a total investment of €550,000.

Budget Holders

Each Nursing Officer or Head of Section of the Mental Health Services is assigned a budget every year, which enables funds management in that unit according to pre-set thresholds. This system promotes empowerment, decentralisation, efficiency and cost savings. Any savings made by each cost centre during a year will be carried forward to the subsequent year. The basis of the budget allocation is the cost per patient, adding on particular needs or foreseeable expenditure for the year in question. During 2011, the total cost centre allocation and savings/deficit were as follows:

	2011	2010
	€	€
Total cost centre allocation	980,000	930,000
Total cost centre expenditure	965,000	830,000
Savings to be carried forward	15,000	110,000

During 2011, there were two new cost centres classified as budget holders, these being the Floriana Day Centre and the Psychologist Department. This system proved to be very successful over the years, as it empowers budget holders and enables a greater degree of flexibility, which at the end materialises into savings. For this reason, the budget holders will increase further during 2012 to include all the Community Health Centres, the Illegal Immigrants Ward; Physiotherapy Department and the Learning Disability and Training Unit.

Internal Procedures

The Management kept on monitoring and strengthening the internal control structures, in order to mitigate risks and prohibit cost overruns. During the year, the following took place:

- release of the first manual of the Standard Operating Procedures for the Finance Department, which documents all the internal procedures and control processes in all sections that fall under the responsibility of the Finance Department;
- liaison with the Central Procurement and Supplies unit (CPSU) to enhance the procurement process with increased transparency, equal treatment and a fair procurement process to the market. This will in turn provide better pricing on items and enhanced competition;

- computation of various ratios based on activity of the various items of operational materials consumed by the various sections of the Hospital and Community which will enhance comparability and cost control;
- allocation of the daily kitchen costs to the respective cost centre in order to increase accountability, improved cost allocation and enhanced control over the main kitchen consumption; and
- the Hospital continued to increase its revenue generating capability by promoting its facilities to the general public such as the renting of dedicated space for exhibitions and the renting of the Lecture Centre and the Community Theatre which brought about to a practically all year-round bookings.

IT Software and Infrastructure

During 2011, the Management enhanced its IT software particularly:

- *Pharmacy dispensing system:* The system, introduced in November 2010, promotes stock control, facilitates data inputting and stock movement. During 2011, this was upgraded to improve and increase the functionalities and to improve certain critical internal controls;
- *Fixed assets register:* Following the capturing of all the assets registered on the Hospital and Community, the filtering and inputting process commenced so that in 2012 the proper asset management through the Fixed Asset Register will start to take place.
- *New chart of accounts and upgrade of the Access Dimensions:* The upgrading of the chart of accounts and the upgraded version of the Access Dimension were implemented as from 1 January 2011. This brought about better data capturing, improved reporting structures and enhanced controls.

Finance: Sir Paul Boffa Hospital (SPBH)

The hospital activity has shown an increase both with regard to inpatient and outpatients when compared to the previous year. This can be seen from the table below.

	2010	2011	Movement
Wards			
Bed Days	7,490	9,666	2,176
Occupancy	53%	59%	6%
No of patients	1,544	1,969	425
OutPatients			
Radiotherapy	14,134	15,766	1,632
Cytotoxic	10,758	13,566	2,808
Derma	26,412	26,637	225

Wards

The number of patient bed days increased by 2,176 over the previous year. The overall occupancy stands at 59% showing an increase of 6% over last year. The number of patients increased by 425, from 1,544 to 1,969. The average length of stay is highest in Derma at 30 days and lowest in the Oncology wards Male 3.1 days and Females 2.8 days. Palliative is 11.4 days.

Radiotherapy Department

Radiotherapy department saw the number of sessions increase by 1,632 to 15,766, which reflect a 12% increase.

Cytotoxic Reconstitution

Cytotoxic reconstitution increased by 2,808 to 13,566 in 2011, being a 26% increase over 2010.

Derma outpatients

Overall, the number of patients remained stable with over 26,000, reflecting a 1% increase.

Costs

Total cost for 2011, excluding drugs, was €7.47 million, out of which €6.25 million was payroll.

Treatment Planning Station

Government has in the last quarter of 2011 invested in the procurement of a number of Treatment Planning Stations at a cost of €2.3 million which will be supported by the necessary training to employees. This investment in oncology shows Government's commitment in this area.

Staff Training

12 nurses had a course in palliative care by Royal Marsden, two lecturers were brought over to Malta, whilst two pharmacists and two physiotherapists were sent for courses overseas.

Pharmacy Stock

During the year, the orders were reduced from every four months to every two months, thus reducing the stock levels.

Accounts System

SPBH's management team together with FMCU concentrated on the implementation of robust financial and stock inventory management systems in order to increase accountability and measure clinical as well as financial outcomes. The IT system is envisaged to be implemented fully by mid 2012. This will cover the Financials, stores (main, stationery, pharmacy), pharmacy dispensing and Cytotoxic unit.

Staff Training for Nurses

A staff training programme covering both nurses and other disciplines in view of the need to improve practices and in preparation for the new oncology centre is being prepared.

Finance: Rehabilitation Hospital Karin Grech (RHKG)

The RHKG has been expanding ever since it opened in 2007. Because of the increased demand for rehab beds, wards were added and long term cases migrated to MCH in December 2009. In 2010, Zammit Clapp Hospital (ZCH) closed its doors and patients were transferred to RHKG after a new Day Hospital and Medical outpatients were fitted out at RHKG. These developments created many challenges. One new ward was opened in April 2011 and another in August 2011. The new wards necessitated major refurbishment of unused areas, which in turn meant an injection of capital investment. From 2008 to 2011, €2.2 million were invested in refurbishment at the hospital, with €650,000 being invested in 2011 alone. Wards were gutted, rewired, new bathrooms were fitted as well as new fire doors for safety. New furniture was bought as well as new fittings such as doors and grab rails. A new service lift was installed.

The new wards meant that the recurrent expenditure of 2011 had to accommodate the expansion. Naturally the expenditure was projected as higher than that of the year 2010. The actual cost of an average ward is approximately €990,667.

What the hospital actually incurred however was an extra €364,910, over 2010 expenditure and €214,277 of this added expenditure was made on medical equipment. This saving was mainly due to the shutting down of a Thin Fuel Oil boiler and its substitution with electricity. The saving in thin fuel oil was

€217,846 in a year. Other savings were made in salaries. Contract care workers were employed to cut down on overtime and rosters were amended for efficiency.

Finance: Department for the Elderly and Community Care

The Department for the Elderly and Community Care continued to deliver its services and improve over last year's with a tighter control over expenditure. It managed to offer the same level of service while also trying to contain expenses. The increase in utility rates, operational costs and contractual services added to the challenge of meeting the ever increasing demand for elderly and long term beds.

- Utilities – An increase in rates for water, electricity and fuel were registered in 2011.
- Materials and supplies – There is an indication that tighter controls are needed in this area. Moreover, a stock control system is being introduced to monitor usage and value of inventory at the end of a period.
- Transport – A number of costly repairs were carried out on an aging fleet of vehicles. The Department purchased five new vehicles which are more fuel efficient and will incur less repair costs over the older ones which were scrapped.
- Contractual services – Higher rates were applicable in 2011 for caring, cleaning and nursing services over 2010, coupled with the increased number of contractor employees to replace retiring government employees in the nursing and caring sectors.
- Incontinence service – There was an increase in actual costs over those budgeted, which was due to the rising number of beneficiaries entitled to the service.

Capital Projects

During 2011, the Department continued in its commitment to improve its services and upgrade its facilities. The following prominent projects were completed during 2011:

- Supply and installation of curtain rails, curtains and bed spreads at SVPR and at the Homes for the Elderly at a total cost of €80,000;
- Refurbishment of panoramic lift at Floriana Home for an improved access for residents and visitors at a cost of €13,000;
- Various refurbishment works and installation of equipment at the Homes for the Elderly amounting to €80,000;
- The opening of a new day centre at Msida, in collaboration with the Msida Local Council, with the Department supplying the qualified social assistants and operational costs, making the Department's initial expenditure of €4,000;
- The commencement of the refurbishment of Zammit Clapp Hospital, which will be converted into a retirement home accommodating around 100 residents with an initial expenditure during 2011 of €204,000. Meanwhile, the Department together with the Department of Contracts issued a tender for the management of the Zammit Clapp Hospital Residential Home;
- The purchase of five vehicles to facilitate transport services for the Department at a cost of €58,000
- The continued upgrading and refurbishment of SVPR with works and new equipment purchased during 2011 amounting to €370,000;
- The purchase of a low floor bus for the transportation of residents during their outings for a price of €15,340.

Programmes and Initiatives

During 2011, the Department continued with its provision of a number of programmes and initiatives to ameliorate health services to the community. The following is an overview of expenditure for the salient programmes and initiatives during 2011:

- *Welfare initiatives for the elderly* – This programme provides for the Telecare Service and the Handyman Services for the elderly and persons with special needs. Expenditure for this programme in 2011 amounted to €22,000 (2010 - €18,000);
- *Home care help service scheme* – this initiative caters for the provision of social assistants to provide for the needs of the elderly in the communities. During 2011, there were 645 social assistants, who were

then incorporated with the Department's payroll. The cost of this service during the year amounted to €5,600,000 (2010 - €5,646,000);

- *Meals on wheels* – this programme caters for the provision of meals to the elderly at their homes, with a total annual budget of €50,000;
- *Community Homes and Day Centres* – this programme provides day shelters for the elderly at their residential locality. During 2011 a new Day Centre was opened in Msida in mid July 2011, bringing the total number of such Centres to 18. The cost for the running of these centres amounted to €58,900 (2010 - €58,000), excluding all salaries;
- *Incontinence service* – a programme that provides for subsidising the cost of nappies used by the elderly and persons with special needs. In 2011, the programme contributed over €400,000 towards these costs (2010 - €230,000);
- *Outreach initiative* – this programme provides for the availability of nurses and physiotherapists to the elderly at their own homes. This programme started in 2010 and continues to be improved. 2011 saw an expenditure of €280,000 (2010 - €85,000);
- *Welfare Committee* – this programme continues to provide a number of services to retirement homes and to the residents at these homes. The annual budget of €3,800,000 continues to contribute funds for the upgrading and refurbishment of retirement homes, equipment and the provision of supplies, such as nappies and incontinence sheets, to the elderly. These funds also contribute to the provision of medical nursing services to the community which amounts to about €1.6million per annum.

Internal Controls

The Department continued with the strengthening of its system of internal control to ensure the completeness, accuracy and timeliness of the financial records and also to provide for surveillance over budgets to minimise cost overruns. During the year, the Department:

- installed a regular management reporting system identifying costs per cost centres;
- introduced standard operating procedures for the procurement of goods and services in line with procurement regulations;
- integrated the above procedures with the newly set up Central Procurement and Supplies Unit to enhance the procurement process with increased transparency, equal treatment and a fair procurement process to the market. This will in turn, provide better pricing on items and enhanced competition due to better economies of scale;
- revised the procedures for the recording of financial data, including a revision of the chart of accounts and cost allocation to improve data capture and reporting structures;
- introduced a system of identifying costs per cost centre and the costing of the individual service being provided.

PROCUREMENT

Central Procurement Unit

The Central Procurement and Supplies Unit (CPSU) was set up on 1 August 2011 to handle all procurement and supplies related to MHEC which account on average budgetary expenditure of circa €250 million per annum. The vision of this unit is to be an integrated, motivated organisation within a multi-disciplinary network, working together with all departments to achieve the seamless procurement of value-added supplies, works and services throughout the government healthcare system, based on the principles of fairness, transparency and non-discrimination between economic operators and which promotes best value for money. The pre-set targets and objectives of CPSU are as follows:

- provide an efficient and effective service which directly benefits patients throughout the government healthcare system;
- provide a service that is professional with the highest level of ethics and integrity;
- ensure the way in which things are done comply with organisational policies and strategy, guidelines and legal obligations;

- have the necessary structures in place so that public procurement is carried out on the principles of fairness, transparency and non-discrimination between economic operators as set out in the Public Procurement Regulations;
- work closely with clients and end-users;
- raise the profile of the organisation at all levels;
- make sure ‘best value for money’ is promoted, by ascertaining that materials/works/services are available; in the right quantity, at the right time, of the right quality, at the right place, from the right supplier, at the right cost and at a minimum inventory and operating investment;
- reduce/eliminate the out of stock/lack of supplies issues of pharmaceutical and medical devices.

Strategic Plan Being Adopted to Achieve Objectives

Harmonisation and Integration of the Procurement and Supply Value Chain:

- a uniform stock management system;
- roll-out of the Stock Information Management System across all appropriate healthcare entities;
- establish the business and functional specifications for a robust integrated and consolidated procurement framework.

Inter-Communications between the Stakeholders:

- avoid mistrust, suspicion, turf protection, double guessing;
- appoint a blameless attitude;
- turn mistake made into lessons to be learnt;
- set up a Supply Chain Management Committee.

Re-dimensioning the Tendering Process Chain with Key Performance Targets:

- re-designed in a manner that establishes firm Key Performance Targets for each part of the process chain;
- avoid holding high stock levels for those items that have a medium to high turnover;
- triggering of a product replenishment carried out sufficiently early for this high level of stock;
- high stock levels result in further increased costs stemming from pilferages, expiry of products;
- Key Performance Target of a number of working days from the Procurement Process trigger, Acknowledge receipt, Preparation of Tender Dossier, Review of Tender, Clarification with Entities, to the need for a tender to the forwarding of the tender document to the Department of Contracts (DOC);
- Key Performance Indicators should be introduced for the pre-publication and pre-award phases of the tendering process so that each phase of a tender process is tightly managed including a preset agreement on durations for activities which are not directly under the control of this Organisation so as to measure the procurement cycle and setup the safety stock levels;
- establish a base line delivery time of 12 weeks subject that suppliers will enter into formal agreements to maintain a stock base in Malta;
- the evaluation criteria of price should include cost of the supply chain in order to incentivise competition amongst suppliers to seek reduced delivery times when competing for a bid;
- establish the volumes required for every tender that it publishes, as well as how the volumes are anticipated to be supplied on a best estimate basis so that the suppliers are provided with information that will allow them to plan more effectively and in doing so provide a higher quality of service to the Healthcare system.

Terms of Award – Eliminate Administrative Burdens and Excessive Costs:

- re-assess the application of a one year contract term award as the award of choice;
- establish whether the objectives sought can be met by the adoption of different tender instruments;
- reducing the administrative and financial burdens;
- foreign centrally located warehouse could also be considered in order to group order and reduce on the freight charges;
- reduce financial and administrative burdens on short term contracts by strategic procurement instruments.

Tender Instruments Applied:

- new innovative procurement instruments applied for the procurement of pharmaceuticals and consumable medical supplies; Framework Agreement, Dynamic Procurement System, Reverse Auctioning and E-Procurement.
- sourcing strategy according to the product where-in Framework Agreements are applied for the sourcing of bio-similar, branded and generic pharmaceuticals; Reverse Auctioning and Dynamic Procurement Systems are applied for the sourcing of high priced pharmaceuticals (non-bio-similar), low volume generics and branded pharmaceuticals and consumable medical supplies and traditional procurement instruments for the sourcing of medical equipment.
- a four-year term for the issuance of mini price competitions amongst the selected suppliers during the term of the Agreement.
- estimated that such a mode of procurement would generate a financial saving of circa 10-30%, whilst the saving on the tendering cycle tends to range from 25-30%.
- setting up of the contracts, draw up of Policies and Procedures, Determining Phasing of Items to be issued with the respective procurement instrument.
- a project team is to be set-up with representatives from the DOC, the Malta Information Technology Agency and this new Organisation to launch a number of Reverse Auctioning/E-Procurement pilots tests

Registration of Pharmaceuticals with the Malta Medicines Authority:

- unregistered products in the submission of bids by suppliers further delays the procurement process;
- establishing as a minimum submission criteria for a bid to be evaluated to have met all eligible criteria, the obligation that the tenderer is to present the appropriate certification by the MMA that the process of registration has been initiated.

Evaluation Process of Tenders – Clinical/Technical champions:

- re-designed around strategic sourcing on the one hand where-in this function will be responsible for the life cycle of a tender and for the management of the evaluation process and on the other hand around clinical/technical procurement specialists
- wherein this function will be responsible for the professional clinical input required for evaluation – with such knowledge to be strengthened by clinical/technical professionals from the different disciplines on an exception basis where items under procurement are of a certain degree of complexity and where further specialist knowledge is warranted.

Appeals of Tender Awards and Dedicated Review Board:

- MHEC constitutes approximately 50% of the work that flows into the DOC.
- MHEC recommends the following:
 - (i) that an *ad hoc* Public Contracts Review Board be set up to solely focus on pharmaceutical and medical supplies.
 - (ii) re-aligning the DOC in a manner that a MHEC portfolio management function is set up within it to streamline, fast track and smoothen communications between this new organisation and the Contracts Department.
 - (iii) it is not in the public interest to have health tenders treated as other tenders. Apart from the financial consequences that such delays give rise to, there is the consequential and more damaging impact, on the discontinuity of supply in the distribution of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies.

Delivery Periods, Just in Time and Top-up Stock Management:

- a base delivery time frame of 12 weeks with regards to pharmaceuticals and medical materials on the condition that suppliers will enter into a formal agreement with the Organisation that they will maintain a stock base in Malta.
- price formula established for evaluation include the cost to the Organisation with regards storage, distribution, and other related logistics and incentivise in order to incentivise suppliers to seek delivery periods that improve on the base line period in order to secure a competitive edge on other suppliers.

- establishes the volumes required and how the volumes are anticipated to be supplied on a best estimate basis so that the suppliers are provided with information that will allow them to plan more effectively and in doing so provide a higher quality of service.

Market Challenges:

- Government should continue with discussions with the suppliers, many of which are represented by both the Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise and the General Retailers and Traders Union.
- Ongoing discussion can help bring down the walls of mistrust and suspicion that exists between the parties and therefore secure an environment that can lead to the resolution of such issues.
- Government should also hold discussions, on an ongoing basis, with the manufacturers directly. Such discussions could result in securing the manufacturers' support to pressure their respective suppliers to adopt business norms.

Proposed Organisational Reform

The present Procurement and Supplies Unit is broken down so that reform is rendered manageable to the extent possible and the reform is done externally to the operational process. Management is also working towards having the responsibilities for the procurement of all high volume pharmaceutical products, bulk medical supplies and medical equipment assigned to the new organisation, whilst the purchasing and budgetary responsibility devolved over to the entity.

It is aimed to set up a high powered team tasked to negotiate with suppliers, to reach agreement within the shortest timeframe possible, a pricing mechanism for the pharmaceuticals that would be based on a formula of reference pricing and mechanisms for price review so that the distribution function would be hived-off to the entity or private sector.

The present Procurement and Supplies Unit is being re-engineered and re-structured into the following core business functions:

- Strategic Sourcing Management;
- Clinical/Technical Assessment Management;
- Supply and Distribution Chain Management;
- Knowledge and Market Management;
- Support Services Management.

Central Storage and Supplies Unit

The CSU currently stores and distributes medical items including medicines, medical devices (disposable and non-disposable) and foods for special diets. The various CPSU clients include the institutional health dispensaries and medical devices centres in government hospitals, the primary health care dispensaries in health centres and other clinics, Corradino Correctional Facility, Detox Centre and the Pharmacy of Your Choice (POYC) Scheme. In addition, stores also supply voluminous renal fluids to CAPD patients eligible for home deliveries and total parenteral nutrition (TPNS) to eligible patients. The CPSU stores are located at Marsa, G'Mangia and Madliena. Goods from suppliers are received, checked, quarantined, released and stored. Orders from the various clients are received, prepared, checked and distributed. Departmental transport is supplemented by the use of leased vans whenever necessary. The following table shows the number of goods received and issued by stores during 2011.

Goods REC/D				Goods Issued				
	<i>G'Mangia Med</i>	<i>G'Mangia Equip</i>	<i>Marsa Med</i>	<i>Marsa Equip</i>	<i>G'Mangia</i>	<i>Marsa Med</i>	<i>Marsa Equip</i>	<i>Madliena</i>
Total	3,930	12,003	1,217	551	20,153	12,634	7,904	9,581

Office of the Responsible Person

The Office of the Responsible Person (RPO) is mainly concerned with quality issues, such as drug alerts, complaints and recalls of pharmaceuticals and medical devices, as well as regulatory affairs related to the procurement, storage and distribution of medical products by CPSU.

Quality Assurance

Quality standards for RP duties are managed through an approved set of operating procedures, which shall now be updated to comprise all pharmaceutical wholesale dealership activity at the CPSU. Internal GDP audits were carried out in April and June 2011, whilst training of staff on GDP procedure and SOPs was carried out during August 2011, however there is need to take into consideration ongoing revision in the light of major reform/transition at CPSU. There were 5,128 drug consignments received at stores and forwarded to the RP office for quality control (for which each batch was individually examined). 34% of these were directly imported from foreign suppliers (mainly UK wholesalers). During the year, a total of 158 Quality Alerts and Safety Reports on drugs or medical devices were received (including products presently under investigation), of which 25 resulted in product recalls and/or corrective action.

Regulatory Affairs

The RPO is responsible for overseeing the licensing process of medicinals, suppliers and clients, as well as the maintaining and assisting to achieve the required standards in Pharmaceutical Wholesale Dealership for CPSU operating licence. There were about 30% of medicine consignments not registered locally, of which 68 medicines (excluding non-formulary Parenteral Nutrition products) are not licensed in the country of manufacture (Specials). During 2011, a variation to the Pharmaceutical Wholesale Dealership Licence was submitted for change in licensee, and subsequent to the scheduled GDP Inspection by the Medicines Authority (held 26 – 28 July 2011), the operating licence for CPSU was renewed on 29 September, subject to necessary works and upgrades on storage facilities. The department subsequently issued a call and requested approval for lease of stores in November 2011, which will address temperature control issues until a new facility is completed for centralisation of CPSU operations.

Contracts Section

The function of the Contracts Section at GHPS involves various processes whereby contracts for the purchase of Drugs, Medical Equipment (together with prosthetics and orthotics) and General Items are awarded following requests for offers made either through tender or through calls for quotations. The preparatory process of contracts prior to the eventual issue of awards is quite elaborate and depends on the technical advice submitted by various specifiers and users. Evaluation reports in respect of tenders are discussed and adjudicated at Committee level. Evaluation reports are then referred to the Departmental Contracts Committee or General Contracts Committee (as the case requires) for subsequent award or otherwise. The following table indicates the number, type and value of the tenders and direct orders generated by GHPS/CPSU for the procurement of drugs, medical devices and general items during 2011:

Contracts Issued during 2011		
Number Issued by Category	Total number issued	726
	Drugs	429
	Equipment	294
	General	3
Number Issued through	Treasury (Contracts' Dept)	82
	Departmental	640
	D/O via tender	3
Cost by Category	Drugs	€31,097,639.17
	Equipment	€14,686,967.37
	General	€211,685.92
	Total Cost	€45,996,292.46

Tenders

Calls for tenders are issued either through the Department of Contracts for items whose projected value is €120,000 and over; and through departmental tenders whenever the projected value is below €120,000. Both procedures are effected following public calls for offers advertised in the Government Gazette and respective websites.

Calls for Quotations

Relevant calls for quotations are published in the Government Gazette and the GHPS website, thus providing potential suppliers with the facility to download the necessary documentation. These are divided under Drugs and Medical Devices. Calls for quotations are effected under two main areas: through Government Gazette, and on the ex-GHPS/CPSU website; through calls for the submission of Proforma Invoices (PFIs) from known suppliers.

Statistical information regarding tenders, quotations and proforma invoices processed:

Tenders issued via Contracts Dept.	45
GPS Departmental tenders	1,085
Government Gazette quotations	652
Proforma Invoices	3,237

Medicines Evaluation Section [CPSU-MHEC]

The Medicines Evaluation Section is responsible for the following activities:

- Technical Evaluation of quotes received via tenders and PFIs
- Participation in the Committee Meeting for the award of tenders
- Technical checking of LAs prior to approval by CEO
- Liaising with DPPM regarding specification issues, new items and deletion of items
- Responsibilities of the DDA Store
- Financial approval of PFIs up to €1,747 (medicinals and equipment).

Technical Evaluation of quotes - For 2011, the Medicines Evaluation Section evaluated 3,756 PFIs and 3,396 tenders.

Issues tackled with DPPM regarding specifications - These generally involve issues regarding specifications and issues regarding problems with sources of supply. For 2011, a total of 651 issues were tackled.

DDA Store Responsibilities - The DDA Store responsibilities include stock purchase of DDA drugs, applying for import permits for importing of DDAs from UK wholesalers to Malta, processing requests for DDAs and storage of DDAs. During the year, 2,790 requests were received, 110 orders from agents were received and 2,642 issues were processed.

Approvals processed (Medicines and Equipment) - 2,727 approvals were processed in 2011.

Year 2011	Technical Evaluation		DDA Store Responsibilities			Issues regarding Specifications	Approvals
	Pfis	Tenders	Requested	Received	Issued		
Total	3,756	3,396	2,790	110	2,642	651	2,727

Management Accounts

The Management Accounts Section is responsible for maintaining the financial records of CPSU. The following risk areas have been identified, some of which have been addressed:

- Supplier invoices used to be checked when the invoice would be due for payment. This process has now addressed and all supplier invoices are checked for correct pricing and receipt of goods, before the financial records are updated. The supplier is advised accordingly if any discrepancies are noted. Penalties for late delivery and incorrect computation of VAT and/or price differences are determined immediately.
- Invoices for the supply of services are posted to the purchase ledger rather than reflected only in DAS when paid.
- The major creditor personal accounts were reconciled to supplier statements. No major discrepancies were noted although the suppliers are not acknowledging deductions made in respect of late delivery and are claiming interest for late payment. CPSU does not acknowledge interest incurred for late payments. Previously, creditor statements were never reconciled to financial records.
- Other creditor statements are reconciled on receipt and any unpaid invoices are being tackled when these come to our knowledge. Suppliers who are purporting to have supplied goods and/or services are not recognised in the financial records and were referred to the previous Director of GHPS.
- Accounting for charges which relate to stock purchases are being accounted when incurred.
- The correct VAT accounting and analysis, the VAT rates that should be applied by reference to the TARIC code, has not yet been addressed.
- Reporting to MFEI (B2 & B3), together with better stock control systems including procurement and final consumption reports are considered to be of paramount importance, if CPSU has to address the out of stock situation, be efficient in managing stock and improve its procurement and purchasing cycles. This area is being addressed by seeing to better IT and intelligent software systems.

Other Matters - Central Procurement Unit

Procurement Officers Assigned to MHEC Entities - In the light of the latest reform within the MHEC, in November 2011, the CPSU appointed a procurement liaising officer to each entity within MHEC. Agreed protocols have been set with the respective entities on how procurement of supplies, services and works ranging across all financial thresholds is to be carried out.

Procurement Officers for Medical Devices and Medicinal Products - As from October 2011, a distinction has been made between the procurement of medical devices and medicinal products, whereby a particular procurement officer no longer caters for a mixture of both. Procurement officers have each been assigned to either procure a set of medical devices/equipment or to procure a set of medicinal products.

Communication with MHEC Entities - A number of meetings were held with MHEC entities for CPSU to explain and discuss the modus operandi for procurement of supplies, services or works.

Communication with Chamber of Commerce (CoC) - During the last quarter, monthly meetings were held between CPSU and CoC, where various issues are discussed and improved relating to tendering and contractual conditions. As a result of these meetings, various changes were made to the tender dossier templates. The changes applied aim to avoid the occurrences of cancellation of tenders against futile reasons such 'no submission of samples' where it is possible of a bidder to submit a sample during evaluation stage rather than at bidding stage. Furthermore, changes being applied to contractual agreement aim to decrease the instances where CPSU avails to out of stock situations.

E-Procurement - In collaboration with the DOC during 2011, CPSU embarked on implementing E-Procurement. CPSU personnel started to attend training sessions on the use of the Electronic Public Procurement System (EPPS) in September 2011. Further internal meetings between CPSU and DOC were held in order to discuss the best way forward. In December, CPSU issued its first pilot electronic tender for which the submission of offers is due to elapse on 25 January 2012. Whilst CPSU should experience the evaluation process of this pilot e-tender and the eventual award, further e-tenders are being compiled, thus reducing the administrative burden on both bidders and CPSU personnel.

Tender Dossier Templates for Medicinal Products and Medical Devices - With the participation of various personnel within CPSU and DOC, complaints received from bidders, end users and CPSU personnel themselves with regard to past tender dossiers were discussed and various changes were introduced.

Tender Dossier Templates for Non-Medicinal Supplies, Services and Works - Templates for departmental tender dossiers were set and revised in line with the latest updates provided by DOC.

Publication of Departmental Tenders - CPSU established a standard operating procedure for MHEC Departmental Tenders to be issued from a single centre. Implementation of this standard operating procedure commenced in December 2011 and will continue in the first quarter of 2012.

Assignment of Evaluation Committees and Setting of Evaluation Committee Meetings - Improvements were also introduced in assigning tender evaluation committees. For Medical Devices and Medicinal Products, Chairpersons are determined by CEO (Procurement and Supplies). The role of chairperson is not assigned to the same person any longer for all tenders issued for the supply of Medical Devices and Medicinal Products. Respective Procurement Officers are assigned with the role of Secretaries to the Evaluation Committees. Members of the Evaluation Committees are assigned by CEOs/Head of Departments or their delegates for the entities where supplies in question are consumed most. For tenders for the provision of non medical supplies, services or works, Committee Chairpersons are assigned by DG (Financial Management and Control) whereas Secretaries are assigned by CEO (Procurement and Supplies) Members are then assigned by the CEO/Head of Department requesting the supply, service or works. All evaluations are being carried out through Evaluation Committee meetings for which all constituents are present.

Adapting from one-year Contract Agreements to three-year Contract Agreements - In order to benefit from economies of scale, whilst reducing administrative burden at CPSU, an exercise was carried out to determine for which supplies the purchase prices during the past three years had a standard deviation greater than one. For these identified supplies, CPSU shall proceed with setting three-year period contracts instead of one-year period contracts.

Negotiated Procedures for Proprietary Items - Another exercise being carried out by CPSU for medical devices and medicinal products is that of determining supplies which are of a proprietary nature and for which the issuance of tenders through open procedures is not feasible. CPSU is embarking on procuring such supplies through negotiated procedures, thus diminishing the time frame to set a contract agreement whilst negotiating a better contractual price.

Introduction of Focal Point – Procurement Flow System - In view of the volumes of requests processed by CPSU, so as to improve on the efficiency and effectiveness of CPSU, it has been felt necessary to move away from handling requests in a manual manner and move to receiving and handling requests through an information system. CPSU will have a demo of such information system during the first weeks of January. Consequently, CPSU will proceed with having this information system gradually applied for receiving and managing requests for supplies, services and works. The Focal Point shall provide CPSU with monitoring and statistical data.

Logistics Section

The Section has achieved the utmost flexibility and responsiveness to the dynamic change in conditions and demands of the hospital with the limited resources available, by continuously restructuring and adapting work procedures to be resilient to the desired service level whilst simultaneously be customer focused and constantly increase efficiency and effectiveness for catering a consistent service. The activities described below depicts the performance deployed to re-engineering of the Section's work structures and new operational procedures for the proliferation of salient management practices, striving together towards service enhancement whilst applying a holistic approach to cost reduction and simultaneously rendering a value added service to its clients.

Training

- Two seminars were organised to explain compliance issues to EU directives on medical devices to all potential adjudicators within MDH and CPSU personnel. This section also proposed recommendations of how CPSU and MDH should share responsibilities to ensure all purchased devices conform to CE complians requirements for inclusion in tender inception stage.
- Training for staff pertaining to Logistics and Supplies, was organised to demonstrate and enable the understanding and recognising of new items transferred from conjoint to disposable store.
- Communication and team building training for the Logistics personnel was focused on a practical approach programme specifically designed to help this team to perform a better job.

Others

Harmonisation of Codes and Descriptions of Disposable and Conjoint items – So as to have a uniform coding system across the government supply chain for traceability purposes, the section embarked on an intensive task to change the MDH in-house established codes to Sage codes, whilst concurrently revised description of conjoint and disposable items and removed any trade names that were commercially illicit to retain. This changeover was implemented on 10 April, primarily to enhance traceability of medical devices for patients' safety whilst simultaneously improve materials management and audit trail of such devices. In all, 353 disposable items, plus 1,682 conjoint items, were revised, edited, and inserted in the database so as to harmonise codes and description between MDH user, stores and CPSU. During this change over 36 conjoint items which were highly in demand were transferred from conjoint to disposable store on top-up basis.

Special Items – In an effort to harmonise codes and description of special items between users CPSU and the Supply department, the Logistics department so far created coding and uniform description for 922 items and these were included in database for uniformity within the supply chain. This exercise should be finalised in the near future.

Restructuring of the Supplies Department – To be in line with Materials Management and Logistics strategy for enhanced and effective service within the hospital service, the management of the Logistics and Supplies department compiled and are implementing a plan to re-engineer the Supplies department. The aim is to restructure operations and amalgamate resources to ferrite out cost creating structures for ensuring effectual performance. The revamping of new operational procedures strive towards a more efficient service whilst simultaneously apply a holistic approach to cost reduction with the aim to make this restructuring a success story.

Restructuring General Store (GS) – Following the amalgamation of GS MDH and GS G'Mangia, the management of the Logistics and Supplies department embarked in an active role to scrutinise resources, cost creating structures and operational processes so as to reduce costs whilst simultaneously erect operational procedures for more efficient and effective performance, enhance materials management and strengthen control mechanisms. It is intended to also ensure that everyone is working within timely scheduled synchronised activities whilst utilising capacity, assets and resources to the full to make certain that the are achieving more with less resources plus effect timely deliveries to customers.

Purchase of ready to feed feeds – This department conducted a study covering six paediatric wards making use of normal baby feed (for 0 to six months babies). Following a cost benefit analysis, it transpired that it is more cost effective to purchase ready to feed feeds than to buy tinned powder milk and prepare with conventional means. Estimated annual consumption for ready to feed feeds was calculated and after approval from all stake holders a tender was processed.

Establishing quota templates for general stores cleaning and stationery items – Following one to one meetings with over 200 cost centres, around 400 quota templates were established for both cleaning and stationery items. To set these initial parameters, the average consumption of two year historical data was

examined to establish the appropriate quota for each item in liaising or with the approval of the officer in charge of respective cost centre.

Mayor incident trolleys – Following the political unrest in neighbouring countries, nine mayor incident trolleys and nine chest drain boxes were prepared for such eventualities. Total cost for devices procured to replenish these trolleys amounted to €15,000. Trolleys are now located in major disaster store whilst continuous monitoring of expired dates is conducted by this section.

Libya – Coordinated the supply and delivery of various surplus medicines, infusion, devices and dressings from CPSU stores and MDH respectively to IgoAid.

UDI Workshop – Participated in the 4th Unique Device Identification workshop in Brussels. The prime objective of UDI is to increase patient safety, thus in the interest of patient safety against a background of globalisation it is desirable to address traceability of medical devices at a global level. It is anticipated that UDI system will be the globally accepted source for positive identification of medical devices.

Other Work performed by this Department

- Performed quarterly reviews to Disposable, Provisions and GS quotas for all cost centres.
- Participated in the planning and implementation of the CPR exchange tray roll out system in all Medical, Surgical, Orthopaedic and Urology wards.
- Post assessment of 102 inspections held throughout the year.

To achieve a significant difference from those prevailed in the past, and embark on a new paradigm of leaner methods of operation and enhanced customers value, invest in technology is needed, as this is the most important enabling tool for planning and control and to make possible salient logistics functions improve the quality of service being rendered. A comprehensive tender document has been articulated for the Smart Cabinets - Theatre Stock Management System with the help and valuable input of several experts in the field. It is earmarked that such a system should create a more dynamic structure, to enable continuous monitoring, control and to keep abreast of the changing requirements and trends of this catalyst hospital environment.

National Blood Transfusion Services (NBTS)

The main events that highlighted 2011 were:

- the significant increase in the utilisation of blood products and consequently in the supply of blood products to hospitals;
- the commencement of irradiation of blood and platelets as a new product;
- validating washed red cells as a new product and subsequent staff training;
- finalisation of tender documents for the refurbishment of the blood establishment, published on 30/12/2011;
- procurement and validating of paediatric red cell aliquotting;
- participation in improving efficiency through implementation of Lean Sigma four principles. This involved a visit and reports with recommendations from a team of experts;
- participation in an external informal audit by a team of German auditors from Paul Ehrlich Institute and the German Red Cross;
- training of staff as internal blood bank auditors;
- finalising the accounting, procurement and stock management IT system which should be fully operational in 2012;
- finalising tender for Document Management system, awaiting financial approval for submission;
- continuous work on developing and submitting URS for e Progesa (Blood bank IT system) for eventual procurement;
- continuous improvement in the quality system operational at the blood bank;

- finalising and issuing tender for NAT testing for West Nile Virus and Chikungunya with an estimated capital expenditure of €814,000. Training of staff for the same NAT testing with the participation of a contracted consultant.
- procurement of bacterial testing in-house which is pending validation;
- continuous upgrading of equipment and systems in use for the routine procurement, testing and processing of blood and blood products;
- continuous participation and active involvement in international fora, including EU Commission, European Blood Alliance (as executive board member), Council of Europe and International Society of Blood Transfusion;
- encouraging post graduate staff training, five are proceeding at Masters Level in Transfusion Science and one is pursuing a PhD.

Blood Donation				
Year	Callers	Whole Blood	Platelets	Total Donations
2010	19,524	14,548	548	15,096
2011	22,217	16,485	475	16,960
Variance	+2,693	+1,937	-73	+1,864

There is a very significant increase of approximately 13% over the previous year. The number of single donor platelets slightly decreased but this was much more than made up for by the production of pooled platelet concentrates.

PHARMACY OF YOUR CHOICE

The POYC Unit was set up in December 2007, with the intent to introduce and sustain the POYC Scheme nationwide. The POYC Scheme is one of Government's initiatives, so that through the MHEC, it continues to promote patient-centric reforms for the benefit of the patients. In July 2007, Government, together with the General Retailers' and Traders' Union (GRTU) and the Chamber of Pharmacists (MCoP) as representatives of the private pharmacists, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch the Pharmacy of Your Choice Scheme within the local community. The fundamental aim behind the POYC Scheme is to facilitate a more comfortable access to the Government's free pharmaceutical service¹³ by shifting this service from the Health Centres' pharmacies to the patients' residence – to any community pharmacy of the patients' own choice. The added value of the POYC Scheme is intended to eliminate the long waiting and queuing times spent at the Health Centres for this service and simultaneously gain its beneficiaries a prompter and more personalised pharmaceutical service in respect of information, advice and delivery.

The POYC Scheme Trajectory

The POYC Scheme was launched as a pilot project towards the end of December 2007. Following circa a two-year¹⁴ temporary pause, the POYC Scheme expansion (rollout) was resumed in July 2010, with the inclusion of Gozo *in toto*. During the year under review, the POYC Scheme was extended further to another eight localities in Malta; these included B'Kara and St Venera (in February) and Paola, Fgura, Vittoriosa, Cospicua, Senglea and Kalkara (in October). The 2011 expansions also incorporated an additional 30 community pharmacies, bringing the overall total of community pharmacies participating in the POYC Scheme to 129. The B'Kara rollout meant that all the localities previously served through the Health Centre

¹³ Government's Free Pharmaceutical Service is available to all those patients who fall under Government's policy or legislation regulating the entitlement for free pharmaceutical services.

¹⁴ The POYC Scheme rollout was temporarily suspended in July 2008, so that the pilot project would undergo an intensive evaluation and consolidation exercise to assess the Scheme's overall outcome since its introduction in December 2007. It is to be highlighted that although the rollout was temporarily suspended, the POYC service delivery remained operational within all the areas that the POYC Scheme had started its operations.

pharmacies of Mosta, Gzira and B'Kara were now being covered by the POYC Scheme, and therefore it was also opportune to suspend the pharmaceutical service from these points to ensure a more efficient and effective management of Government's available resources. In the meantime, the pharmacy within the GGH suspended its service to the 9,350 POYC Scheme participating patients. Consequently, as at December 2011, the POYC Scheme covered the northern part of the Island including all Gozo, the majority of the central localities and, it also initiated its pathway towards the southern regions.

Indeed, as at December 2011, the POYC Scheme was spread over 47 different localities (37 in Malta and 10 in Gozo). There were 129 pharmacies participating in the Scheme (111 in Malta and 18 in Gozo), while the total number of patients registered with the POYC Scheme amounted to 65,110. This reflects an increase of 18,435 patients over the previous year. The table hereunder outlines a detailed overview of the POYC Scheme's expansion and trajectory to-date, together with the number of pharmacies in each locality and the number of patients registered within each locality.

POYC Scheme Rollout Month	Locality	No of Pharmacies	Registered Patients as at end 2011
December 2007	Gharghur	2	613
	Mġarr	1	721
January 2008	Mellieha	3	2,088
February 2008	Naxxar	4	2,590
April 2008	St Paul's Bay	2	1,264
	Qawra	3	1,133
	Buġibba	1	828
	Mosta	7	5,178
	Rabat	3	3,340
May 2008	Dingli	1	969
	Bahrija	1	203
	Mtarfa	2	413
May 2008	Swieqi	2	883
	St Andrew's	2	662
	Ta' Ġiormi	1	522
	Pembroke	2	568
	Paceville	1	146
	Ta' Xbiex	2	473
	Msida	4	2,213
June 2008	St Julian's	3	940
	San Ġwann	4	2,775
	Gzira	4	2,250
	Attard	4	2,098
July 2008	Pieta/G'Mangia	4	1,392
	Balzan	2	1,054
	Lija	2	882
	Fleur de Lys	1	278
Total		38	17,136
July 2010 (Resumption of Roll Out)	Fontana	1	157
	Ghajnsielem	2	683
	Kercem	1	474
	Marsalforn	1	324
	Nadur	2	1,153
	Qala	1	556
	Sannat	1	179
	Victoria	5	3,681
	Xaghra	2	999
	Xewkija	2	1,144
October 2010	Sliema	12	3,509
	Iklin	2	588
February 2011	B'Kara	11	4,862
	St Venera	4	1,875
October 2011	Cospicua	2	1,577
	Fgura	3	1,971

	Kalkara	1	579
	Paola	5	2,498
	Senglea	2	698
June 2008	Vittoriosa	1	577
Total		14	7,900

Inactive Patients*	556
Grand Total	65,110

* Patients registered with the POYC Scheme automatically fall as 'Inactive' after an absence of six consecutive months from their POYC pharmacy. 'Inactive' patients can be reactivated upon request. This measure is taken to ensure that Government imbursement is being affected for the services rendered to the actual number of patients who would have availed of the POYC Scheme during a given quarter.

Free Dispensing of Government's Pharmaceutical Stock through the Community Pharmacies in the POYC Scheme

During the period under review, circa €11,138,762 million worth of the Government's free pharmaceutical stock was dispensed to patients participating in the POYC Scheme, while the POYC Unit transferred circa €12,351,907 million worth of the Government's pharmaceutical stock to the 129 pharmacies participating in the Scheme. The chart hereunder compares the value of dispensed pharmaceutical stock against the number of registered patients by locality.

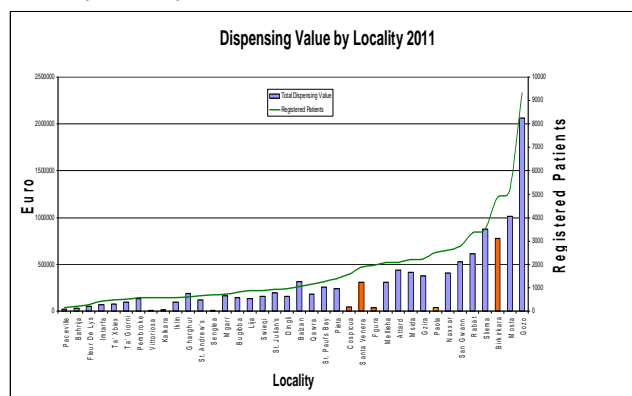


Chart 1 – Total Dispense in € value by Locality - 2011

This Chart also demonstrates that value of medication dispensed increases with registered patients (Gozo has been grouped into one large locality for clarity). Localities detailed with an orange bar are those which were added to the scheme in 2011. The average value of medication dispensed per registered patient in 2011 was of €170.32. This average varies between localities because of different treatments and prescribing trends. Excluding the new localities the lowest average was that of Mellieha where the average patient value was of €149.69, while the highest onwas that of Gharghur at €309.82.

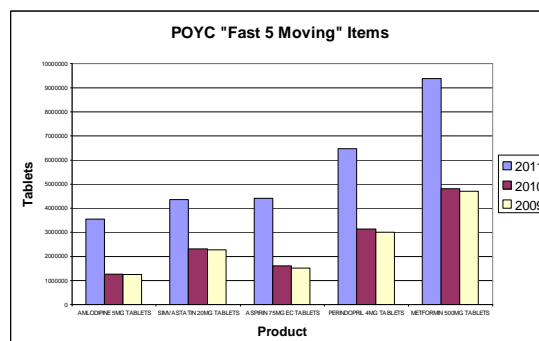


Chart 2

Chart 2 illustrates the trends of the five most dispensed stock items from 2009 to 2011, with 2011 being the year that experienced the greatest growth in demand. Indeed, it is evident that as the patient benefitting from the POYC Scheme increased so did the demand. In fact, 2011 shows that both values have almost

doubled since 2009. It is noteworthy to refer to the dispense value in 2008 when the POYC Scheme service remained operational in the 68 ‘piloted’ pharmacies while the rollout *per se* was suspended. The dispensed values continued to grow even though there were no new community pharmacies or localities until the second half of 2010. It is also important to note that the value dispensed in 2010 and 2011 by the community pharmacies which were in the Scheme in 2009 has been maintained at the same level. It is also evident that as the number of pharmacies and patients since 2009 has doubled, so has the value of medication dispensed. This is close to one million euro a month and it is expected to continue to increase.

Payments to Community Pharmacies as per MoU

In line with the MoU, in 2011 the POYC Unit paid the overall sum of €1,408,942 to the participating community pharmacies. This amount reflects the sum of €1,378,322 for services rendered to POYC Scheme benefitting patients by the pharmacies and €30,620 for their ADSL Internet Connectivity. In 2011, the Unit also provided the necessary stationery and materials¹⁵ to the participating pharmacies to facilitate their dispensing service, which cost amounted to €11,790. Hence, from 2008 to date, the community pharmacies have received an overall total of €3,091,591.

Performance Review and Analysis

POYC Gozo Branch

The Gozo Branch of the POYC Unit sustained its operations and continued to cater for Gozitan stakeholders, so as to ensure that they too will receive timely and effective support. During 2011, the POYC Gozo Branch Office received and cross-checked a total of 613 new patients’ applications and a total of 6,161 amendments to the original applications. The POYC Gozo Branch provides technical support to pharmacists and general practitioners regarding prescribing criteria of specific medicines and other general related information. This Office also provides a Client Support Service to the patients and pharmacies participating in the Scheme in collaboration with the Client Support Service team of the POYC Unit. This Office is also responsible to ensure that back-up supply of ancillary stationery¹⁶ is available and reaches the Gozo community pharmacies in the shortest time possible to ensure a seamless service at all times.

The POYC Gozo Office is also responsible for conducting a biannual stock taking exercise within the 18 POYC Scheme participating community pharmacies in Gozo. This exercise also serves as a good opportunity for the community pharmacists to clear any concerns, and also as a measure for better stock controls and stock management.

Repackaging Area

During 2011, the Repackaging Area increased its overall activity to meet with the clients’ demands. This area is responsible to repackage all the pharmaceutical stock items that are received in bulk form into patient-pack size. It is to be noted that most of these stock items concern the majority of the fast-moving pharmaceuticals that are essential to address the most familiar medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, mental health etc.

A spike in May, characterised by a heavy demand for *Metformin*, caused a sharp increase in the production output. These demands coupled with the POYC Scheme’s expansion to other localities necessitated the deployment of additional staff within this area to ensure that production deadlines were met and sustainable.

¹⁵ The stationery and materials include labels and ink for the printers and paper bags for usage in pharmaceutical dispense.

¹⁶ Ancillary stationery includes the printer labels, ink, paper-bags, POYC Scheme Registration Forms, etc.

Sustained Empowerment and Commitment

During the year under review, POYC sustained its resource-based view to pre-empt weaknesses and timely apply the appropriate mechanisms to empower, motivate, utilise, develop and, in turn, retain its human capital to attain its strategic objectives. Additionally, systematic training programmes, job shadowing, one to one mentoring and coaching, and a strong team-based learning environment continued to support staff's capabilities and give them the opportunity for self-development. This approach facilitated continuous performance alignment with production output according to the specific daily needs with the least negative repercussions on our service delivery.

Sustained Growth

During 2011, POYC management continued to sharpen its focus on the relationship between human resource management and the organisational performance. The strategic allocation of the workforce has always been treated as the potential driver to achieve continuous improvement, maximise operational performance and quality output and, simultaneously address and curb wastage - rather than solely address a cost-containment challenge. Through these new initiatives, POYC managed to motivate the workforce and align them with the organisation's objectives and management practices. The increase in productivity rate of 2011 reflects the expansion of the POYC Scheme Rollout trajectory which started in July 2010¹⁷.

Sustained Added Value

From December 2007 to December 2011, the POYC Unit dispensed €24.3 million worth of the Government's free pharmaceutical stock to patients benefitting from the POYC Scheme, and transferred €24.8 million worth of the Government's pharmaceutical stock to the 129 pharmacies participating in the Scheme. The gradual increase in dispense reflects the increase in the number of patients benefitting from the POYC Scheme according to rollout pattern.

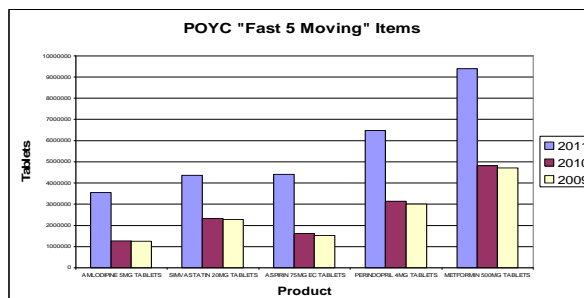


Chart 3 – The 5 most 'fast-moving' Stock Items, 2009 - 2011

The chart above reflects the five most fast-moving pharmaceutical stock items over a period of three years (2009 -2011). It is evident that demand for pharmaceutical stock increased as the POYC Scheme enlarged its foot-print. Indeed, it can be argued that the current demand has almost doubled that of 2009.

Licensing of POYC by the Medicines Authority

The POYC Unit sustained its contact with the Medicines Authority throughout 2011 in preparation for the official licensing of the Unit as a 'Wholesale Dealer' and a 'Partial Manufacturer'. In order to obtain these licenses, the POYC Unit must meet the technical and legal criteria established in the European Union Good Manufacturing Practice (EU GMP) guidelines and the provisions of the Medicines Act 2003. The

¹⁷ It is to be noted that up to June 2010, there were 68 community pharmacies and 30,000 benefitting patients in the POYC Scheme. In December 2011, the community pharmacies increased to 129 and the number of benefitting clients more than doubled – as it reached over 65,000.

POYC Unit submitted its application for licensing in October 2011. It is expected that this process will be concluded in the coming months.

Developments

During the period under review, numerous meetings continued to be held with key top management officials from within the MHEC to discuss the way forward of the POYC Scheme. Meetings with the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC), in accordance with the 2007 MoU, were also conducted to discuss salient issues relative to the POYC Scheme and its way forward. Moreover, the POYC Unit sustained its organisational impetus and embarked on several initiatives with the aim to position itself amongst the best local business management models. The intent behind all efforts was to optimise our internal/external operational processes and to maximise on our efficiency and effectiveness through the ‘best fit’ business strategy in line with available resources.

POYC Unit

- **Staff Development:** In an effort to continuously improve the POYC’s workforce commitment and output, during 2011 the Unit supported the attendance at courses organised by the SDO on various topics, which included, amongst others, accounts, finance and in the use of IT systems. Specific hands-on training courses were organised by Philip Toledo Ltd on ACCESS Dimensions for the staff in the POYC’s Finance Area so as to ensure full use and application of the IT programs’ features.
- **Processing of DAS Payment IT System:** In 2011, the POYC Unit Finance Area sustained the processing of all the payments owed to the community pharmacies in respect of services rendered to POYC Scheme beneficiaries. The processing of these payments is carried out through the DAS payment system which was set-up purposely in 2010. This initiative is very well received and appreciated by the community pharmacies as their payments are being processed and received on time.
- **Strengthening of the Quality System:** The Unit continued to develop and strengthen the Quality Management System by drafting a number of new standard operation procedures (SOPs) to complement the Quality Manual, and by reviewing and updating existing ones. The SOPs reflect the various works’ processes that need to be carried out in respect of key operational activities taking place within the different areas of work at the POYC Unit, which cover Administration and Finance, Pharmaceutical Affairs, Stores, Preparation, Repackaging, Logistics. To complement the SOPs, all the operational flow processes were graphically mapped out and displayed in all the respective rooms to facilitate adherence and alignment. These charts are kept updated to reflect any changes in the corresponding SOPs. In 2011, a Training Matrix Chart was also developed to facilitate the timely and periodically in-house training of staff on the requirements according to the SOPs.
- **Handbook on HR Procedure:** The POYC’s Handbook on HR Procedures which was distributed to all staff in 2010 was kept updated throughout 2011. The intent of this handbook is to inform and align all staff within the Unit with Government’s latest HR procedures and initiatives. In line with this, the handbook comprises salient excerpts from the Public Service Management Code and the Family-Friendly measures introduced by Government together with the Public Administration Act and the Code of Ethics for Employees in the Public Sector. This document was also handed to all the new staff that joined the POYC Unit in this period. This document was highly commended upon by the Director, HR (MHEC).
- **Internal Communications Network Policy Document:** The Internal Communications Network Policy Document (ICNP) was finalised and distributed amongst the POYC Unit’s staff in March 2011. The intent of this policy document is to officially establish efficient and effective internal communication network channels to facilitate the timely transmission of information amongst all the operational levels in order to achieve a coherent, shared organisational culture that aligns the entire staff in pursuing common goals, attain timely coordinated action and serve as a continuous learning platform not only to improve our service, but also to create opportunities for individual professional development and growth. The communication channels reflect the POYC’s organisational structure, which organigram is purposely colour-coded to facilitate immediate association with the Area of work by all operational

levels. The ICNP Document was chosen by the Permanent Secretary to be used as a role-model document within the Health Division.

- Award of the Equality Mark Certification from the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE): In an effort to consolidate and promote its 'Equality' values to a nationally recognised and deserving level, in March 2011 the POYC Unit submitted its application to the NCPE to obtain the Equality Mark Certificate. In June 2011, the Unit was awarded the Equality Mark Certificate¹⁸ and granted permission to use the Equality Mark Logo. Today, the POYC Unit is proud to be one of the very first government organisations to be honoured with this certificate. This certification manifests the true commitment undertaken by the Unit to create and incorporate gender equality values and opportunities within its organisational strategic objectives, and to introduce a management structure that facilitates this ethos.
- Attainment of two Malta People Awards 2011 organised by the Foundation of Human Resource Development: In December 2011, the POYC Unit successfully secured the top two awards of the Malta People Awards 2011 organised by the Foundation for Human Resources Development (FHRD). The awards are the:
 - People Management Impact on Business Success' Award, which is intended to reward businesses that are transforming the way they manage and develop their people in order to build sustainable organisation performance, and the
 - Employee Engagement Award, which is intended to acknowledge the HR initiatives or system that have made a marked contribution to a culture of employee engagement, good communication flows, accountability and space for personal initiatives that can have a positive impact on an organisation.

This was the first time that the POYC Unit participated in this national event. Besides the two Award trophies, the POYC Unit was also awarded the FHRD Malta People Award 2011 Achiever logo.

Performance Audit Exercise – National Audit Office

In May 2011, the National Audit Office (NAO) initiated a Performance Audit Exercise on the operational activities and work process of the POYC Unit. As part of the exercise the NAO officials:

- met six times with the POYC Unit's management team to discuss the entity's different operational activities and process;
- conducted on-site visits to all POYC Areas to get better acquainted with all the operational processes;
- accompanied the POYC delivery persons during the delivery of pharmaceuticals to the community pharmacies;
- conducted a survey amongst a sample of POYC Scheme participating patients and community pharmacies.

It is expected that the NAO report will be finalised in the first quarter of 2012.

Investment in Information Technology

The continuous increase of the POYC Scheme patient-population brought about a need to fine-tune the current IT operational process, with the intent of rendering them smoother and more seamless. During 2011, the POYC Unit continued to invest in the enhancement of the POYC Scheme-specific IT software systems to significantly speed up the overall operational workflow¹⁹, thus gaining on time wastage, drastically reducing possible human errors, increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the overall process and adding a greater value to the overall production and output. Furthermore, these enhancements provide more robust audit trailing, mitigate the HR shortages and provide a platform for knowledge management.

¹⁸ The Equality Mark Certificate is valid for a period of two years, after which term the POYC Unit will be subject to re-evaluation.

¹⁹ Overall operational workflow refers to real-time usage of the IT systems located within the POYC UNIT's offices and within all the participating pharmacies.

Investment in the POYC Unit's Infrastructure

The second phase of the refurbishment project, which is expected to include the complete overhaul of the ex-MOP, encountered several technical setbacks and therefore the targeted completion date had to be extended to 2012. The POYC Unit had no jurisdiction over these setbacks as they were of an entirely technical nature. All the refurbishment tenders were published in the second half of 2011, and a number of these tenders are in the Adjudication stage, while others have to be republished as no offers were submitted. In the meantime, the ex-MOP area has already been completely gutted to speed up the refurbishment initiation process. Once finalised, this new area will house the Preparation Area and the Logistics Area, while the current Stores Area will spill over into the space vacated by these Areas at Level -1. The new Electronic Tagging Area is also expected to be housed at Level -1.

Cross-checking/Verifying of Documentation

The POYC Unit continued with this exercise during in 2011. The intent behind this exercise is to ensure that the patients, who apply to benefit from free pharmaceuticals under Government's free pharmaceuticals' legislation, will be in possession of the necessary valid permits and documents that entitle them to benefit from this service. This exercise is highly laborious and its main purpose is to curb abuse over the free pharmaceuticals beneficiary scheme and, to continuously increase patients' awareness and education on the proper utilisation of Government's funding schemes.

Client Support Service

Client Support Team

Throughout 2011, the Client-Support Service continued to play a key role in the Unit's daily operations. In general, the enquiries concern a change in the choice of pharmacy, availability of pharmaceuticals' stock, management of pharmaceuticals and so forth.

Call-Register Logbook

During 2011, the Call-Register Logbook was introduced and the Logbook was also included in the POYC's SOPs. The purpose of the logbook is twofold: to serve as a register for record purposes and audit trailing; and to maximise efficiency and effectiveness in providing timely response client-support service staff.

Chauffeur Driven Delivery System

Top-Up/JIT Delivery System

The Top-Up and Just In Time (JIT) approach delivery system introduced in 2009 continued to register the desired positive outcome in 2011. The system contributed to curb wastage, ensure optimisation of stock rotation within the 129 community pharmacies and guaranteed an equitable distribution of the pharmaceutical stock available with the POYC Unit's stores at all times. Moreover, this system also allows POYC to effectively distribute stock in the least time possible. This system also facilitates audit trailing of all government pharmaceutical stock from point of departure (POYC Unit) to its arrival at the community pharmacies, through the highly controlled delivery process currently in place. This system is well received by all stakeholders as it allowed for patients to be served in a better and more efficient manner while it also freed storage space at pharmacies' level. The Unit's delivery persons daily accompany the purposely leased van to timely deliver POYC's pharmaceutical stock to their destination. The delivery van carries the POYC logo and each daily delivery route covers circa 15 - 20 pharmacies.

New Delivery Roster

During the year under review the POYC Unit revised its delivery roster so as enhance efficiency of all available resources. This exercise was also undertaken in preparation of the expansion of the POYC Scheme nationwide.

Organisation of Training Seminars to Participating Pharmacies

During the year under review, the POYC Unit sustained the initiatives introduced in May 2010, and organised a number of seminars for the private pharmacists of the new areas/localities before the POYC Scheme was extended to these areas. The aim of these seminars was to inform and align these community pharmacists with Government's dispensing guidelines, protocols and procedures, and the modus operandi of the Scheme. This initiative was highly appreciated by the community pharmacists. Currently, two in-house seminars are held before the POYC Scheme is expanded into a new locality. The pharmacists also received individual/group hands-on training on the 'Dummy' WPDS²⁰ (Dispensing Screen) to ensure that they will be familiar with the WPDS system before the POYC Scheme goes live within their locality.

The organisation of seminars and the hands-on training initiatives are extremely well received by the community pharmacist. In addition, POYC has reaped the expected benefits of this initiative as the pharmacists are confident when they come to dispense Government's pharmaceutical stock through this System and, in turn the patients are satisfied with the professional service they are receiving.

During the summer months, the POYC technical team organised seminars on dispensing guidelines for the pharmacists of the 68 pharmacies which had joined the POYC scheme in 2007 – 2008 as these had not received any similar training previously. The seminars were spread over three months and were very well received.

Brand and Image Building

The POYC UNIT's Website

The POYC Unit's website also played an important role during 2011, as it was one of the vehicles used by the Unit to update all stakeholders and the general public with the latest news and information in relation to the POYC Scheme's developments. Besides information on POYC Scheme rollout, the website also highlights key aspects of this Unit's modus operandi by providing a methodical walkthrough of the Unit's main activities from its inception to date. This client-centric approach social-enabling tool is very well received by the general public and to date has registered over 140,000. The site is kept up-to-date by POYC staff. The website is accessible on the following URL: www.poyc.gov.mt

Publication and Distribution of Informative Leaflets

During the year under review, the POYC Unit re-published the two information leaflets in the English and Maltese language respectively. The content of these leaflets reflect the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) found in the Unit's website. The leaflets, which were distributed to all the POYC participating pharmacies, were well received by the general public, especially in those areas where the POYC Scheme was going to be rolled out for the first time.

²⁰ The WPDS is the Web-based (IT) enabled dispensing system that the POYC UNIT installs in each private pharmacies in the Scheme, to enable real-time 'pharmaceutical stock' visibility, support and advise, together with facilitate pharmaceutical stock JIT delivery/Top Up which is based on the consumption levels of available stock within a specific pharmacy.

Media Exposure

Since the resumption of the rollout, the POYC Unit was invited by various radio and television stations to provide first-hand information to the general public and answer to POYC Scheme related enquiries. Several press articles about the progress of the POYC Unit and the POYC Scheme were also published in the local newspaper during 2011.

Social Responsibility

In line with its social responsibility ethos, during 2011 the POYC Unit organised various initiatives in aid of a number of voluntary organisations. Amongst others this year, the POYC Unit donated animal food to *Noah Ark*, water to the Humanitarian Aid Campaign for Libya and once again organised a Blood Donation Day during the Christmas period. Furthermore, the POYC Unit also participated in job exposure initiatives organised by the Careers Guidance teachers from various colleges under the umbrella of the Directorate for Educational Services. These initiatives were organised to give the school children the opportunity to 'live' a work experience for a period of two weeks - at a workplace of their choice. To date, a healthy number of students have visited the POYC, and the staff engages itself completely to impart knowledge and to give the desired level of attention with the intent to make the student's stay a pleasurable and a memorable one. POYC's participation in these initiatives has been rewarded by the inclusion of the POYC logo in Job Exposure Initiative 2011 – Student's Reflective Logbook.

Efficiency Gains through On-Site Visits to Pharmacies

During 2011, the POYC Unit sustained its commitment to improve efficiency of Government's pharmaceutical stock distribution, and redistribution of excess stock within the community pharmacies. This exercise allowed for the increase of stock availability and, the considerable reduction in the wastage of expired stock. Moreover, through this initiative POYC was in a position to maintain its presence within the community pharmacies, increase their awareness of POYC policies and regulations, conduct structured periodic stock-taking exercises and closely monitor stock management by the community pharmacists. This exercise was possible through the periodic pharmacy visits carried out by the six technical officers assigned to POYC on contractual services²¹ basis. For 2011, it was possible to identify and redistribute more than €36,873 worth of stock than in 2010. This represents a 35% increase.

Expansion of the POYC Scheme Nation Wide

In line with the POYC Unit's targeted and approved POYC Scheme Rollout Plan, it is envisaged that the POYC Scheme will be extended nationwide by end December 2012. However, the completion of this Plan depends on a number of key determining factors which do not entirely depend on the POYC Unit's performance or decision taking - such as the clearance for each expansion from the tripartite partners before every new rollout.

The table hereunder identifies the 23 localities that still need to be covered by POYC Scheme, which areas include a total of 80 community pharmacies. All these pharmacies are eligible to participate in the POYC Scheme.

Birzebbuga	Luqa	Qrendi	Żabbar (and Xghajra)
Floriana	Marsa	Safi	Żebbuġ (Malta)
Għaxaq	Marsascula	Sigġiewi	Żejtun
Gudja	Marsaxlokk	St Lucia	Żurrieq
Hamrun	Mqabba	Tarxien	
Kirkop	Qormi	Valetta	

²¹ These Contractual Services were part of a Contract for Services reached between the DG, Health Care Services and the Ministry of Finance in 2010, and was entered into between the individual (on his own behalf), and the DG, HCS for MHEC.

Introduction of POYC IT Systems within the SVPR Pharmacy and the Gozo General Hospital Pharmacy

In December 2011, the POYC Unit submitted a proposal to introduce the POYC IT Systems within the SVPR pharmacy and the GGH pharmacy, the intent being to leverage the POYC IT infrastructure to implement proven ‘best practice’ methodologies organisation-wide²², thereby streamlining key pharmaceutical-dispense operational processes.

ADMINISTRATION SECTION UNDER THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL DIVISION

The Administration Section, within the HR and Administration Directorate, moved to the Financial Management and Control Division in the last quarter of 2011. Operational reviews of administrative functions and staff were carried out. The objective was to increase efficiency levels restructuring or consolidation of units and/or functions wherever deemed necessary. Regular on site visits and internal meetings assist to achieve this aim. The MHEC Administration Section is very vast and embraces numerous sections including the Registry, the Engineering department, Surveillance and Security, Inventory, Fleet Management. Other administrative duties encapsulate Green Initiatives and Freedom of Information including Data Protection.

Registry

The Registry Section is the heart of every department and the nerve centre of communications. It serves as a distribution centre for departmental, personal and disciplinary files. Correspondence for both incoming and outgoing are also channelled through Central Registry. During the year under review, incoming mail amounted to about 98,000 items. These were received from the general public, government departments, parastatal bodies, hospitals, outstations, local councils and other organisations. Outgoing mail during 2011 amounted to 158,174 items. These can be classified as indicated hereunder:

Local Ordinary Mail	150,551
Local Departmental Mail	3,682
Local Registered Mail	1,842
Overseas Ordinary Mail	1,556
Overseas Registered Mail	543

The Registry also keeps a record of all registered letters sent both locally and abroad as well as recording the amounts of the daily consignments of mail dispatched. The following circulars were also processed and distributed by the Registry Section.

Office of the Prime Minister (PAHRO+ OPM)	117 92+25
Ministry of Finance	18
Contracts Department	23
Treasury Department	7
Health Division (DH circulars)	124
Others – Memos	30

In addition to the responsibility for the safe custody of thousands of files, the Registry opened another 6,222 new files during 2011. The Registry is also responsible for the custody of about 3,000 personal files together with 7,000 files of retired, deceased and recruited employees. The movement of every file is recorded to keep track of the whereabouts of each and every single file.

²² Organisation-wide refers to those entities falling under the umbrella of the MHEC.

Engineering Department

The MHEC Engineering department continues to be instrumental in providing ongoing strategic, corporate and operational management support to most of the directorates within the Health Division throughout 2011 including the GGH and MDH. In addition, it was and still is directly and extensively involved in the regeneration process of the St Luke's Hospital site and other duties include project works; regulatory inspections of national and private health facilities installations; consultancy support; facilities management; repairs and refurbishment throughout MHEC where required.

Security Services

The surveillance and security of various MHEC premises is managed by Principal Security Officers assisted by a number of Security Officers and Security Guards based in different MHEC locations, namely at St Luke's Hospital Complex, SVPR, elderly homes, MCH, SPBH, Head Office, Marsa Stores and various health centres in most of these locations the physical security surveillance is 24/7. CCTV cameras were re-activated or introduced in sensitive areas. Intensive Security Guard courses were offered to various employees to upgrade their security service.

Inventory

Officers in charge of the inventory work attended a training course offered by CDRT which increased their knowledge in inventory management issues. The focus this year was mainly on MHEC Head Office, St Luke's Hospital and HR Harper Lane MHEC Melita Street premises, where a thorough inventory exercise was carried out.

Fleet Management

Fleet Management has been introduced in all buildings/hospitals concerned across MHEC.

Refurbishment

Refurbishment of Head Office premises kick-started in the year under review included the upgrading of various offices. Extensive works were carried out in particular on Head Office's top floor area. Within the Registry, an open-office plan was partly refurbished, also one store was converted into an office, namely the Administration's main office. Maintenance equipment, IT equipment and other material not required for immediate use were taken to St Luke's Hospital stores, to make room for more offices at Head Office to proceed with the plan to centralise all offices related to Human Resources and Finance at Head Office. Plans were finalised so that FMS project entrusted with the remaining refurbishment will proceed in 2012 in a fast pace and according to established schedule.

Green Initiatives

Extensive energy audits, carried out in all MHEC offices in the previous year, were followed up in collaboration with MRRA to implement the recommendations in the audit report, including the installation of three photovoltaic panels on MHEC buildings, and the waste separation of printer and photocopier toners. Another important green initiative was the purchasing of two Euro III buses, one of which replaced an old bus at MCH.

Parliamentary Questions

The Administration Department was also responsible for the processing of PQs, assuming overall responsibility for drafting of consolidated replies covering all divisions within the MHEC.

Freedom of Information and Data Protection

Procedures to implement the FOI Act have been ready as from 2010, but so far are on hold pending the coming into force of the relevant regulations. MHEC FOI officers were trained and assigned. For the purpose of the FOI Act, MHEC comprises five Public Authorities (PAs). Information regarding the structure, functions and responsibilities of each PA was compiled, ready to be uploaded on the e-Health website. During the year, the Data Protection Office within the Administration Section tackled a number of queries relating to Data Protection such as requests to view personal files and request on guidance on procedures in line with the Data Protection Act to access data for research purposes.

JACQUELINE CAMILLERI

Director General (Financial Management and Control)