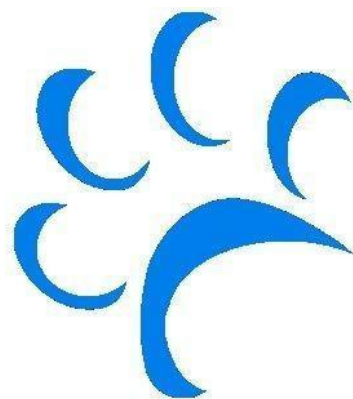


ANNUAL REPORT

2017



Annual Report 2017

Office of the Commissioner for Animal Welfare

Annual Report 2017

The year 2017 was another interesting and hectic one for my Office. On the 20th February 2017 I was handed the keys for the new office at Regent Building level 2, Racecourse Street Marsa. A call from the Public Service employees for the position of Animal Welfare Promotional Officers and for that of an Animal Welfare Inspections Officer was issued and three new Officers were recruited.

On the 8th March 2017 my Office was invited by the Assistant Headmaster, Mr. Robert Grech, of the De La Salle College in Cottonera to participate in the Careers Day for the Secondary School Students. During this event a stand was set up and managed by us, giving the opportunity to students to discuss a career with regard to the welfare of animals. Books and leaflets were also delivered to those students interested in this subject. One has to say that a very good number of students came forward to be informed directly from the horse's mouth. Also, throughout the year quite a number of University and MCAST Students called at my office to be guided with information related to animal welfare in Malta.

On the 19th April 2017 I was invited by the Mayor of Mosta Local Council, Mr. Ivan Bartolo, to participate in an initiative namely **Mosta Solidali** and to give a short speech on animal welfare issues. I have spoken with regards to stray cats in the locality and the importance for the Local Councils to adopt the idea of erecting a cat cafe' for the stray felines. On this matter the Local Council took this initiative and was guided by my Office to file an application with the Planning Authority to build a Cat Cafe' in Mosta.

Another interesting subject that was raised was the problem of feral pigeons and their control in this town. On this matter I have spoken at large on the media, and I gave a solution for their control by investing in small pigeon lofts that are placed on top of buildings and allow the pigeons to breed. The pigeons lay their eggs which are later destroyed and by this method the pigeon population will be reduced gradually. An example of this is Melbourne, Australia where the population was reduced by 80% through the use of such traps.

In September 2017 we were called to have a meeting with the management of a large company to help them to give our views about a policy they wish to undertake to introduce a "**Pets at Work Policy**" within

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their work premises. Such a policy was also introduced in the mother company in France and was a success. Our contribution was vital for them and they already managed to draft an excellent policy for those employees who wish to bring their dogs with them on the premises.

The promotion on animal welfare in this current year was again mainly focused on providing lectures, including a powerpoint, for year 6 students in the state, church and private schools. For the third consecutive year we have distributed to each student a copy of the book “ **L- Imħabba Tagħna Lejn L-Annimali Obbligi – Liġijiet – Regolamenti** ”. The publication of a workbook “ **Il- Fbieb Tagħna L-Annimali** ” that was printed last year and distributed to all year 5 students was again given to the said students also in this scholastic year. Judging by the feedback received, these publications and talks were yet another success.

My Office was also invited for the first time to deliver such talks for the elderly at St Vincent De Paule residence, after a number of relatives of the said elderly, phoned me to extend such an initiative. The residents appreciated both the book and our time spent with them.

Once again this year my Promotional Officers collaborated with the Animal Welfare Directorate and took part in Skola Sajf talks with regards to animal welfare promotion. On the 15th October 2017 we also participated in the activities of Animal Welfare Awareness Day held at the Għammieri Government Experimental Farm in Marsa. A stand with promotional material from my Office was erected for this purpose while hundreds of people visited us.

On the 9th December 2017 I was invited by the **Service Dogs Malta Foundation** to a **Service Dog’s Meet’n’Greet** where three new Service Dogs successfully graduated to work with children on the Autistic Spectrum Therapy. I was amazed with the valuable work done in the sector of people with various disabilities.

Throughout this year my Office received three hundred and ninety eight reports mostly from Maltese citizens and tourists. Most of the foreigners’ complaints were about horse cabs’ owners who keep their horses for long periods of time in the sun in the summer heat. With regard to this matter a petition to ban cab horses from work in Malta was also started

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online. Most of the complaints were handled and investigated by my Office. Some were handled by the Animal Welfare Directorate and the Veterinaries Department. This year I also gave witness in court with regard to several animal welfare cases.

On the 28th March 2017 a Central Bank Account was approved by the Ministry of Finance and opened by my Office. The purpose of this account is to help finance a new **Rehoming Centre** in Malta for the injured stray cats and dogs that presently are being kept within the premises of the Directorate for Animal Welfare. This idea came to my mind some four years ago and was boosted by a meeting that was held between an individual who wanted to stay anonymous, the management of a company in Malta and myself. As on the 31st December 2017 this person contributed five thousand Euro to the said account, Number: **MT94MALTA011000040090EURCMG5001R**. He also promised to keep donating money for this cause. A statement by the Central Bank is attached with this Annual Report for more transparency.

The interest shown by the general public where animal welfare is concerned, is very much appreciated. However, on investigating reports regarding mishandling of animals by Animal Welfare Officers, my Office found that a number of them were not quite correct. In this regard improvement in both Directorates was actually registered. The lack of enforcement of the Laws and Regulations in general with regard to the Directorate for Animal Welfare and the Directorate for Veterinaries are the main shortcomings that these Directorates need to address.

I strongly recommend both Directorates to join forces and have an efficient Inspectorate to tackle enforcement of the laws and regulations on a daily basis.

Emanuel Buhagiar
Commissioner for Animal Welfare

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COMMISSIONER FOR ANIMAL WELFARE
REGENT BUILDING NO 2
RACECOURSE STREET
MARSA PRS1633

DONATIONS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE ACCOUNT
A/C Number: 40090EUR CMG5 001 R
Statement Date: 02/01/18
For Period: 01/12/17 - 31/12/17
Statement No: 11

TRAN : MT94MALTC11000040090EURCMG5001R

BOOKING DATED ACCOUNT STATEMENT

BOOKING DATE	VALUE DATE	CHQ/ REFERENCE DESCRIPTION	DEBIT/CREDIT	BALANCE
01/12/17		OPENING CREDIT BALANCE		5,000.00
		CLOSING CREDIT BALANCE		5,000.00

1

Any discrepancies should be reported to Manager Payment & Banking Ops

Personal data in relation to transactions effected via SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) may be required to be disclosed to the United States authorities, in order to comply with legal requirements applicable in the United States for the prevention of crime.