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New regulations for the protection of third party property during construction

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Government will be introducing regulations aimed at protecting third parties and third party property during construction works. These will be part of a phased implementation of regulations related to building construction over the coming months. This was stated by the Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs George Pullicino, during a speech he delivered to a seminar on Energy Efficiency organised by the Kamra tal-Periti.

On the subject of the conference, the Minister noted that only yesterday the price of oil reached \$127 per barrel. Based on current trends there are those who forecast that the price will top \$200 per barrel by the end of the year. This makes the subject of this seminar all the more relevant.



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Pullicino said that as a member of the European Union, Malta is committed to reducing its CO2 emissions by 20% by 2020, and committed to ensuring that 10% of its energy is generated from alternative sources by 2010. He stated that one must keep in mind that these refer to base levels as at 1990. By January 2009, Malta must also introduce a system of certification regarding the energy performance of buildings as well as certification of boilers and air conditioning equipment.

Minister George Pullicino said that an effective educational campaign is needed. This should be widespread to target professionals who design buildings and mechanical and electrical apparatus, contractors and builders, real estate/property negotiators, as well as the general public. Such an educational campaign should not only focus on the new regulations, but more importantly, should inform the public of the benefits that can be gained when such regulations are enforced and abided by.

George Pullicino said that the demand for complex buildings is constantly on the increase. This, together with the increase in materials that are used for decorative purposes and the increase in the use of accessories and light installations, means that water heaters and air conditioners that run on electricity are often the cause of large and excessive use of energy.

He said that from an administrative perspective, there is also a need to create a system to ensure that laws and regulations are implemented, monitored, and that their enforcement takes place in a sound and efficient manner, that does not give rise to unnecessary bureaucratic measures.

He said that architects, engineers and professionals that work in this industry need to be better informed regarding their new role and responsibilities due to the systems of certification that will be introduced to ensure that the new regulations are implemented. This will take place through a number of information sessions that will be organised, where these procedures will be explained in more detail. These professionals must on their part, keep up to date with the standards that will be updated on a regular basis.

The way in which these regulations for control have been drafted ensures an element of self regulations which places responsibility for correct certification on those registered to carry out such work. The Building Control Office within the Services Division will ensure that these regulations are observed and will be authorised to check whether the required certificates were issued within the stipulated timeframes, as well as verify such certificates. In those circumstances where the regulations would not have been followed, the Building Control Office will have the authority to take necessary corrective measures, as well as impose fines and sanctions on the Assessors who would have issued incorrect certificates.

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