

MALTA MARITIME FORUM NEWSLETTER
PROGRESS MEETING
4TH APRIL 2017

Dear Members,

On the 4th April 2017, the Malta Maritime Forum held its first progress meeting of the year, at the “Maritime Museum” in Birgu. The meeting was moderated by Dr. Ann Fenech, who was instrumental in making the event even more dynamic.



There was a high level of participation and attendance, both by members of the Forum as well as a number of other guests from the maritime sector. The program included a review of activities, which was delivered by Mr. Joseph Bugeja, as the CEO of the Forum. The presentation attached covers the extent of activities undertaken by the Forum, particularly the extensive work carried out by the five sub-committees since the last General Meeting held in November last year.



A very informative and interesting presentation followed by Mr. Anthony S. Diacono, the Chairman for MEDSERV P.l.c. His presentation gave a deep insight into Medserv’s corporate strategy as well as a detailed explanation of the various professional services carried out at several of their international facilities. The presentation delivered by Mr Diacono is attached to this newsletter for further information.



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The Mediterranean Maritime Hub was represented by the appointed CEO to the Hub, Mr Stephen Colville. Mr Colville has a vast array of experience in the field and it was a great opportunity to hear all about the developments being undertaken at their new facility in Marsa. The presentation attached gives a brief insight into his delivery.

The Progress Meeting then moved on to a very constructive floor discussion addressing the theme, 'How can we improve our maritime effectiveness in Malta?' Mr Godwin Xerri, who managed to entice a very healthy and productive dialogue, leading to various considerations for the maritime sector, moderated the discussion.

A number of the points discussed by the participants were:

1. Branding "Maritime Malta" – there is a need to develop the brand "Maritime Malta" so that this becomes synonymous with the maritime services that Malta can offer. Ideally, Malta should define itself by the activities that it delivers best.
2. There are natural limitations to the maritime services that Malta can offer competitively thus it might be more effective for Malta to focus on niche markets where it can excel.
3. The fact that Malta has not as yet succeeded to make breakthroughs in certain market segments such as Ship management, calls for a review of the local environment (financial, fiscal, resource availability) to try and create the right environment, which is attracting such activities. This also requires co-ordination with government.
4. There are quite a number of success stories that one can relate to Maritime Malta; the Forum should keep projecting these positive elements.



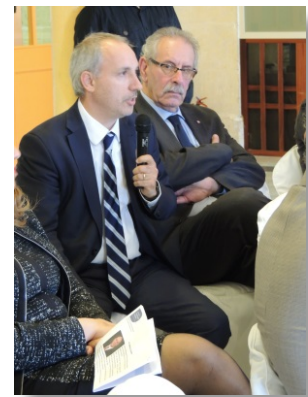
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5. The issue of “negative perception” towards the maritime industry is not a phenomenon to be found solely in Malta, the European Commission itself has acknowledged the problem that the European maritime industry is facing. Efforts are being undertaken at European level to make the industry more attractive – not only in terms of environment but also in terms of career development.



6. Education and training are the two cornerstones of the maritime industry that need constant review and upgrading. Malta has been suffering from a lack of academic courses, which address the requirements of the maritime industry, i.e. not only seafaring careers but also related disciplines, such as engineering, economics, logistics. It is very pleasing to note the initiatives being taken by the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Malta through the launching of a M.Sc. degree in Maritime Engineering and the Maritime Platform. The Forum is also launching training courses of a practical nature, some of which are in conjunction with MCAST.

7. Quality and standards should be the driving force behind maritime Malta. It is only through such elements that Malta can stand out, especially within the Mediterranean environment.
8. The Forum is the ideal gathering to help the industry move forward in a cohesive and focused manner even by taking initiatives to the policy makers to help in the development of industry-friendly policies. There is need for long term planning (20 years) to ensure vision and direction.
9. MMF will be taking necessary steps to move from talk to action.



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The Session was concluded by Dr Joe Borg as the Chairman of the Malta Maritime Forum. Dr. Borg thanked all the speakers for their valid contribution, the Board members for their continued support and work and also the various Sub-Committees, who have been doing sterling work for the Forum. Dr. Borg stressed, “The results and review of this period are proof of the extent of dedication and hard work put in, to achieve such a number of tangible results by the Forum”. In the short period of its existence, the Forum has managed to obtain both local and foreign recognition. These factors gave the Board and all involved, the strength and energy to move forward with their agendas.

Dr Borg stressed on the need for the Forum to dedicate more time to listen to contributions from members and stakeholders in the maritime industry. He invited the floor to take part in the sub-committees with the aim to take the Maltese maritime sector to a higher level.



Thank you for your continued support.
MALTA MARITIME FORUM