

**SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL  
HERITAGE  
REPORT FOR 2003**

# CONTENTS

1.0	Mission Statement	3
2.0	The Cultural Heritage Act (2002)	3
3.0	The National Cultural Inventory	5
4.0	The State of the Heritage Report	6
5.0	Outreach and Education	7
6.0	Research	8
7.0	Land Use Issues	9
8.0	Guardianship	10
9.0	International Commitments	11

## Appendix 1

**Superintendence of Cultural Heritage:  
Financial Statements for January-September 2003**

## **1.0 MISSION STATEMENT:**

To ensure the protection and accessibility of cultural heritage

## **2.0 THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT (2002)**

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage was established by the Cultural Heritage Act of 2002. It has taken over the regulatory role within the cultural heritage sector previously held by the Museums Department. The entity started operating as of January 2003.

## **2.1 FUNCTIONS OF THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Article 7 Section 5 of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002 states that the function of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage is:

- To establish, update, manage and publish, or to ensure the compilation of, a national inventory of cultural property;
- To exercise surveillance over the protection, conservation, restoration, maintenance, exhibition and accessibility of cultural property;
- To promote research in the field of cultural heritage and to conduct excavations and other investigations which may be required so that objects or aspects of cultural heritage be discovered, cared for and appreciated;
- To authorise excavations, as well as to monitor excavations ensuring that such excavations, their documentation and the exhibition of the results thereof follow scientific methods and employ the best technology possible;
- To ensure that adequate documentation is kept and archived in relation to excavation, exploration and search for antiquities or cultural property and discoveries resulting from Environment Impact Assessments;
- To promote and ensure the best policies, standards and practices in the conservation and presentation of artefacts, collections, museums, buildings, monuments and sites;
- To advise and co-ordinate with the Planning Authority action in safeguarding cultural heritage when considering applications for planning permission relating to the development affecting objects, sites, buildings or landscapes which form part of the cultural heritage;
- After consulting the Committee of Guarantee, to advise the Minister on the need of enforcing urgent repair or conservation works, as well as to the need for the compulsory acquisition of sites or buildings for the better protection of the cultural heritage;
- To advise the minister on all matters relating to the cultural heritage and cultural property; and

- To perform such other functions under this or any other law as well as such other functions as the Minister may from time to time assign to it.

## 2.2 CORE BUSINESS

The core functions of the Superintendence include:

- **Heritage data management and processing:** national heritage databases, national inventory of cultural heritage assets, museums and sites, clean storage/archiving, data provision to the general public.
- **Planning development issues:** field evaluations, planning process consultations, recommendations for scheduling, Environmental Impact Assessments, Appeals Board.
- **Museums and sites monitoring:** assessment, auditing, guardianship.
- **Surveillance, enforcement and prosecution:** all aspects of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002.
- **Movement of goods:** import/export, customs, border control, EU regulations.
- **Heritage data capture:** field work, excavation, evaluation of art objects, collections, documentation and other, covering all territory including territorial waters.
- **International commitments:** UNESCO, Council of Europe, European Union, European and Euro-Med partnership, bi-lateral and multi-lateral relations.
- **Communication and outreach:** press, public relations, education, Local Councils, schools, publication programme.
- **National Forum:** compilation and upgrade of the State of the Heritage Report.
- **Policy development:** policy, standards, guidelines, regulations, heritage management plans, advice to Government on heritage matters.
- **Finance and administration.**

## 2.3 LEGAL NOTICES

Further to the Cultural Heritage Act, the following Legal Notice was issued:

### **Return of illegally removed cultural objects**

In view of Malta's entry into the EU, the Superintendence prepared subsidiary legislation for the transposition of Directive EEC/7/93, on the return of illegally removed cultural objects. The subsidiary legislation, published as Legal Notice 246 of 2003, sets down rules and regulations for the manner in which stolen or illegally removed cultural objects are returned to their state of origin. This legal instrument provides an important tool for the safeguarding of Malta's Cultural Heritage in the context of possible trans-frontier movement of goods.

## **3.0 THE NATIONAL CULTURAL INVENTORY**

### **3.1 CULTURAL HERITAGE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

The Cultural Heritage Act 2002 identifies the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage as the statutory body responsible for the development and management of a National Inventory of Cultural Property.

Following its establishment, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage launched the Cultural Heritage Inventory Management Systems Project (CHIMS).

The main objective of CHIMS is to create a new knowledge-based context for understanding, managing and disseminating data concerning Malta's cultural heritage. CHIMS aims to have a social vision that can bridge the gap between academic and technical necessities and public concerns.

Following the completion of a Systems Analysis, a Request for Information was drawn up for the development of a software system capable for operating CHIMS. The preparation of the RFP was undertaken with the technical support of MITTS.

The Request for Information was published on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2003, with the final bids received at the Department of Contracts on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2004. It is planned that the contract be awarded by June 2004.

### **3.2 AUDIT OF FINE ARTS COLLECTION INVENTORY**

In 2003 the Superintendence conducted an audit verification exercise of state-owned works of Art. Until 2002 these art works had been covered by inventory procedures operated by the National Museum of Fine Arts.

Existing records cover paintings, prints, ceramics and furnishings, located in Ministries, Government buildings as well as at the National Museum of Fine Arts. The aim of the exercise is to verify the current location of catalogued works, and to identify previously unlisted works. Around 8,000 inventoried items were assessed. The exercise included identification of data and records related to these works of art, including documented interventions. A number of previously un-inventoried items have also been identified.

## 4.0 THE STATE OF THE HERITAGE REPORT

The Superintendence published the first State of the Heritage Report on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2003 as per Cultural Heritage Act. This report outlines the status of the Cultural Heritage and was presented to the National Forum on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2003.

The Report was distributed to interested parties at the National Forum, and was immediately made available to the public on the Superintendence Website at [www.culturalheritage.org.mt](http://www.culturalheritage.org.mt) .

As indicated in the Introduction to the Report:

“The aim of the State of the Heritage Report is to provide a source of steady information regarding the cultural heritage of the Maltese islands. To date, such information is defused among diverse organizations and individuals. As a result, the state of Malta’s cultural heritage cannot very often be assessed in a holistic manner. Policies advancing the sustainable use of the cultural heritage have traditionally been weakened by a lack of a general comprehensive view of what is actually happening in one of Malta’s vital socio-economic sectors.

The report provides a source for discussion during the National Forum. The Cultural Heritage Act provides for the annual update of this report, including the integration of input from organisations and heritage management practitioners.

The report aims to create a focused source of information on Malta’s heritage sector, informing broader issues and expanding data information on specific issues. The Report will permit the exchange of data, and contributes to the cohesion of the heritage sector.

Exchange of data, the monitoring of trends, the economic profiling of the heritage sector as well as the various technical requirements of preservation and presentation will serve to characterise the state of the heritage. The report, built on contemporary views of such elements, will also inform policy development, while promoting sustainable development and the sustainable use of the cultural heritage.

The report will also serve as an important outreach tool primarily to provide a broad educational tool. Access to knowledge of our cultural heritage will improve understanding and efforts to protect heritage in a sustainable way.”

## **5.0 OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

### **5.1 SUPERINTENDENCE WEBSITE**

The official website of the Superintendence ([www.culturalheritage.org.mt](http://www.culturalheritage.org.mt)) was launched in October 2003. The website is aimed at a broad audience, from scholars to the general public and children. It informs the public about the mission, work and objectives of the Superintendence established by the Cultural Heritage Act 2002.

The functions of the Superintendence are explained, and related documentation is accessible via the website. Other documents, including legislation and publications are available in a section dedicated to Resources.

The website carries information about Malta and its cultural heritage, and also provides photo galleries with images related to various aspects of heritage.

A section of the website is dedicated to CHIMS, the national cultural heritage inventory project, which will eventually be accessible on internet. Besides the national inventory, the website is aimed at having a number of educational and outreach programmes. In the future, these will include programmes with schools, Local Councils, NGO's, a forum for discussion, as well as interactive games for children.

The website also provides news related to heritage, as well as information about projects and activities of the Superintendence. It also gives several useful links to other websites related to cultural heritage.

### **5.2 EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS**

The theme chosen for the 2003 European Heritage Days campaign focused on the link between traditional crafts and national identity.

The campaign opened on Sunday 19th October with a live exhibition of traditional crafts at the school hall of Maria Regina Junior Lyceum. Featured traditional crafts included cane works, weaving, pottery and gilding. The event was held again for schoolchildren during school hours in the following week.

During the week a number of schools were invited to participate and organise events related to this year's theme. Events included exhibitions, talks with visual material as well as cultural visits. The best two entries were awarded book vouchers and tokens to be spent in the purchase of educational material.

The campaign came to an end on Saturday 25th October with a number of tours organised in collaboration with Koperattiva Zjarat Kulturali Plus. These tours took participants to workshops still practising and producing traditional artefacts. Professional guides accompanied the visitors to these locations.

## **6.0 RESEARCH**

### **6.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION**

The Superintendence has carried out several archaeological investigations in the course of 2003. Among the most significant investigations undertaken were the following:

#### **6.2 WIED MOQBOL, L/O ZURRIEQ**

An investigation in this area failed to discover any traces of reported prehistoric remains. However the investigation did identify an area of ancient quarrying associated with a limited scatter of classical pottery. Full scale documentation of these remains is being undertaken by the Superintendence staff.

#### **6.3 DONI STREET, RABAT**

The area was investigated by the Superintendence, following the issue of a MEPA Development Permit at this location. The investigation established the existence of numerous Medieval remains, including structural remains and numerous ceramics. Full scale documentation is being undertaken at this site, while the best means of protecting the archaeological remains is being discussed with the developer.

#### **6.4 ST. DAVID STR, MTARFA**

The Superintendence has investigated an area formerly covered by a garden and due for development by the Housing Authority. The investigation established the existence of various archaeological remains, including World War II shelters, a cistern and ancient quarrying. Following the mapping of these remains, Housing Authority agreed to modify the plans of the proposed development to ensure the survival of these historical features.

#### **6.5 CITTADELLA, VICTORIA**

A section of what appears to be part of the medieval defences of the Gozo Cittadella was exposed as a result of maintenance works being carried out by the Works Division. The remains were investigated by the Superintendence and subsequently documented. Works Division has undertaken to conserve the archaeological remains.

## **7.0 LAND USE ISSUES**

The Cultural Heritage Act gives the Superintendence a number of roles related to land use and development, when these issues bear on the cultural heritage. These include liaison and co-ordination with the Malta Environment & Planning Authority.

### **7.1 CO-ORDINATING WITH MEPA**

In 2003 the Superintendence had been consulted by MEPA on approximately 300 cases linked to development issues. Of these:

- 2% regulated issues of monuments and plaques
- 9% had potential or actual impact on fortifications
- 72% had potential or actual impact on archaeological remains
- 7% regulated interventions on and restoration of historical structures
- 12.5% were located in Mdina or urban Rabat
- 6.5% were located in Valletta
- 9% were located in Victoria, Gozo

### **7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHEDULING TO MEPA**

The Superintendence made six recommendations to MEPA for the Scheduling of cultural properties, in terms of the Development Planning Act.

- Mural Painting at 112, Triq Patri Guzepp Portelli, Qala - April 2003
- Property sited at Triq Alexander c/w Triq il-Bronja, Zurrieq - May 2003
- Properties sited at 12/13, Alley 1, Triq Hal Bajjada, Rabat - June 2003
- Property sited at Triq Doni c/w Triq Doni l-Qadima, Rabat - July 2003
- Property sited at 18, Triq Santa Filumena, Kalkara - July 2003
- Villa Macedonia, St. Valentino Street, Balzan - August 2003

### **7.3 ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND SUSPENSION NOTICES**

The Cultural Heritage Act empowers the Superintendence to intervene in cases where works, proposed or on-going, threaten the cultural heritage. Developers were formally instructed in terms of the Cultural Heritage Act to desist from damaging or destructive works, in four cases.

- Development at Triq Alexander c/w Triq il-Bronja, Zurrieq
- Development at Triq Doni c/w Triq Doni l-Qadima, Rabat
- Development at Alley 1, Triq Hal Bajjada, Rabat
- Development on Birgu Waterfront

### **7.5 EXPROPRIATION OF SITES OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Superintendence, in liaison with the Government Property Division, has concluded the acquisition of property bearing Catacombs at Tac-Caghqi, l/o Rabat. This property was acquired to guarantee the preservation of significant archaeological features, and access to the site. The final price had been set at

Lm26,850, which amount had already been transferred to Lands in 2002. The deed of purchase was signed on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2003

## 8.0 GUARDIANSHIP

The Cultural Heritage Act introduced the concept of a 'Guardianship Deed' by virtue of Article 48 of the Act. The administration and surveillance of the Guardianship process is the responsibility of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. Non-Governmental Organisations and Local Councils are now offered the legal right to enter into a Guardianship Deed with Government over the custody and administration of publicly owned immovable cultural property. This mechanism will allow various publicly owned monuments to be conserved, maintained and regularly opened to the public.

Nine Guardianship deeds have been set up with the non-governmental organisation Din I-Art Helwa over the guardianship of as many architectural monuments. All nine deeds were signed by the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage in front of the Public Notary on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2003.

The following is a list of properties covered by the nine guardianship deeds undertaken so far by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage.

LOCALITY	SITE LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	AREA sq m.
Naxxar	Qalet Marku Tower at Bahar ic-Caghaq	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Tower	81
Naxxar	Ghalis Tower at Bahar ic-Caghaq	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Tower	84
Mellieha	Torri I-Ahmar (also k/a Fort St. Agatha)	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Tower & Battery	3,160
Marsascala	Torri Mamo, Triq id-Dahla Ta' San Tumas	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Tower	738
San Pawl Il-Bahar	Torri Ta' Wignacourt, Triq San Gilardu	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Tower	144
Ghajnsielem	Santa Marija Tower, Comino	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Tower	815
San Lawrenz	Dwejra Tower	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Tower	144
Ghajnsielem	Santa Marija Battery, Comino	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Coastal Battery	574
Floriana	Msida Bastion Cemetery	17 <sup>th</sup> Century Bastion & 19 <sup>th</sup> Century Cemetery	4,880

## **9.0 INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS**

The Superintendence has participated in a number of initiatives, with international bodies and partners.

### **9.1 UNESCO**

#### **International Conference on Underwater Archaeology; Mediterranean Agreement**

UNESCO initiative under the Italian Presidency / Syracuse 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> April 2003.

### **9.2 EUROPEAN UNION**

Most of the international commitments of the Superintendence were related to Malta's growing role within the EU and its effect on the cultural heritage sector.

Such EU related initiatives included participation by the Superintendence to the following international fora :

### **9.3 CULTURAL HERITAGE AND INTER-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

E.U. initiative under the Italian Presidency; organised by Regione Sicilia / Palermo 14-16 November 2003.

### **9.4 STANDARDS AND MODELS FOR EUROPEAN MUSEUMS ADMINISTRATION**

E.U. initiative under the Italian Presidency, organised by the Regione Campania, and other national entities / Naples 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2003.

### **9.5 SEMINAR: TERRITORIAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE**

E.U. initiative under the Italian Presidency / Naples, 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> October 2003.