

NASoM's Key Activities During 2016

Complaint against breach of EU law by the Maltese Government

The EU Motor Vehicle regulations¹ underpin the exhaust noise limit values and the procedure for the replacement & testing of the exhaust system components. *Nonetheless these were not correctly transposed into the Maltese legislation.* These regulations are pivotal for maintaining the safety & quality standards of the vehicle and reduce noise pollution when it is put in service

Although the NGO had several meetings with the regulatory authorities about this matter the results were inconclusive. Therefore, the matter was put to the attention of the Commissioner for the Environment & Planning at the Ombudsman's office. After several exploratory meetings with the authorities failed to elicit a solution the Commissioner put the case to the EU Ombudsman. On November 2016, The EU Ombudsman notified the EU Commission to investigate the NGO infringement complaint.

Monitoring/control of Amplified Music from Open-Air Activities

The NGO embarked on an innovative initiative which, if successful, would benchmark the control of amplified music from open-air avenues. The stakeholders include the catering establishment owner, the Local Council, Acoustic and sound equipment consultants, GRTU and the residents.

Another project, in conjunction with the Malta University, is the installation of sound nodes (sensors) at different locations, to measure the noise level in real-time; especially where noise is the cause of concern. The system is to have the capability to provide objective noise evidence and enhances data collection and analysis.

Noise management from open-air theatre & Catering Establishments

The NGO has been collaborating since 2014 with the ACM & the Valletta open-air theatre management to reduce the noise nuisance during rehearsals and performances of cultural events. Nevertheless, this year it was finally agreed that Telmaco SA will finalise the balancing of the sound system. This is expected to drastically reduce the noise from being a nuisance to the residents.

Another issue is the uncontrolled activities from several catering establishments. The NGO is supporting the residents by bringing all the stakeholders together to find an equitable solution. Giving advice about the noise legislation and also proving the necessary expertise to record and present objective noise evidence.

Assistance through the NGO's portals

The NGO receive frequent calls each week by those who are suffering hardship from noise pollution. Assistance is either given on-line or else through direct intervention. Although it is never straight forward we seek to get all the stakeholders around the table to find lasting solutions. If required, we provide preliminary sound survey to acquire objective evidence to help those asking for assistance. *The NGO's main objective is to attain a solution in the shortest time possible; yet this is often thwarted by an outdated legislation and a fragmented administrative system.*

Lobbying the authorities

Our most important objective is to engage with the authorities so as to review the noise legislation and streamline the administrative system. To achieve this we have meet with several regulating authorities from the various Ministries. The Association's last meeting of the year was with the Environmental Minister. The memo presented during this meeting will be emailed to all paid up members.

Association's AGM

The Association will be holding its AGM in February 2017, we wish to meet with all the members and those who wish to support our efforts to reduce noise pollution. Without rancour but with a sense of despondency we have to remark that few of those asking for our assistance bother to become members or at least share & like our Facebook page! Therefore, we are thankful for your moral support and financial contribution.

¹ EU Reg. 540/2014 "on the sound level of motor vehicles and of replacement silencing systems"

¹ EU Reg. 168/2013 "on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles"