

# Postal Diary

## 15 March 2008 – 5 July 2008

*by Joseph Fenech*

### **4 April 2008**

The Malta Communications Authority published a Consultation Document relating to MaltaPost plc's Universal Service Obligations. This document discussed the obligations incumbent on MaltaPost plc as the Universal Service Provider on three main areas of the universal service: access to services, the guarantee of daily delivery and the publication of information on the universal services offered. On the areas of access to services, this document evaluated the existing density of access points for services falling within the universal services and puts forward proposals that aim to establish parameters to be used to ascertain the minimum density of access points. This is done in order to ensure that MaltaPost plc's obligations in this area are being met and the rights of the consumer addressed. On the aspect of guaranteeing MaltaPost plc's obligation to secure next day delivery of postal items, this document examined whether the current arrangements relating to the collection and delivery of postal items are satisfactory and whether changes in this area are warranted. As regard the publication of information the document put forward proposals on what information should be provided and what media should be used in relation to the universal postal service, including amongst others, postcodes and postal service schemes. The consultation period ran until 30 May 2008.

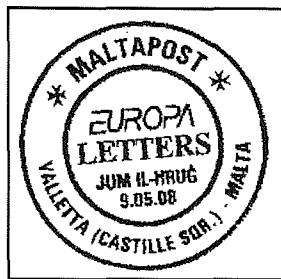
Amongst other details, the Consultation Document indicates that there is a total number of 468 letterboxes throughout Malta and Gozo (421 in Malta and 47 in Gozo), available to the general public. There exist an additional 52 private letterboxes installed in private and public premises throughout Malta and Gozo. Currently there are 32 branch post offices and 27 sub-post offices throughout the Islands providing a basic counter service. There are also 456 stamp vendors spread across Malta and Gozo (including MaltaPost plc's outlets and sub-post offices).

### **14 April**

On 14 April 2008, the National Statistics Office issued News Release 61/2008 highlighting the post and telecommunications statistics for the quarter October – December 2007. According to these statistics, in the quarter under review, total postal traffic amounted to around 14.3 million items of which the absolute bulk represented letters and other printed items (up from 14.03 million items for the last quarter of 2006). The total number of parcels sent through the national post in the period under review was 15,198 (compared to 13,692 in the corresponding period of 2006).

## 9 May

The EUROPA 2008 stamp set, entitled LETTERS, and designed by Edward D. Pirotta, was issued by MaltaPost plc on Friday, 9 May 2008. The stamps, with face values of Euro 0.37/Lm0.16 and Euro 1.19/Lm0.51, are 48.0mm x 39.5mm in size, with a perforation of 14.0 x 14.0 (comb). The stamps were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited, and are available in sheets of ten. The two stamps in this set carry identical images, in monochrome and sepia respectively, and depict a postman on his mail round, and holding his bicycle, with the old Mail Room at the Valletta Central Post Office in the background. Stamp booklets containing five Euro 0.37 stamps from this set, were also issued. MaltaPost plc issued a special commemorative double-ringed handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 5). The handstamp was inscribed "MALTAPOST - ----- - MALTA" in the outer ring and "EUROPA/LETTERS/JUM IL-HRUĠ/9.05.08" in the inner ring. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in 'The Malta Stamp' bulletin No. 266.



## 14 May

The Sub-Post Office at 51, Triq Ġorġ Borġ Olivier, Mellieha MLH 1024, was closed for business between Wednesday, 14 May and Tuesday, 20 May 2008, both days included.

## 22 May

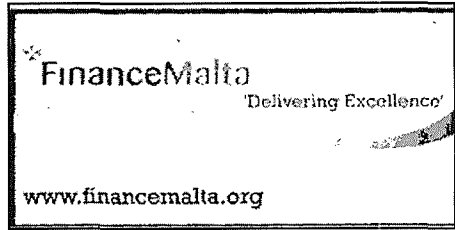
According to a press release issued on 22 May 2008, for the six months ended 31 March 2008, MaltaPost plc registered a profit before taxation of Euro 2.60 million as compared to Euro 1.01 million for the same period the previous year. Earnings per share increased to Euro 0.060 from Euro 0.023 in 2007. Turnover increased by 13.41% from Euro 9.66 million to Euro 10.96 million. MaltaPost plc indicated that, apart from an overall increase in business, the performance during this period was enhanced by two events, namely increased volumes during the General Elections and sales from philatelic/numismatic issues commemorating the introduction of the Euro.

## 1 June

The MALTAPOST news issue no 14 of June 2008 reported that MaltaPost plc had allocated the first personalised postcode to the residents of Tigne` Point in Sliema. Following an application by MIDI consortium, MaltaPost plc allocated the personalised postcode TP01 to these residents, thereby replacing the postcode which had been given to the area following the introduction last year of a new postcode system. MaltaPost plc is offering a personalised postcode service for particular addresses in identifiable zones.

## 6 June

A special machine cancellation – “FinanceMalta/Delivering Excellence/www.financemalta.org”, started to be used at the Central Mail Room, Marsa, on all outgoing foreign mail, with effect from Friday, 6 June 2008.

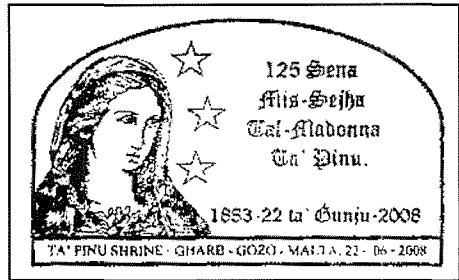


## 17 June

Through Department of Information notice No. 0862, it was announced that following Cabinet approval, the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications appointed the new Stamp Design Advisory Board, which is set up under the terms of the Postal Service Act. Dr Philip Farrugia Randon is Chairman of the Board, with the other Board members being Ms Claudia Taylor East, Mr Joseph Said, Mr Michael Borg and Ms Mariella Pisani Bencini.

## 22 June

A special postmark – “125 Sena mis-Sejha tal-Madonna ta’ Pinu/1883 – 22 ta’ Gunju – 2008/Ta’ Pinu Shrine – Gharb – Gozo – Malta. 22-06-2008” – was used at Ta’ Pinu Sanctuary, limits of Gharb, Gozo, on Sunday, 22 June 2008. The handstamp was designed by Gozitan philatelist Anthony Grech. Moreover, the



ecclesiastical authorities at Ta’ Pinu Sanctuary also issued a special commemorative card to mark the 125th anniversary of the calling of Our Lady of Ta’ Pinu. This limited edition card (only 1000 cards have been printed) was designed for the occasion by Gozitan artist Chev. Paul Camilleri Cauchi.

## 23 June

Due to the ‘Isle of MTV Malta Music week’ festivities, an early collection (at 4.30 pm) was effected by MaltaPost plc, instead of the customary 7.00 pm collection, on Monday, 23 June 2008, in Paceville, on street letterbox No 217 – Elias Zammit Street, Paceville (MaltaPost plc St Julians sales outlet). MaltaPost plc affixed a notice on the said letterbox denoting the new collection time and the nearest 7.00 pm collection letterbox.

## 24 June

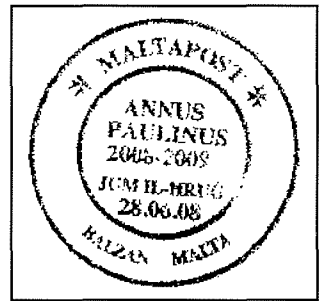
Due to the 'Isle of MTV Malta Music week' festivities, an early collection (at 4.30 pm) was effected by MaltaPost plc, instead of the customary 7.00 pm collection, on Tuesday, 24 June 2008, in Bugibba, on street letterbox No 299 – Bay Street, Bugibba. MaltaPost plc affixed a notice on the said letterbox denoting the new collection time and the nearest 7.00 pm collection letterbox.

## 25 June

Due to the 'Isle of MTV Malta Music week' festivities, an early collection (at 4.30 pm) was effected by MaltaPost plc, instead of the customary 7.00 pm collection, on Wednesday, 25 June 2008, in Floriana, on street letterbox No 252 – St Publius Street, Floriana. MaltaPost plc affixed a notice on the said letterbox denoting the new collection time and the nearest 7.00 pm collection letterbox.

## 28 June

On Saturday, 28 June 2008, MaltaPost plc issued a set of stamps marking the celebrations commemorating the 2000th anniversary of the birth of St Paul (at the start of the year of St Paul – Annus Paulinus). The stamps, designed by Paul Psaila, have a face value of Euro 0.19/Lm0.08, Euro 0.68/Lm0.29 and Euro 1.08/Lm0.46. The set also includes a miniature sheet with a face value of Euro 3.00/Lm1.29. The stamps are 44.0mm x 31.0mm in size, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb), while the miniature sheet is 120mm x 86mm in size, and the stamp size 44.0mm x 31.0mm, and perforation 13.9 x 14.0 (comb). The stamps were offset printed on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper by Printex Limited, and are available in sheets of ten. The four titular statues reproduced on the stamps are found in the Conversion of St Paul Church, Hal Saï (Euro 0.19 stamp – wooden statue of St Paul made by artist Xandru Farrugia), in St Paul's Shipwreck Church, Munxar, Gozo (Euro 0.68 stamp – papier mache' statue of St Paul made by artist Agostino Camilleri), in St Paul's Shipwreck Church, Rabat, Malta (Euro 1.08 stamp – wooden statue of St Paul made by artist Giovanni Caruana) and in St Paul's Shipwreck Church, Valletta (Euro 3.00 stamp – wooden statue of St Paul made by artist Melchiorre Gafà). For this occasion, MaltaPost plc also issued a commemorative folder, marked Commemorative Folder No 1. This folder, printed in a limited quantity of 7500, and sold at a retail price of Euro 15, includes all the stamps in the set, as well as information and illustrations on the titular statues depicted and their respective churches. Each commemorative folder is numbered, and carries the same number



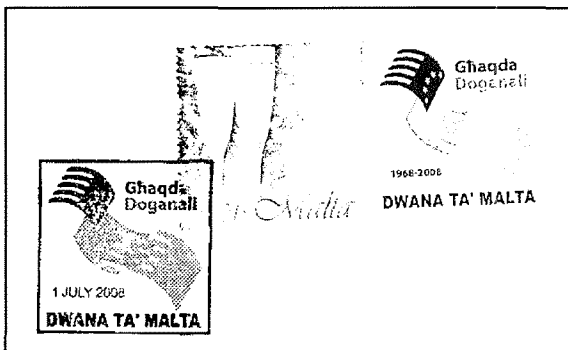
as the miniature sheet enclosed in it. Maltapost issued a special commemorative double-ringed handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No. 6). The handstamp was inscribed “MALTAPOST - ----- - MALTA” in the outer ring and “ANNUS/PAULINUS/2008-2009/JUM IL-HRUGĠ/28.06.08” in the inner ring. The MaltaPost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No. 267.

### 30 June

MaltaPost plc informed the public that a bundle of mail containing letters intended for addressees in Rabat, Malta, had been retrieved from the seabed at Ċirkewwa on Sunday, 1 June 2008. Following internal investigations the matter was reported to the Police and to the Malta Communications Authority for any action deemed necessary. On its part, MaltaPost plc dismissed the employee responsible for the delivery of the mail in question and initiated civil proceedings accordingly. At the same time, MaltaPost plc apologised for the incident.

### 1 July

MaltaPost plc notified that a special postmark – “Ghaqda Doganali – 1 July 2008 – Dwana ta’ Malta” – was available on personalised covers at the Department of Customs, Lascaris Wharf, Valletta, on Tuesday, 1 July 2008. Envelopes cancelled with this special postmark could also



be obtained from the Philatelic Bureau of MaltaPost plc. The special postmark on the personalised envelope was used to cancel a Euro 0.19 stamp which included a personalised stamp commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Customs Union. The special cover itself carried the logo of MaltaPost as well as the logo of the Malta Customs, as well as an inscription denoting the 40th Anniversary of the Customs Union (1968-2008).

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