

German company to be given €1 million to repair its own shooting range work



The Shift Team

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The government is intending to spend almost €1 million for the new shot net system at the ‘state-of-the-art’ Ta’ Kandja shooting range to repaired, barely four years since its inauguration.

Just as Finance Minister Clyde Caruana is scrambling to find €200 million to stem rising levels of public deficit and debt, his Cabinet colleague Education Minister Clifton Grima will be splashing out €1 million to repair the shot net system after having left it unmaintained and in a state of virtual abandon.

Adding insult to injury, the additional €1 million in repairs will be given to the same German company that had originally installed the net in 2018 at a cost of €2.3 million. The job was awarded by direct order during a frenzy of contracts unleashed to complete the new shooting range in time for an international shooting event.

Asked to state whether the government had approached O. Luntz GmbH for an explanation as to how this modern system has already incurred major damage even though the €14 million range has been hardly used, both Minister Grima and SportMalta CEO Mark Cutajar refused to reply to any questions.

| CFT Title: SPD1/2022/176 SERVICES - Tender for the Provision of Refurbishment and Maintenance Services of the Shot Net Catchment System at the Malta National Shooting Range, at Ta' Kandja for Sportmalta (CFT CA Unique ID: SPD1/2022/176) (Status: Evaluation) | | | |
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| Envelope | EO name | Tender Id | Financial Value (EUR) |
| Single | O. Luntz GmbH | 179839 | 825313.10 |

They have both also failed to explain why the company that installed the system had not been held responsible for its maintenance, or lack thereof, or why the government is footing the cost of repairing the pricey net after such a short timeframe.

Sources close to the shooting federation have told The Shift that the government has left the shooting range in a state of total disrepair, and that it has failed to hand over the facility's management to the federation despite promises made by disgraced former prime minister Joseph Muscat.

Announced just days before the 2017 general election as a ploy to sway thousands of voters, including the hunting lobby, Labour's way, the shooting range project was converted into an exercise of dispensing millions of euros in direct orders and into an opportunity to place still more people on a government payroll.

[An audit by the NAO](#), found that the €14 million project, originally estimated to have cost just €7 million, was riddled with irregularities, particularly in the way contracts were handled.

The protagonist responsible for the issuing of dozens of direct orders was [Chris Bonnet](#), at the time a person of trust of then Parliamentary Secretary Clifton Grima.



Bonnet had also been investigated by the police as part of a probe into the project for potential corruption. No charges, however, have been brought against him in court.

Dubbed the 'direct-orders supremo', Bonnet is now a Labour MP and has been made a parliamentary secretary by Prime Minister Robert Abela and was moved far from the area of sports as he had later fallen out with Minister Clifton Grima.

Most of the project's direct orders were awarded to Bonnici Brothers. At the time, Prime Minister Robert Abela, already an MP, was Bonnici Brothers' lawyer and he was also [conducting private business](#) with the company's managing director Gilbert Bonnici.

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Looking at a bigger picture, the figures/spending never add up with ministerial statements on a need for reduced public spending/belt tightening – a classic government gaslighting tactic used the world over to subdue and subjugate.

There seems to exist somewhere a bottomless source of money – and it is no secret that Malta is brimming with vast amounts of dirty cash – look no further than Russian oligarchs for example.

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