

## Adequate structures for cab horses requested



Adequate structures for cab horses are being requested by a number of non-governmental organisations who joined forces to voice their concern.

The organisations said in a statement that this issue, which many animal rights organisations had been pushing forth for years, has not improved.

Cab horses still remained without adequate shelter and had to spend days in the scorching sun without any form of shade.

Welcoming the action the Animal Welfare Directorate was taking over the welfare of cab horses, the organisations felt that the latest decision, which called for the covering of cab horses with a protective cloth, was far from satisfactory and not ideal to ensure and safeguard the well-being and welfare of cab horses in the long term.

They said:

“Although the Animal Welfare Act puts the onus of the animal’s well-being on the owner such that cab owners may face a fine for not complying with such an obligation, public authorities can and must also play a very important role to protect and safeguard the rights and welfare of these animals.”

They insisted it was highly important that a permanent solution was implemented through the allocation of adequate shelters which had proper hygiene facilities including a clean water source.

It was also important that the structures that were set up were spacious enough to accommodate both the horses and the cab so as to avoid situations where the horses still ended up in the sun.

The organisations stated :

“It is truly shameful for Malta that whilst promoting cabs horses as a tourist attraction, it is at the same time also exhibiting the lack of animal rights and welfare that still exist in this island.

“As a result, we are kindly requesting that a concrete and permanent solution is found to address this issue of animal cruelty once and for all.

“We cannot understand why such a simple and straightforward decision is taking whole years to be adequately addressed and why year after year, the situation has still not improved.”

The organisations are Animal Rights Group, Moviment Graffiti, Island Sanctuary, Greenhouse, SOS Animals Malta, National Cat Society, International Animal Rescue, St Francis of Assisi Foundation, Street Cat Rescue, Stray Animal Support Group, Share Malta, Noah’s Arc, Abandoned Animals Association, Cefree, Alternattiva Demokratika Zaghzagh, Nature Trust, Ananda Marga, Centru Tbeix, SPCA-Gozo, SPCA-Malta.

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## Comments

Franco Farrugia (1 day, 19 hours ago)

@ Jana Pierce - I wonder who is the stupid commentators, here. Horses are animals and they deserve a decent life. If cab drivers are unable to give them this decent life, and I maintain that some of them do not, then, yes, for the sake of the horses, let us ban the cabs. Year in, year out, I have been harping at every beginning of summer, so that horses are given what they deserve and what is theirs by right - that is, decent working hours, not under the scorching sun! and yes, also adequate shielding from the sun. Now, is that so much to ask? And yet, every summer, the same thing happens - everyone looking the other way. So, I ask you: who is the stupid commentator? Nobody has a right to earn a living off the hardship of animals!!!!!! And anyway, if some individuals' 'employment' hangs by a shoestring, then it is up to them to fight their way out and get themselves decently employable. So, let's stop a country from moving on, because this is the only work I do! Hmpphhh!

Andrea Portelli (2 days, 19 hours ago)

Yes I agree with Claire Busuttil

It's not the first time one see's a horse racer trotting on a main road on his carriage. can you imagine seeing horses trotting on the Auto Bahn or A1??

Only In Malta

.....Konna U ghadna nghixu, Pajjiz tal-mickey mouse....

Claire Busuttil (2 days, 19 hours ago)

@s.aquilina yes you are right, tourists should boycott cab horses, if they are animal lovers. When I went to finland, was really tempted to do a dog sleigh ride, but after seeing how they are treated, I changed my mind.

Jana Pierce (2 days, 19 hours ago)

The cabs are a good thing for everyone - for the tourists, for the drivers, for Malta, and yes, for the horses.

Horses need a job to thrive and have a place in this world.

And adequate shelter from the sun is reasonable and desirable, and should be erected. However, the hysterical calls for banning the horses is just plain stupid. The drivers and owners have a right to earn a living, and the horses have a right to do the same.

A well-taken care of horse can work in extreme heat with little hardship. If certain guidelines are followed, there will be few problems.

Let the horses and driver alone!

s aquilina (2 days, 22 hours ago)

@Ruby Jenner - Totally agree 100%. Tourists should be discouraged from using the Karozzin which is nothing more than a pleasure ride for passenger at a huge discomfort to these poor animals. Unlike Mdina, Valletta does not have the natural structure to accommodate these rides without burdening the horse. With steep hills, highly congested and polluted streets it is certainly no environment fit for a leisurely horse ride. Summer time is even more punishing, the horse suffers from sun exposure just like any of us. Just think, these horses are brought on site early in the morning and not take back to their stables before late afternoon.

John Law Gatt (3 days ago)

It is well to think about Adequate Structures for the poor cabbie horses. BUT HOW ABOUT ADEQUATE STRUCTURES FOR BUS TRAVELLERS AT THE VALLETTA BUS TERMINAL...one has to endure the hot sun/heat/rain and cold weather and also not to mention a bench for elderly persons to rest on...this is 2009.

charles grech (3 days, 2 hours ago)

Where is the "Animal Welfare Department"? AWD only boasts when putting down animals or attacking animal sanctuaries in dire need of help

Claire Busuttil (3 days, 3 hours ago)

poor horses, having to stay for long hours in the sun, if you are in Valletta, you can see them suffering in the heat.

besides, this, horses on our roads, are becoming more frequent to see, sometimes, you

have to drive behind these animals, with a 20km/h.....

When is there going to be a serious government, making horse riding/cabs, illegal on our roads?!?!?

oh yes, and one last thing, do you know how much these cab owners charge for a valletta tour?!?!? ....do they have a VAT book???? how is their income calculated?!?! jekk dawn n nies se ikomplu iqaxru haj lit turist.....ovvja li t turist ma jigix aktar l hawn!!!

Joseph Caruana (3 days, 3 hours ago)

The call is legitimate and does not refer to the accounting or costing of the call but rather it focuses on the need to ensure proper hygiene and shelter standards to reflect the need to treat animals with responsibility. at least!!

If people want to argue about the money to be spend, who to pay up, where the stand ought to be and all that stuff. Then push for something to be done are the department of animal welfare seems like is not even considering animal welfare as yet.

The call is for the responsible treatment of this issue not the postponement of it.

J oatmon (3 days, 3 hours ago)

The year is 2009 not 1909. The horse is no longer used as transport in the developed world, because of the hassles, mess, flies and inconvenience.

Horses still have their place on the race track and in the country, they are more trouble than they are worth in cities and towns, that is why they are banned from cities and towns in many countries.

2009 and it's time for the horse carriages to be banished from the streets in Malta.

emanuel muscat (3 days, 5 hours ago)

When are we going to stop asking dad to buy us a lollipop since now we are adults? The horses belong to their owner who in turn makes money. So the responsibility for their care lies with the owner. The govt. is responsible only for the relative regulation. This applies not only to cabs but to all businesses. Mr. Decesare it applies for your organisation too.! Stop begging and asking. Discuss prices, behaviour "the rich by tomorrow" attitude. Yes there is competition. Smart up to it man! and lead your folk. Seek for good management. The fact that one owns an establishment does not qualify him to run it. The authorities, the govt. and even more the opposition should be one front for this new attitude. Otherwise one is always a winner, without any effort. Let us grow.!!

Franco Farrugia (3 days, 5 hours ago)

It is about time that the animal associations spoke as one voice to what I have been repeatedly saying about the plight of these horses. Another summer has passed and the authorities, ministries and ministers, have ignored the plight of these horses - for yet another summer. I have been repeatedly writing about what these horses are going through. It is even for such a reason, yes, that I would be in favour of cabs being disbanded altogether, since the owners DO NOT really care for their horses.

John Inguanez (3 days, 8 hours ago)

If animals need protection from the sun, why don't we subsidize the private contractors so that they provide shelter from sun to the construction workers; road builders, decorators

and the lot.

Do animals have rights from than humans? I am baffled.

How do you reason, that government cuts subsidies on our utilities, and then pay subsidies to protect the animals. That's fair enough, the organizations will say. But ask those who were hit by the subsidy-less energy tariffs.

Let's be reasonable for once. If the animals need protection, the cabs owners should form a cooperative, run their business as it should be and then provide the shelters themselves. They are self-employed as others. No distinction please.

Joe Fenech (3 days, 8 hours ago)

Who do you think is going to walk down there to get a carriage ride? Putting them there is only hiding an issue not solving it! They need to be in Valletta centre to attract people, on condition that they have shelter, and hygiene and that animal welfare standards are maintained. Owners also need to pay a fee for an animal waste cleaning service and other amenities.

d bugeja (3 days, 9 hours ago)

this animal abuse is being done in front of the public's eye, government and the animal welfare

and yet all the authorities talk without taking any action in improving the well being of these creatures. It is shameful that these animals are being treated in the bare eyes of the authorities.

I am in favour in that the animal welfare is doing raids to stop animal abuse, but please these horses needs shelters.

Alfred Curmi (3 days, 9 hours ago)

I hope that I'm not wasting my time writing this comment and yours' (dear readers) reading it since in our beloved country so many words are wasted because nothing is ever done, especially when potential voters can be hurt.

Anyway, I believe the whole sector needs to be regularised.

# The horses need to be protected also before and especially after their calvary during the day. I have frequently encountered these poor creatures being DRIVEN HOME to their stables through Hamrun, presumably going as far as Qormi and Birkirkara if not further away in the scorching afternoon sun after hours in Valletta. Why are the owners not obliged to take them to work in horse boxes. Besides, can you imagine how these cabs slow down the traffic in our narrow roads?

# If the cab is a traditional vehicle, the drivers should be made to wear traditional garb and not the vulgar clothing resembling colourful underwear which some of them usually sport.

# Cleanliness is also a must. A leather bag must be introduced under the horses' bellies. This can be seen all over Europe and in Turkey. Are our horses more delicate than those elsewhere?

Mario Tabone-Vassallo (3 days, 9 hours ago)

Facil, jekk jarmaw umbrella kbira tax-xemx li jorbtu mal-lasta tal-karozzin, jistghu jzommu z-ziemel fid-dell u mhux biss meta jkun wieqaf, jekk iridu. Ma jistax il-gvern

jaqta' s-sussidji tal-gass tax-xjuh u wara jissussidja x-xoghol privat bla htiega. Meta mmorru l-bahar ilkoll hekk naghmlu

Joseph E Briffa (3 days, 10 hours ago)

It's high time that the authorities did something to alleviate the lot of these cab horses that are at the complete mercy of their owners. These horses are made to work night and day and have to stand for hours in the scorching heat of Malta's summer which, particularly this year, has been unbearably hot and sticky. There is no way that the horses' owners can be persuaded to treat them any better. The horses are deprived of any shelter, they are made to carry overweight people up hills in the hottest part of the day. I remember that in Vienna horse cabs were not allowed to work when the temperature was below zero; so why are horse cabs in Malta allowed to work during heat waves? It's about time the pertinent authorities give more than a thought to animal welfare; but then this is not surprising when one considers that not even human beings are looked after, otherwise how would one explain the lack of proper facilities for cyclists, and for bus drivers at the Valletta terminus? Where are proper washing and sanitary facilities for bus drivers? Are our politicians in a comatose state?

Renald Galea (3 days, 10 hours ago)

Some thinking outside the box is required.

The miniscule profit to Malta's image and profit derived from allowing horse-drawn cabs to ply our streets is heavily upset by the negative image and impact suffered.

Even if a satisfactory solution is found to the highlighted problem, one must consider the stench of urine which permeates the horses' waiting area and route; the dung they drop (which is left to sink into the warm tarmac) and the angst and confusion caused to other road users.

All in all, horse-drawn cabs should be banned from our streets.

As a corollary to the subject, while in Mdina two days ago I noticed that while the only cab was indeed fitted with rubber wheels, the horse was shod in steel and was leaving deep scratches in the expensive paving.

Ruby Jenner (3 days, 10 hours ago)

Tourist's should not use these cab's when they visit Malta and then perhaps something will be done to protect these animal's.

J Farrugia (3 days, 10 hours ago)

to these organisations I have one thing to say, whenever they want we can exchange places and they sit where I sit to smell the fresh aroma of the stench left by the horses, at the entrance of the upper Barrakka Gardens. It is wonderful. Who knows maybe they will build their own home there near the Emigrants Commission's office and bear this wonder foul smell coming from where 6-10 cabs fight it out between them. Asking for 80 euros and then falling to 25 euros. These NGOs had better take care of themselves first before commenting on other national scourges. These cabs have to be disbanded asap.