

## Pullicino gives blessing to the end of spring trapping and sea shooting

THE OFFICIAL dates for the autumn and winter hunting and trapping seasons have been officially agreed upon by the Ornis Committee and blessed by Minister George Pullicino, MaltaToday can reveal.

The new seasons will kick off on September 1 and end on January 31, effectively signalling that trapping and hunting at sea in spring will finally come to an end.

The negotiated position between Malta and the EU already commits the Maltese government

to stop all trapping in 2008.

The dates for spring hunting on land will have to be discussed at a forthcoming Ornis Committee meeting. A decision to go for hunting in spring will be counter to EU directives.

The Ornis Committee, which is now chaired by lawyer Tonio Azzopardi, fell short of adding new species to the list of specially protected birds or reducing the number of days hunting can take place in the autumn.

This will be the second time that spring trapping ▶ page 9



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## Internet provider resists MCA's attempts to pass on data to Israeli spy firm

Matthew Vella

WITH DOUBTS over the choice of Israeli firm Verint to supply its eavesdropping technology to the Malta Security Service, more operators are disputing the Malta Communications Authority's demand for access to internet service providers' (ISP) networks.

Webwaves Ltd has demanded the authority not to divulge confidential information on its network structure to the Israeli spy firm Verint, the firm whose technology will be used by the MSS to intercept telephone and cellular phone calls, and also email and internet communication.

According to Webwaves director Joe Tabone, not to be confused with his namesake who chairs MCA, the system may be prone to attack if such sensitive information falls in the wrong hands and other unauthorised third parties.

After protesting with the authority, Joe Tabone was told by the MCA that his ISP's network structure would not be passed on to the Israeli firm,

which has close links with the Israeli government and whose research and development costs are reimbursed up to 50 per cent by Israel's ministry of trade and development.

Tabone had originally resisted the MCA's demands to release confidential information on the Webwaves network structure. The authority however warned it would impose a fine if he failed to comply with its demands.

"If a person intends to do an electronic attack to a system, the first exercise would be to get as much information as possible of the target system structure.

"For me, giving away this system structure to anybody outside the company, means that an entity outside the company will find it much easier to intrude into a system," Tabone told MaltaToday.

Joe Tabone has challenged what he terms is a "wrong and illegal" perception of the MCA of what "legal interception" entails. ▶ page 7

## Bid to remove Karmenu Vella by merging union sections

Karl Schembri

PLANS ARE in the offing to dismantle the Professional and Services Section in the General Workers' Union headed by Karmenu Vella and merge its members with another section in a bid to get rid of the moderate

union leader.

Sources close to the union say Vella is under attack and his section is clearly up for a shake-up in what would be perhaps the simplest way of getting rid of him.

For long Vella has been targeted in anonymous leaflets as one of

"Emanuel Micallef's clique" and a "Nationalist" together with Josephine Attard Sultana – just sacked by the union last week – and ports section secretary Emanuel Zammit.

Contacted Friday, GWU President Salv Sammut would not confirm or deny ▶ page 9

## Emanuel Micallef interviewed pages 12-13



**“ In a way, Tony Zarb is not a leader. He is more of a compromise type of person, in the sense however that instead of having vision and coming out with a direction, Tony just listens to what the people in front of him say... he will side with the majority. This happens every time. ”**

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