



Muscat's far-reaching reform pgs 8-9 ▶

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DID THEY REALLY NEED THE CASH?



Alfred Sant, Louis Deguara, Jesmond Mugliett, Francis Zammit Dimech, and Tony Abela all got compensation for their service as ministers

As people worry over energy bills, ex-ministers get €157,000 'to find a job'

JULIA FARRUGIA

WITH consumers and businesses alike reeling from the massive hike in utility bills, eight former ministers and former Opposition leader Alfred Sant will be receiving €157,000 from the Prime Minister in the form of a 'terminal benefit'.

Revealed last Sunday by sister newspaper Illum, Sant and the former PN ministers – Louis Deguara, Ninu Zammit, Censu Galea, Francis Zammit Dimech,

Jesmond Mugliett, Edwin Vassallo, Michael Frendo, and Tony Abela – have been compensated under Lawrence Gonzi's plan, announced back in April, to help former ministers find their feet as they rejoin the labour market.

But to add insult to injury, MaltaToday can confirm that most of these MPs were back to work just months, if not weeks after the March election, some of them in their very own firms where a job was waiting for them.

Altogether, these eight MPs and one

former MP will each get the equivalent of a yearly working man's salary – more than enough to pay electricity and water bills for years to come.

The Gonzi compensation was announced to help former ministers get back into private employment after spending years in the service of the country.

But as Members of Parliament, today these former officials are already enjoying their annual €16,305 honoraria. Only Tony Abela, the notary from Rabat,

failed to make it to the House this time around.

And Mugliett, Deguara, Abela and Vassallo already had a private practice or a business to return to, after being ditched from the Cabinet by Gonzi himself.

Contacted by MaltaToday, former minister Michael Frendo who was awarded €10,823, confirmed that he was already working. A lawyer by profession, Frendo said he only took that part of the compensation for his service as minister, and not

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Malta's €25 million tuna claim under investigation



Joe Borg has been accused of 'threatening' countries into supporting higher quotas

RAPHAEL VASSALLO

Malta's claims concerning some €25 million worth of live bluefin tuna, caught in 2007, are currently the subject of an international investigation after being openly rubbished by conservation groups, MaltaToday can confirm.

In a high level meeting in Morocco over the past week, Malta struggled unsuccessfully to convince officials of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna – the inter-governmental fishery organisation, currently responsible for the conservation of tuna – of the verac-

ity of its declarations regarding the amount of live fish carried over to 2008 from 2007.

ICCAT and its signatory states met on November 17 in Marrakech, where environmentalists and industry exponents battled for a week over the fate of the bluefin tuna, listed as a critically endangered species on account of over-fishing.

The controversy concerning Malta centres on government's claims that €25 million worth of tuna, 1,350 tonnes in all, was fished in 2007 and carried over to 2008, and is currently being held in four separate tuna ranches: a declaration denied by conservation groups.

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