

*Bill amending the Civil Protection Act (Cap 411 of the Laws of Malta)*

At present the Civil Protection Act (Cap 411 of the Laws of Malta) does not provide for the granting of pensions and to the circumstances in which pensions may be granted. The Act caters only for those police officers who have been transferred to the Assistance and Rescue Force set up under this Act. In this regard, the police officer shall be deemed to have remained in the Police Force during their period of service with the Assistance and Rescue Force, and such officer shall be entitled to a pension in accordance with the Police Act (Cap 164 of the Laws of Malta).

To this effect, amendments are being proposed with a view to granting the 25 years service to members of the Assistance and Rescue Force within the Civil Protection Department. In this regard, a bill has been presented before Parliament with a view to introducing new pensions provisions as well as provisions dealing with removal from office, retirement on the ground of public interest and information to be granted to persons entitled to a pension.

The principal aim of these amendments is the insertion of the circumstances in which a pension may be granted. To this effect, a pension may only be granted:

- If the officer has attained the age of fifty-five years or if he has completed twenty-five years' service in the Force after he attains the age of fifty;
- If the officer's office has been abolished;
- In the event of compulsory retirement for the purpose of facilitating improvement in the organisation of the Force;
- In case of termination of employment in the public interest;
- On medical evidence to the satisfaction of the Minister that such officer of the Force is incapable by reason of infirmity of mind or body of discharging the duties of his office and that such infirmity is likely to be permanent.

The Bill also provides for the grounds of removal from office. In this regard, an officer of the Force shall be removed from office on grounds of inefficiency, infirmity of body or mind and on grounds of public interest.

The Bill has been introduced in Parliament in December 2014 and is currently being discussed in parliament at second reading.

