

MEMORANDUM TO CABINET BY THE HON. MINISTER OFPUBLIC BUILDING & WORKSPayment of bills in respect of works carried
out in Public Toilets

For a number of years the Public Works Department has followed the practice of seeking a priority list from the Health Department before works on public toilets are taken in hand.

The Estimates for 1970/71 provided £4,000 for the construction of Latrines (Vote 32 B.1.) The same amount is provided in the Draft Estimates for the current financial year. (Vote 33 B.1.)

By letter-minute dated 11th March 1970 the Minister of Health was informed by the Minister of Public Building and Works that it was expected that works on the proposed public convenience at Zurrieg would be started at an early date. The aim of this communication was to enable the Chief Government Medical Officer to earmark funds. No reaction to this letter-minute was sent to the Minister of Public Building and Works by the Minister of Health. In March 1971 a number of cash vouchers covering works on the Zurrieg Public Convenience were referred to the Chief Government Medical Officer for settlement. None of the vouchers was honoured.

The contractors are threatening to sue Government for payment. On the other hand the Public Works Department is unwilling to order or execute works which may not be paid for.

The matter was taken up personally with the Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Customs and Port who declared that once there was a vote for the construction of toilets, bills for works on such toilets should be charged to it.

At the same time a toilet commenced at Mgarr some 2 years ago has had to remain uncompleted because the Ministry of Health has not released the balance required.

Hon. Ministers are requested to advise that payment of all amounts due to complete these two conveniences be charged to vote 33 B.1.