

This morning a meeting was held by Formentera's local safety commission, La Junta Local de Seguretat, at which Formentera Island Council president Jaume Ferrer; island director to the National Administration in Eivissa and Formentera Rafael Garcia; the head of Formentera Local Police; the corporal of the Guàrdia Civil of Formentera; a representative from the Civil Protection volunteer corps and a representative of each of the local political parties were present.



The goal of the meeting was to take a look back at the 2013 summer season and review certain safety issues. As is also protocol at the start of the summer, the Council president and the island director of the National Administration had previously met with representatives of local citizens' groups with a mind toward surveying current issues and concerns in order to transmit these to the safety junta.

Both the Council president and the island director of the National Administration highlighted the positive statistics registered this year and gave a positive review of the tourist season. Both representatives noted the deft coordination on issues of safety that redounded to resolutions of existing problems and permitted a streamlining of both material and human resources. The two men also spoke about the importance of making safety a priority not just in summer, but all year long.

As every year at the junta's November meeting, the president of the Formentera Council reviewed this year's statistics on public order through 31 October as provided by the local police. Important among these data was a continued decrease in police charges brought for camping (illegal in Formentera); an increase in charges for ambulant vending; and a decreased number of reported cases of dogs without a lead thanks to an animal control campaign organised last year on the island.

With respect to vehicle traffic and public order, 536 traffic stops were effectuated in 2013

compared to last year's figure of 339. Two thousand six-hundred eighty-eight vehicles received some sort of sanction, of which 1,030 had to be removed by the municipal tow truck. The majority of these cases were for illegally-parked motor-scooters. Also registered by the statistics were 29 traffic accidents in urban areas and 50 abandoned vehicles on public land.

Cases of illegal camping, which have steadily dropped since stricter regulations were adopted in 2010, continued the trend this year. Thirty-seven cases were recorded in 2013 compared to 60 last year and 104 in 2011. Increased vigilance to this effect was key to the change, thus achieving one of the local administration's most important objectives: preserving the natural patrimony of the island.

Cases of failure to comply with the municipal ordinance prohibiting animals without a lead in public areas registered a considerable drop. Only 14 tickets were given for dogs off of lead and no cases were recorded of damages or attacks. This figure last year was 27. As a measure to reduce incidences of this sort, last year criminal sanctions were toughened and fines were increased. With fines for having a dog off of lead between 150 and 750 euros, infractions to the municipal ordinance decreased considerably.

Statistics regarding ambulant vending indicate increased cases of criminal charges as a result of more exhaustive police controls. Police reported 157 cases in 2013 (particularly on beaches) compared to 117 in 2012 and 87 in 2011.

The ordinance on street advertising that entered into effect last summer redounded to 103 infractions, compared to only 21 cases in 2012. This can be attributed to increased control efforts on the part of Formentera's Office of Activities.

In other information of interest, 26 cases were filed by the local police for failure to comply with Public Health Law 1/92 regarding possession and consumption of illegal substances. Ninety-five percent of these cases were for activity in Sant Ferran, where 12 people were detained, the majority of the time for cases of illegal levels of blood alcohol. Thirty-four cases of due diligence were reported to the local courts for incidences of criminal behaviour, municipal infractions and damages to public property, and 59 charges were filed for cases of failure to comply with established hours of operation and other ordinances, resulting in confiscated stereo equipment and business closures. A total of 97 cases were logged for illegal construction activity.

For his part, Eivissa and Formentera's island director of the National Administration, Rafael Garcia, highlighted a 6% drop in penal offences: criminal offences (delictes) were reduced by 3.7% and simple infractions (faltas) by 10.2%. With respect to the 356 offences to local patrimony and to socioeconomic order that were recorded – mainly offences for robbery and theft – this year's figure was 4.6% lower than last year's (373).

Public order is one of the priorities of the Formentera Council's governing team. For this reason, controls by the Formentera Local Police will continue to be more stringent and coordination with other institutions of public safety more comprehensive. All of these measures contribute to an improvement of safety on the island of Formentera.