

المسار almasar

The Official Monthly Magazine of Dubai's RTA

Issue No. 177 March 2023

**Taxis to go 100%
eco-friendly by 2027**

**Air Taxi emulates future
mobility in Dubai Sky**



Vision

The world leader in seamless & sustainable mobility.

Mission

We provide seamless and safe travel with innovative, sustainable mobility solutions and services to make every journey in Dubai a world-class experience.

Self-Driving Transport



Dubai has taken advanced steps in achieving the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President, Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai to become the smartest city in the world. Such a drive entails sustaining the city's pioneering role in shaping the future of global mobility including self-driving transport.

During the World Government Summit held in 2023, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum has endorsed the Air Taxi stations (Aerial Taxi Vertiports) models and designs, in addition to the partners which RTA is currently working with for running the operations and investing in the infrastructure required for the readiness of the city to run the service. Four provisional locations have been selected for Air Taxi stations, Dubai Downtown (Burj Khalifa District), Dubai Marina, Dubai International Airport, and Palm Jumeirah. According to the timelines set, the Air Taxi is expected to start operation by 2026.

By the end of this year, Dubai is gearing up to operate the autonomous taxi in collaboration with the GM Cruise. As such, Dubai will be the first city in the world to operate GM Cruise vehicles outside the USA. Work is currently underway in preparing for the trials phase which is scheduled to start this March. GM Cruise vehicles are fitted with a sensor system of cameras, lasers and radars to capture the data of the surrounding environment.

These vehicles will be operated in Jumeirah 1 as a preparatory stage for launching the service by the end of this year. They will function in a safe mode of Machine Learning that enables them to collect data about the attitudes of drivers and road users, which is used to support the subsequent self-driving operation of these vehicles.

Self-driving transport has become a reality. Global companies are gathering pace in advancing the technology and software for operating autonomous vehicles. Represented by entities concerned with licensing the operation of autonomous vehicles, governments are engaged in upgrading the infrastructure of autonomous vehicles and enacting legislation governing operation.

Led by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Dubai was a pioneer of self-driving transport. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed launched Dubai Strategy for Self-Driving Transport in 2016 aimed to convert 25% of mobility journeys in Dubai into smart self-driving journeys by 2030. RTA charted out plans to turn the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum into a reality. It embarked on studying and testing different prototypes of driverless vehicles and mobility means to select the most suitable models for enhancing connectivity and easing mobility, ultimately fostering the wellbeing of residents.

H.E. Mattar Al Tayer

Director General, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors

المسار almasar

Strategic Map For AlMasar Magazine Team

Vision

The Pioneer
Government
Magazine in Dubai

Mission

To work in the spirit
of team in presenting
achievements, enhance
Success , and document
roles of RTA.

Core Values

Transparency &
Credibility
Corporate Reputation
Excellence
Spirit of Team
knowledge Sharing

Reciprocal Ads Initiative

Al Masar magazine Editorial Board offers the Reciprocal Ads initiative whereby a space for an advert is allocated to strategic partners and other government entities against allocating the same space in the magazine of the beneficial entity during the same month for the benefit of the RTA.

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News

- 15 Two million riders used public transport on a single day.
- 16 621 million riders used public transport, shared mobility and taxis in 2022
- 19 Mobility Research and Innovation Centre at the University of Birmingham opens

Projects

- 22 Flyover linking Ras Al Khor and Nadd Al Hamar Streets Opened

Achievements

- 24 Taxis to go 100% eco-friendly by 2027
- 26 RTA obtains Technology Maturity Model Integration certification
- 26 Route 2020 scoops new regional award



Cover story

06 Air Taxi emulates future mobility in Dubai Sky

Services

- 28 Quick Vehicle Testing & Registration Centre Opens at Seih Shuaib
- 29 RTA, Huawei Community launch 'Draw with Salama' contest
- 30 Trial run of autonomous delivery robots starts
- 31 Dubai Taxi enhances school bus services for students of determination
- 32 Udrive serves Hatta's residents, tourists



Activities

- 34 CIECA delegation visits Licensing Agency
- 35 Customers Council considers improvement of Abra services
- 36 2.8m rides for Careem BIKE since launched in Feb 2020
- 38 AI legislation in transport under review



Community Safety

- 39 campaigns on misuse of right-of-way and beaches
- 40 Health & Safety Open Day calls for using hi-tech
- 41 Emirates Parkings authorized to tow and impound violating vehicles
- 42 Dubai Road Facilities Condition Index hits 95%





UAE President, Vice-President
attend World Governments Summit

Vice-President: Our mission of the WGS is to provide a global platform for shaping the future



His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, and His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, attended part of the key activities of the World Governments Summit 2023 held in Dubai from 13 to 15 February. The event featured a discussion session hosted by His Excellency the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, and a session by His Highness Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah.

Activities of the WGS were also attended by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Mohammed Al Sharqi, Crown Prince of Fujairah, and several Sheikhs and senior officials. The event was marked by the participation of more than 10,000 government leaders/officials, heads of international organisations, mega companies, entrepreneurs, experts and specialists in various fields.

The World Governments Summit brought together this year 20 heads of state and government, 250 ministers, 10,000 business leaders, government officials, thought leaders and prominent global experts in addition to 80 international organisations. The summit held 220 sessions in which speeches were made by 300 international dignitaries from Presidents, ministers, experts,

thinkers and future makers.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, stated that the UAE's mission in organising the World Governments Summit is to provide an international platform for shaping the future, celebrating innovation, and honouring those with inspiring experiences and influential success stories whose efforts have contributed to transforming the lives of societies, and creating solutions to the challenges facing people.

His Highness said: "The huge changes that we are bound to witness in the coming years require governments to be prepared with proactive thinking and technology-driven innovative solutions, besides developing business models and government mentality to be more flexible and matching with the expected major transformations.



Mohammed bin Rashid approves models of aerial taxi vertiports at World Government Summit

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, accompanied by H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of Dubai Executive Council, approved models of aerial taxi vertiports developed by the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority (RTA).

The models were displayed at the Authority's stand at the World Government Summit 2023. His Highness was briefed about potential partners identified by the RTA to operate and invest in the infrastructure required to bring the aerial taxi project to fruition.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed was accompanied by H.H. Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group; Mohammad bin Abdullah Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Chairman of the World Government Summit (WGS) Organisation; Omar bin Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy

and Remote Work Applications and Managing Director of the WGS Organisation.

His Highness was also briefed by Mattar Al Tayer, Director-General and Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of RTA, on the latest updates to the aerial taxi operations project. The project aims to roll out a new mobility service driven by pioneering technology to ease the mobility of individuals across urban areas in a safe, smooth and sustainable manner integrated with the public transport network in Dubai. The service is set to be operational by 2026.





“The initial phase encompasses choosing both manufacturers and operators based on their technology and timeline, as well as determining the sites for vertiport installations. The initial network of vertiports will connect four main areas of Dubai: Downtown Dubai (Burj Khalifa area), Dubai Marina, Dubai International Airport and Palm Jumeirah,” said Al Tayer.

“Vertiports embody a revolutionary form of infrastructure that encompasses a range of facilities such as designated take-off and landing zones, a passenger waiting area, security protocols, and electric charging stations. These stations seamlessly integrate with other modes of transportation. The next step involves identifying exceptional investors who are experts in building the necessary infrastructure for the air mobility industry,” he added.

Sheikh Mohammed approved the prototype design of the first aerial taxi vertiport to be located near the Dubai International Airport, which will be seamlessly integrated with various modes of mass transportation. The vertiport comprises a structure that features two levels for car parking. The topmost roof serves as the terminal for aerial taxis, which will be connected to the Emirates Metro Station

via an air-conditioned bridge.

The vertiport boasts a contemporary design that complements the general appearance and charm of Dubai. A distinct and enjoyable mode of transportation will be offered to users, featuring air-conditioned facilities that have been crafted to meet top international safety standards for maximum convenience. The vertiport comprises four stands for aerial taxis and two landing areas, optimising its operational efficiency and maximising the utilisation of the station.

“The aerial taxi operation consists of two main stages; selecting the suitable technologies that meet global standards and forming a partnership with a specialist provider. To ensure the best outcome, companies are evaluated in terms of the technologies utilised in this cutting-edge form of sustainable transportation, as well as the comprehensive plan for its adoption and implementation,” he further added.

“The operation comprises four crucial elements. They include detailed negotiation with a multitude of companies active in this field, signing of commercial agreements, establishment of local entities to execute relevant business endeavours, development of the necessary infrastructure and the highly anticipated roll-out of the service.



■ RTA showcased its autonomous aerial taxi at the World Government Summit 2017. Also in the same year, the trial run was initiated for the first test flight of an air taxi capable of carrying two passengers. The purpose of this project is to develop the necessary commercial and technical abilities to offer this innovative service in the emirate.

“The second stage involves identifying a potential partner for investing in the infrastructure needed to introduce autonomous aerial taxis to Dubai’s skies. At present, commercial negotiations are in progress with the most promising and specialised investors globally in the realm of air mobility to construct the requisite infrastructure.

“The launch of the service hinges upon the preparedness of the companies and the legislative requirements for operating aerial taxis. This also involves a thorough examination of all operational details and ensuring that all safety and security measures are in place,” Al Tayer explained.

“The RTA’s aerial taxi initiative aligns with the Dubai Self-Driving Transport Strategy, aimed at transforming 25 percent of total mobility journeys in Dubai into driverless journeys by 2030. The RTA is working closely with the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, General Civil Aviation Authority and Dubai Air Navigation Services to create a one-of-a-kind comprehensive framework for the operation of such vehicles in Dubai. This includes the development of legislation and setting clear specifications and standards for vehicle operators. RTA, in collaboration with its strategic partners, outlines the flight paths for the vehicles, identifies take-off and landing sites, and specifies the necessary equipment for safe and efficient

operations,” Al Tayer said, in conclusion.

Aerial taxis possess the unique capability of vertical takeoff and landing and are sustainable, eco-friendly vehicles powered by electricity, emitting zero harmful pollutants to the environment. The taxis are also recognised for their safety, comfort, and speed, featuring the latest technological advancements in the field from around the world. With a range of 241.4 kilometres and a top speed of 300 kilometres per hour, the aerial taxi can accommodate up to four passengers plus a driver



Eco-friendly Air Taxi promotes transport integration

Study to expand services outside Dubai in the offing

Ahmed Hashem Bahrozian, CEO of the Public Transport Agency, Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) revealed that air taxi vertiports to be constructed nearby the Dubai International Airport will be completed in 2026. He added that the vertiport would be linked to the Emirates Metro station to ensure seamless integration with mass transportation means. He confirmed that the aerial taxi would be eco-friendly as it would be powered by electricity and could shuttle between cities in the UAE if the relevant authorities agreed to prepare vertiports for these flying vehicles in the near future.

4 Vertiports

According to Behrozian, several vertiports would be in operation in Dubai during the launch phase. They would be located in Dubai Marina, Palm Jumeirah, and Downtown Dubai. The first phase of launching the service will include these three vertiports over the next three years.

He added that discussions and collaboration with relevant authorities in other emirates might result in constructing several aerial taxi vertiports, enabling journeys between Dubai and Abu Dhabi, as well as Dubai and Northern Emirates.

240km

Speaking about the travel range of the vehicle after a single charge, he mentioned that the aerial taxi could cover over 240 kilometres in one trip.

He explained that the aerial taxi service would be appealing to both tourists and businessmen. He anticipated the service would be popular among both groups, particularly for intercity travel for fast and enjoyable travel at the same time. The aerial taxi vertiport near the airport consists of two helipads, one for take-off and the other for landing. There will be four rest and electric charging



stations. The aerial taxi is eco-friendly and powered by electricity, which makes transportation comfortable as it produces no carbon emissions and operates with low noise compared to other aircrafts.

Aerial Taxi

- The project is undertaken by RTA in cooperation with Skyports and Jupi companies, pioneers in the field of advanced air transport.
- It is expected to be operational by 2026.
- The air taxi hovers for a maximum range of 241 km and its top speed is 300 km per hour.
- With this project, Dubai is set to become the first city in the world to have an advanced vertical take-off and landing network.
- It features safe and efficient vertical take-off and landing operations to offer passengers an enjoyable flight.
- The initial phase covers the construction of 4 tentative vertiports near Dubai International Airport, Downtown Dubai, Palm Jumeirah and Dubai Marina.
- It operates through vertical take-off and landing and has zero operational emissions.

Dubai Air Taxi Launches in 2026



Travel distance
up to **241 km**

Maximum speed
of **241 km/h**

4 passengers
+ 1 pilot

4 vertiports in the initial stage

Downtown

- Dubai Marina
- Dubai International Airport
- Palm Jumeirah

Features

- Vertical take-off and landing
- Zero operating emissions
- Safety, convenience and fast turnaround

World Government Summit 2023:

Dubai to operate 10 driverless taxis by year-end

Mattar Al Tayer, Commissioner General for Infrastructure, Urban Planning and Well-Being Pillar at Dubai Government, Chairman of the Supreme Committee of Urban Planning in Dubai and the Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of RTA, was delivering a keynote speech on “Urban Planning: Pathways to Wellbeing.”

While referring to the need for including flexibility and innovation in urban planning, Al Tayer said these are achievable by adopting flexible policies, constant upgrading of facilities and services in the city, and benefiting from new mobility patterns such as self-driving transport.

Pointing out that Dubai aims to convert 25 per cent of trips to self-driving means by 2030, he announced: “Ten autonomous taxis will be operating in partnership with GM Cruise by the end of 2023.”

Hot topics

Al Tayer reaffirmed that fostering well-being and sustainability have become hot topics on the agenda of

politicians and policymakers.

“These elements have become particularly pressing given the strategic challenges faced by metropolitan cities in terms of high-growth rates of population, urbanisation & urban sprawl, rapid technology revolution, and global climate change. All of these elements underscore the need to chart out models, plans and projects for serving humans,” he said.

“Under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, Dubai foresaw these challenges facing cities. In 2021, His Highness launched the Dubai Urban Plan 2040, a strategic and flexible transformational plan aimed at



Dubai 2040



55% of Dubai residents to live within 800m or less from public transport stations



Areas of economic activities to expand to 168 square km



Green spaces to rise by 105%



Public beach areas to increase by 400%

making Dubai as the best city for living in the world. The plan charts out an integrated future map for sustainable urban development in the emirate focused on human wellbeing, improved quality of life and enhanced global competitiveness of Dubai.”

Three key aspects

Further reviewing the role of urban planning in enhancing wellbeing, and Dubai’s experience in this field, Al Tayer highlighted three more key aspects of urban planning, namely Land Use Planning, Infrastructure and Mobility and Environment and Sustainability.

He emphasised on the importance of integrating communities and optimising the use of infrastructure and transportation means to meet the needs of society.

Dubai’s Urban Plan 2040, he said, seeks to raise population density, and increase the scale of development and investment to benefit from the existing infrastructure and services by providing 80 per cent of the daily population’s needs within 20 minutes or less by walking, cycling or riding soft mobility means. “The plan also aims to retain 60 per cent of the total area of the emirate as natural reserves and rural areas.”

“The plan identifies five urban centres: the Historical Centre



Mattar Al Tayer:
Dubai perceives Urban Plan 2040 as a pathway to wellbeing

Dubai: Dubai will operate 10 driverless taxis by the end of this year, the chief of the emirate’s Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) said at the World Government Summit (WGS) 2023.

of the city in Deira and Bur Dubai, the Economic and Financial Centre in the Burj Khalifa and Business Bay areas, the Tourism and Entertainment Centre in Dubai Marina and Jumeirah Beach Residence, and the Exhibitions Centre at Expo 2020 City, and the Knowledge and Innovation Centre at Dubai Silicon Oasis.”



Flexible model

He said the plan also adopts a flexible model for the governance of urban planning that strikes a balance between sustainable development and optimal utilisation of lands and projects. "Work is underway to develop a comprehensive strategy for wellbeing in Dubai, with a view to creating a model for wellbeing that enhances Dubai's appeal as the best city for living in the world. The strategy encompasses three levels: individuals, communities and the city, and 17 agencies are working together to chart out this strategy. A survey was conducted among various segments of society and it screened over 12,000 respondents to gauge their needs and aspirations."

Al Tayer said efforts should be made to reduce the carbon footprint and adopt sustainable solutions to conserve resources for future generations. "His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, designated 2023 as the Year of Sustainability. In November this year, the UAE will host the Climate Change Conference (COP 28) at Expo City in Dubai."

Distinctive experiences

He rounded up his speech by reviewing the

Al Tayer cited some of the distinctive experiences of cities that employed urban planning to enhance the wellbeing of residents.

lessons learned from Dubai's experience, which he summarised in that plans and strategies had to be human-centric, set out priorities aligned with current and future needs to ensure resource sustainability, and focus on governance as an organisational structure that guarantees the implementation of plans developed. Among the lessons learned is providing integrated and accessible services in areas to achieve happiness for the community and reduce the need for long distance transportation. He also highlighted the need to use advanced technologies such as AI and big data to enhance the efficiency of city planning and decision-making as well as ensure periodic reviews of sector plans to ensure alignment, flexibility and adaptation to changes. He concluded by adding that success of cities was not a coincidence, but rather a result of systematic planning, efficient implementation, and ongoing development.

Hamdan bin Mohammed: Two million riders used public transport on a single day

Thanks RTA for developing a pioneering land and marine transport model, and soon the Air Taxi.

The metro share in public transport ridership grew by 3%, and marine transport increased by 1% compared with 2021

His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council, confirmed that two million riders used public transport means in Dubai on a single day.

RTA announced a record number of users of public and shared transport in Dubai, on Tuesday, February 21, reaching 2,003,057 passengers, the highest number recorded by public transport in Dubai on regular days (excluding New Year's Day).

The number of riders of the Dubai Metro Red and Green Lines reached 821,447 riders: with 571,803 riders for the Red Line, and 249,644 riders for the Green Line.

Dubai Tram transported 26,931 riders, public transport buses served 430,739 passengers, and marine transport means ferried 48,579 riders. Taxis in Dubai, (Dubai Taxi and franchise companies), were used by 523,919 passengers.

These figures could be achieved thanks to the huge efforts of RTA over the past years in diversifying and integrating

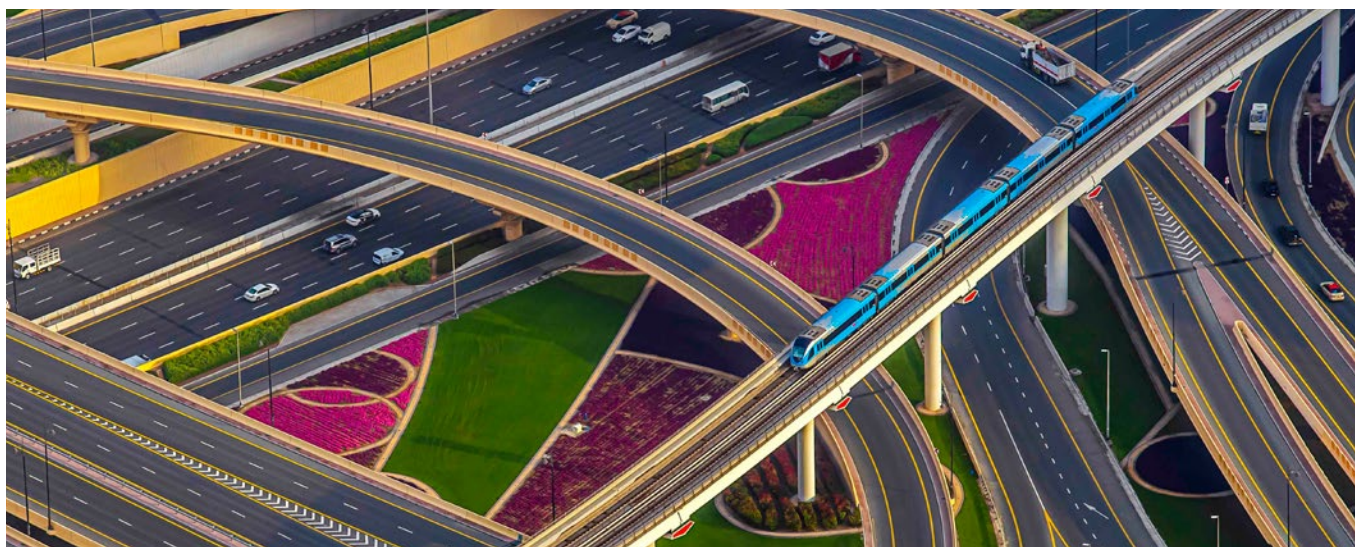


His Highness said in a tweet

“2 million riders used public transport services in Dubai on a single day. Thanks to the RTA team for their efforts in developing a pioneering transport model by land, marine and soon by air with the Air Taxi.”



mass transportation means, and they illustrate the effectiveness of plans and programmes implemented to provide various alternatives for the mobility of Dubai residents. Public transport means in Dubai are integrated and form the backbone of the movement of people across Dubai. The network succeeded in transforming the culture and attitude of all community segments towards the use of public transportation.



621 million riders used public transport, shared mobility and taxis in 2022 as daily ridership hit 1.7 million

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) announced that the ridership of public transport means comprising the Dubai Metro, Dubai Tram, public buses, marine transport (abra, ferry, water taxi, water bus), shared mobility (e-hail, smart car rentals, bus-on-demand), and taxis (Dubai Taxi and franchise companies' taxis) amounted to 621.4 million riders in 2022. The figure reflects an increase of 35% when compared to the ridership numbers in 2021, which was 461 million riders. Equally, the average daily ridership of public transport, shared mobility and taxis clocked 1.7 million riders in 2022 compared to 1.3 million riders in 2021.



His Excellency Mattar Al Tayer, Director-General, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of RTA, expressed his delight in the steady growth in the number of public transport riders in 2022. He was also pleased to note that the share of the Metro in Dubai's public transport ridership had increased by 3%, while marine

Al Tayer:

■ 35% upsurge in public transport ridership compared to 2021, with March touching a peak of 62 million riders

■ 61% of commuters used the metro and public buses

■ **Dubai Metro's share in the public transport landscape soared by 3%, and marine transport users grew by 1% compared to 2021**

transport riders showed a 1% rise when compared to 2021 levels.

“Dubai Metro acquired the largest percentage of the public transport, shared transport and taxis ridership in 2022, amounting to 36% up by 3% from the 2021 level of 33%. It is a good indicator of people shifting to public transport modes that serve a growing number of riders. The share of public buses reached 25%, and marine transport riders grew from 2% in 2021 to 3% in 2023. Meanwhile, shared mobility modes and Dubai Tram maintained their ridership levels, which amounted to 5% for shared transport, and 1% for Dubai Tram. March 2022 recorded an all-time high monthly ridership touching 62 million coinciding with the end of Expo 2020, followed by December which saw 57 million riders. Ridership rates in other months ranged from 46 to 56 million.

“Public transport and shared mobility means as well as taxis made 129 million trips (105 million for taxis, 18.5 million



for shared mobility, 4 million for buses, 936 thousand for marine transport, 450 thousand for Dubai Metro, and 99 thousand trips for Dubai Tram). October was the busiest month in terms of the number of trips recording 11.9 million trips, followed by March with 11.8 million trips. The numbers of trips in other months varied from 9.7 million to 11.6 million trips,” added Al Tayer.

Dubai Metro Riders

Figures released by RTA's Data Statistics and Analysis Section at the Enterprise Command and Control Centre indicated that the number of riders using Dubai Metro's

Red and Green Lines amounted to 225.1 million riders in 2022. Burjuman and Union Stations, which are interchange stations on the Red and Green Lines, accounted for the largest share of public transport riders of Dubai Metro in 2022. Burjuman Station served 13 million riders on both the Red and Green Lines, whereas the Union Station was used by 10.8 million riders.

On the Red Line, Al Rigga Station attracted the highest number of riders reaching 9.9 million, followed by Mall of the Emirates Station (9.6 million), Burj Khalifa/Dubai Mall Station (8.8 million) and the Business Bay Station (8.5 million).





On the Green Line, Sharaf DG ranked first in terms of riders recording 7.7 million ahead of Baniyas Station (7.3 million) followed by the Stadium Station (5.6 million), Salah Al Din Station (5.3 million), and Al Ghubaiba Station (4.9 million).

Other Transport Riders

The breakdown of other means of public transport commuters in Dubai last year was as follows: Dubai Tram (7.5 million), public buses (157.3 million), marine transport encompassing abras, water bus, water taxi, and Dubai Ferry (16 million), shared mobility comprising e-hail, smart car rental, and Bus-On-Demand (32.5 million), and taxis including Dubai Taxi and Franchise companies served a staggering 183 million passengers.

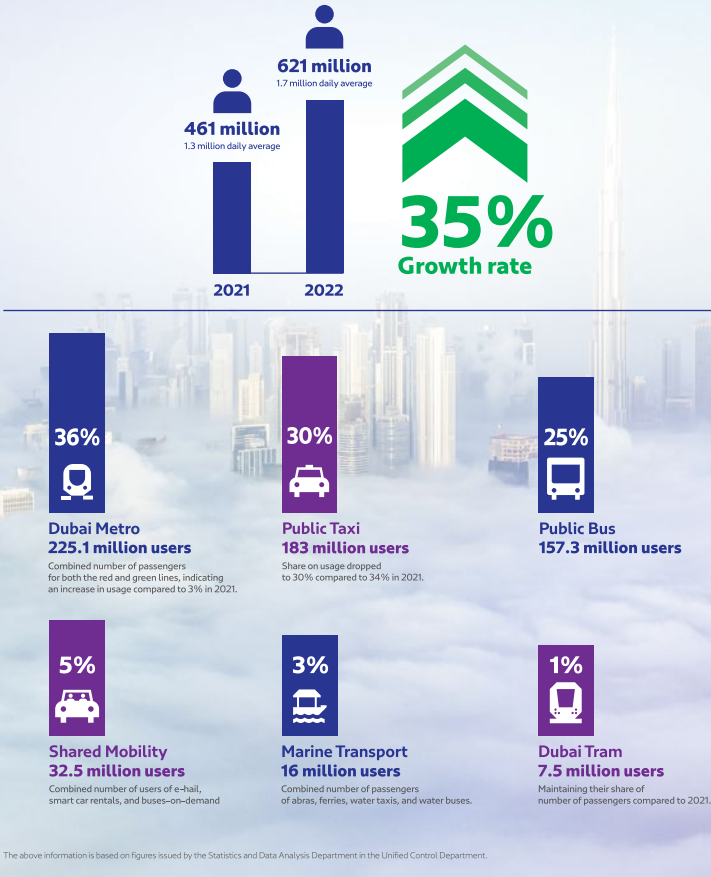
Integrated Network

■ The annual ridership figures of public and shared mobility means as well as taxis are a manifestation of the efficient plans and programmes undertaken by RTA to provide diverse mobility options that cater to the needs of Dubai’s residents and visitors. The numbers also demonstrate the integrated public transport network, which has become the backbone of residents and visitors’ movement around Dubai.

■ It reflects change and evolution in the culture and behaviour of the community toward using public transport. RTA’s strategic and executive road and transport plans are built on the principle of integration to ensure smooth mobility across the Emirate.

2022 Ridership Overview in Dubai

Total ridership of public transport, taxis and shared mobility



Opening Transportation Research and Innovation Pavilion (TRIP) at the University of Birmingham Dubai within the “UAE Innovates 2023”

His Excellency Omar Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for AI, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications, His Excellency Mattar Al Tayer, Director-General, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) in Dubai, and Her Excellency Huda Al Hashimi, Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Strategic Affairs, inaugurated RTA Transportation Research and Innovation Pavilion (TRIP), the first of its kind in partnership with the reputed University of Birmingham – Dubai.

TRIP aims to streamline the ongoing research efforts by focusing on infrastructure, urban planning and sustainability. It aspires to become a hub for hosting creative ideas and youth projects, supporting start-ups in marketing their innovations, spreading innovation culture, organising events that foster a work environment motivating creativity, familiarising with innovation programmes and accelerators, and publishing specialised scientific research in this field.

His Omar Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for AI, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications, emphasized that the UAE is keen to support innovation and innovators, and its strategic visions and future plans consolidate the qualitative and unique efforts of the research industry, which in turn enhances the UAE's standing as a global host for innovations and start-ups. Such efforts aim to uplift these practices to the highest international levels and foster the UAE's pioneering research innovations.”

“Advanced science and artificial intelligence technologies are critical for intensifying national efforts and forging scientific and research partnerships at the federal and local levels in support of

the “UAE Innovates 2023” initiatives. Such efforts contribute to grooming current generations to adopt robotic technologies as an integral part of creating new ideas and future technologies,” added Al Olama.

His Excellency Mattar Al Tayer stressed the importance of the centre and its contribution to creating innovative transport communities. He commended the centre's role in developing smart mobility solutions that contribute to RTA's vision: ‘The world leader in seamless & sustainable mobility’ and mission: ‘Provide seamless and safe travel with innovative, sustainable mobility solutions and services to make every journey in Dubai a world-class experience’, besides promoting the standing of Dubai as a global incubator for innovations and start-ups and developing innovative solutions to current and future transport challenges.

“The centre targets startups, governmental & non-governmental entities, academia, technology companies, innovation incubators and RTA's key vendors,” said Al Tayer who also praised the partnership with the reputed University of Birmingham.

Her Excellency Huda Al Hashmi said, “The UAE leadership



Al Olama: UAE is keen to support innovation and innovators through its strategic visions and future plans

Al Tayer: TRIP cements Dubai's profile as a global incubator for innovations and start-ups

Huda Al Hashmi: UAE leadership adopts sustainability as key pillar of innovation

believes in the importance of adopting sustainability as a pillar of innovations and specialised research. She stressed the UAE government's keenness to promote a culture of innovation by launching targeted initiatives in cooperation with local government agencies.

"The opening of RTA's Mobility Research and Innovation Centre contributes to strengthening the UAE's position as a global hub for sustainable innovation. It reflects the message of "UAE Innovates 2023", which focuses on sustainability, and seeks to translate the directives of leaders to build the capabilities of qualified human resources, support start-ups operating in the field of mobility, and launch initiatives focused on spreading the culture of innovation across the board," she added.

Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony included a mural displaying RTA's prominent innovative achievements since its establishment, and an overview of the centre covering its purpose and operation plan. It also included a presentation illustrating Talabat project, the pilot launch of autonomous food delivery robots known as (talabots) and the delivery of orders to guests attending the



opening ceremony. It also featured presentations by 5 metaverse companies where technology was employed in urban planning, providing services, and responding to customer inquiries.

The launch ceremony also included a presentation of "robots" and uses compatible with RTA's services in monitoring violating vehicles, occupied parking spaces, recharging parking balances, etc. There was also a presentation about 3D printing technology and its use in manufacturing some spare parts for the Rail Agency and raising operational efficiency. A presentation was made by the university for an R&D project for the use of robotics in digging tunnels, presentations of some start-ups and the idea of challenging start-ups. A presentation was also made about a success story of a start-up that developed the Bus On Demand service and reviewed the cooperation aspects with RTA.

Partnership Agreement

His Excellency Omar Sultan Al Olama, His Excellency Mattar Al Tayer, and Her Excellency Huda Al Hashemi attended the signing of a partnership agreement between RTA and the Global Innovation Management Institute – GIMI, which aims to establish the first regional innovation community (Innova Community), which will be the first of its kind in the region in the field of mobility transport research and innovation.

Hussein Al-Banna, CEO of Strategy and Corporate Governance Sector signed on behalf of RTA, and Dr. Hitendra Patel, Executive Director of GIMI signed on behalf of the Institute.

Supporting Ideas and Capacity Building

Their Excellencies Omar Sultan Al Olama, Mattar Al Tayer, and Huda Al Hashemi toured the centre and listened to a briefing from Hussein Al Banna about the Centre, which aims to support RTA's efforts in research and development and embrace creative ideas of Emirati youth, accelerate cooperation with start-ups, and create innovative transport communities.

The briefing included the centre's role in supporting new innovative ideas, capacity building, holding conferences, seminars, exhibitions and workshops both in person or online, and reviewing innovative global transport experiences. It also covered hosting emerging innovative ideas and projects through the innovation incubator and accelerators programme, promoting international competitions, supporting emerging companies and providing resources that promote innovative ideas.



Establishing and managing specialised transport innovation communities

Forging partnerships with universities and scientific research centres to support R&D at RTA

Building capacities in innovation and specialist scientific transport research

Plans

Fatima Al Mandoos, Director of Innovation and Pioneering at RTA's Strategy and Corporate Governance Sector stated that the activities undertaken by RTA demonstrate its intention to move from the current "Global Leadership" to the projected stage: "Global Impact".

"The centre, which was established at world-class standards, had developed plans for the set-up and launch stage, which covers employing qualified human resources and developing business and partnership models. Then comes the stage of providing innovation and research services, business incubation and supporting transport start-ups. It is followed by the transformation and change stage under a 3-year plan aimed to achieve local and global recognition of the centre and its research contributions and innovative transformative transport projects.

Innovation Month

RTA's Innovation and Pioneering Department organised an array of initiatives and events marking the Innovation Month 2023, which is held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President,

Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, under the theme: "UAE Innovates 2023" in the attendance of several leaders from RTA's sectors and agencies.

Additionally, several brainstorming sessions were held for university students together with a host of events related to innovation and sustainability. Discussions covered developing new ideas and motivating employees to innovate. A presentation was made for RTA's prominent innovative infrastructure projects along with the challenges, future directions, and innovative business models.

Among the initiatives carried out and still undertaken by RTA are Innovation Accelerators, Innovation and Future Hour, and Coffee with a Leader besides offering an opportunity for students, entrepreneurs, startups, researchers and specialists to chat with RTA's leaders, and identify challenges, future directions and innovation in business models under discussion. The Startup Challenge initiative offers an opportunity for entrepreneurs and startups to show their innovations to a jury consisting of RTA's experts, and representatives of investment and funding agencies for startups to compare and filter them according to specific criteria to select the Top 3 companies and support them.

RTA's initiatives during the Month of Innovation 2023 also include Students Ideas Factory where various activities and events targeting university students, academics and researchers will be presented to provide solutions related to proactive customer services, environmental sustainability and climate change. An initiative rolled out in partnership with the Mohammed bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation, which opens the door for the public to present innovative ideas and solutions to future challenges. Moreover, RTA will also showcase its innovative sustainability projects at the Global Village.

Opening flyover connecting Ras Al Khor, Nad Al Hamar Roads

Construction completed includes parts of Phase II of the Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Corridor Improvement Project

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) opened the flyover that connects Ras Al Khor and Nad Al Hamar Roads, as part of Phase II of the Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Corridor Improvement Project, which extends from the intersection of Ras Al Khor Road with Nad Al Hamar Road to the intersection of Ras Al Khor Road with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Road. Construction includes bridges and underpasses that span 1,471 metres, which will ramp up the road capacity to 30,000 vehicles per hour.

His Excellency Mattar Al Tayer, Director-General, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors, RTA, said, "Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Corridor Improvement Project is one of the strategic road projects ordered by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, as part of the continuous drive to upgrade the city's infrastructure. The project aims to enhance the efficiency of Dubai's infrastructure to support the emirate's strategic objectives across the board."

Phase I and Phase II involve widening Ras Al Khor Road over a sector extending 8km from the intersection with the Dubai-Al Ain Road up to the intersection with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Road, and constructing bridges spanning 2 km as well as a service road on both sides of the road. Upon the completion of the two phases, the project will enhance the capacity of Ras Al Khor Road to 10,000 vehicles per hour, slash the travel time from 20 minutes to about 7 minutes, boost traffic safety and flow, and resolve the existing overlapping of traffic.



“The project serves many major development projects inhabited by 650,000 residents, including The Lagoons, Dubai Creek, Meydan Horizon, Ras Al Khor, Al Wasl, and Nad Al Hamar Complex. In future, the project’s scope will cover the construction of Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Crossing, which crosses over the Dubai Creek and links Al Jaddaf in Bur Dubai with the road separating Dubai Creek Project and Dubai Festival City”, added Al Tayer.

Phase II

“The second phase includes improving the intersection of Nad Al Hamar Road and Ras Al Khor Road such that the capacity of the intersection will increase to 30,000 vehicles per hour by constructing a 2-lane bridge extending 988m to provide free left turn for traffic inbound from Nad Al Hamar Road heading to Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Road. It also includes the construction of another two-lane bridge extending 115m to serve the traffic incoming from Nad Al Hamar Road to Ras Al Khor Road in the direction of Dubai-Al Ain Road along with a two-lane underpass extending 368m to provide a right-turn for traffic coming from Ras Al Khor Road heading to Nad Al Hamar. Additionally, works also include widening the existing turns as well as Ras Al Khor Road in the sector extending from Nad Al Hamar Road intersection to Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Road intersection, which is expected to open at the end of next April.” Al Tayer further said.

Phase I

In December 2022, RTA opened the initial phase of this project which involved widening the road from three lanes to four lanes in both directions over 4 km and constructing two main bridges spanning 1,730 metres with a capacity of 10,600 vehicles per hour. One of the two main bridges constructed has 3 lanes and extends 740 metres to serve the traffic inbound from Dubai-Al Ain Road and Al Khail Road heading eastward to

the Dubai Creek Harbour. Its capacity is estimated at 7,500 vehicles per hour in the direction of entry.

The second is a two-lane bridge and ramps that span 990 metres with a capacity of about 3,100 vehicles per hour to serve the traffic from Dubai Creek Harbour towards Ras Al Khor Road. Works also include constructing a new 4-lane road extending 1.5 km along with entries and exits for the newly completed communities to ease the traffic movement from and to the intersection of Nad Al Hamar with Ras Al Khor Road.

Al Tayer: The project works include constructing bridges and underpasses extending 1,471 metres, with a capacity of 30,000 vehicles per hour

Upon completion, the project will improve Ras Al Khor Road capacity to 10,000 vehicles per hour

The travel time between Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Road and Bu Kadra Junction will drop from 20 to 7 minutes upon completion of the project

The project will serve developed communities inhabited by 650,000 residents



Dubai Taxis to become 100% eco-friendly by 2027

The Board of Directors of the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has endorsed a plan to transform taxis in Dubai (Dubai Taxi and franchise company taxis) into 100% environmentally friendly (hybrid, electric and hydrogen-powered) by 2027. The move meets the requirements of the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, the Green Economy drive, and the Dubai Government's strategic directions toward comprehensive environmental sustainability.

His Excellency Mattar Al Tayer, Director-General, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of the Roads and Transport Authority, said, "The plan to transform taxis into environmentally-friendly vehicles translates the directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President, Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai to optimise energy usage and promote environmental sustainability in the UAE. RTA has taken decisive action toward creating a safe, clean, and sustainable environment that befits Dubai's reputation. This initiative supports the Dubai Government's efforts to introduce green vehicles and promote a cleaner environment.

RTA has made remarkable progress in this regard, successfully transforming 72% of the taxis in Dubai into environmentally friendly vehicles, comprising a total of

8,221 hybrid vehicles. This significant accomplishment aligns with the overarching goal of optimising energy usage, creating a sustainable environment, and positioning Dubai as a leader in promoting green transportation.

"The 5-year plan (2023-2027-) aims to switch the entire taxi fleet into fully environmentally-friendly (hybrid, electric and hydrogen-powered) within five years at a rate of 10% per annum to achieve the targeted 100% by 2027. The plan is aligned with RTA's roadmap for transforming public transport means into emission-free by 2050," explained Al Tayer.

"The results of experiments on eco-friendly vehicles, which RTA started trialling in 2008, confirmed the environmental benefits of reducing carbon emissions, fuel consumption, and maintenance costs, as well as decreasing noise levels. Hybrid vehicles also have a longer lifespan compared to





regular vehicles and cost less in the long run. They are characterised by lower purchase prices, maintenance fees, fuel expenses, insurance premiums, and other associated costs that potentially could be as low as 50% of regular vehicles,” he further added.

Facts and Figures

Taxis have a huge role in Dubai as the operating taxi fleet in Dubai hit 11,371 taxis by the end of 2022. Taxis made 105 million trips and travelled over 2 billion km in the same year.

Success Factors

Dubai’s infrastructure is key in promoting the use of eco-friendly vehicles and increasing their demand. The fast pace of technology, coupled with the reduction in electric vehicle charging time from 8 hours to less than 1.5 hours, indicates that the charging time will continue to shorten in the future given the widespread of hydrogen refilling stations as an environmentally friendly alternative.

Low Emission

Dubai’s initial plan to transform 50% of its taxi fleet into eco-friendly has produced a remarkable reduction in carbon emissions by as much as 420,000 tons annually, equivalent to 70,000 tons per year. This has stimulated local automotive companies to roll out a range of hybrid vehicles tailored for the Gulf region

■ **Al Tayer: The initiative is in line with RTA’s roadmap to make public transport modes emission-free by 2050**

■ **Hybrid vehicles have lower life cycle costs compared to regular ones**

■ **RTA is seeking to create a safe, clean and sustainable environment**

■ **The initiative is In line with the master plan to reduce taxi emissions**

■ **The 5-year plan aims at a transformation rate of 10% per annum**

First Entity

RTA was a pioneer in the region when launching the trial of hybrid vehicles powered by fuel and electricity for its Dubai Taxi fleet in 2008. It marked the start of RTA’s dedicated efforts to transform the infrastructure of public transport networks to make them environmentally friendly.

DTC at the Forefront

The Dubai Taxi Corporation (DTC) boasts the largest fleet of eco-friendly vehicles with hybrid vehicles accounting for over 34% of the taxis fleet in Dubai. It is followed by Cars Taxi, National Taxi, Arabia Taxi, and Metro Taxi.

Receiving Technology Maturity Model integration (TMMi) Certification

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has been awarded a Technology Maturity Model integration (TMMi) certificate in recognition of its efforts to achieve Level 3 in applicable standards and practises. As a result, RTA has become the first entity in the UAE and the only transport organization world to achieve this honour.

The TMMi is one of the leading international accreditations in standards of technology, quality assurance, and testing practices. The certificate was granted following an evaluation conducted by Experimentus, a UK-based company that is one of the leading international companies in issuing international quality, standards, and standardisation certificates of this model.

Reflecting on the achievement, Mohammed Al Mudharreb,

CEO of RTA's Corporate Technology Support Services Sector, said: "RTA has always been a pioneer in applying top global practices. This achievement is a tribute to the advanced level achieved by RTA in this regard and to its continued efforts to raise the level of the technology maturity model and quality assurance processes. It is a testament to RTA's ability to deliver high-quality services and an excellent customer experience in line with its 1st

Obtaining regional award for investing assets of Route 2020 stations

The award is obtained under the category of 'Transport Project of the Year'

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) scooped a regional award under the category of Transport Project of the Year 2022 at the MEED Projects Awards 2022, organised in partnership with Mashreq Bank that recognises accomplishments of individuals and organisations in successful projects across the MENA region. The MEED Projects Awards 2022 was dedicated to this sector considering its contribution to improving well-being and supporting the economy.

Route 2020 Project

The Commercial and Affairs and Investment Department has clinched this award for the Route 2020 project for investing retail, commercial and advertising assets in 7 stations, namely: Jebel Ali

Interchange Station, The Gardens, Discovery Gardens, Al Furjan, Jumeirah Golf Estates, Dubai Investments Park and Expo. These stations feature contemporary designs and architectural patterns inspired by natural elements of Earth, Water, Fire and Air.

and 7th strategic objectives: Digital Dubai and Advance RTA respectively. It also contributes to RTA's future roadmap (2021-2025) for digital transformation and the 4th Industrial Revolution drive through conducting digital quality assurance and automation of tests."

"RTA's team is eager to use the world's top practises to sustain the improvement of technology maturity model practises to ensure high-level quality assurance and governance of technologies to achieve top maturity levels in this regard," added Al Mudharreb.



Route 2020 project is considered a successful infrastructure investment for its huge role in moving people to the site of Expo 2020 and its contribution to the integration of mobility means in Dubai.

Financial Sustainability

Route 2020 aimed to enhance financial sustainability

and passenger experience through the integrated development of commercial assets. The seven stations are equipped with high-resolution LED screens covering a total area of 239 square metres along the side walls and on the circular pillars of stations, which enriches the passenger's transportation experience.

The project incorporated the trending technology and automation of commercial assets of stations, including a continuous digital transformation of these assets ranging from fixed media to digital screens.

Piloting autonomous delivery robots

UAE, Dubai, 15 February 2023: The Roads & Transport Authority in partnership with Dubai Integrated Economic Zones Authority (DIEZ) and talabat UAE, today announced the pilot launch of autonomous food delivery robots, also known as “talabots”, in Dubai Silicon Oasis (DSO), revolutionising sustainable last-mile delivery in the UAE.

This is part of the entities’ joint efforts to employ advanced technology and encourage the use of zero-emission modes of delivery while enhancing efficiency, which is in line with Dubai’s efforts to switch 25% of all transportation trips in Dubai to be smart and driverless by 2030.

Promoting innovation

Ahmed Bahrozian, Chief Executive Officer of The Public Transport Agency, RTA, said: “This step is in line with the RTA’s strategy to promote innovation, integration, innovative mobility, and relevant skills and expertise, in addition to providing the private sector with the



RTA, Huawei Community launch ‘Draw with Salama’ contest

The competition aims to promote the creative and artistic skills of young people

Dubai’s Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) in cooperation with the “Huawei Community”, launched the “Draw with Salama” competition, in a move aimed to develop the creative and artistic skills of the young readers of the monthly Salama magazine issued by the authority, which is directed to children from 6 to 14 years of age. It aims to communicate with Children in simple language, and interesting cultural and entertaining content about safety and traffic awareness.

The competition was held in coordination with the concerned authorities in the Emirates Education Foundation, the Knowledge and Human Development Authority, and the Ministry of Community Development, the contest aims to encourage readers of the magazine and students of determination to learn about drawing, unearth their abilities and support their talents.

Cooperation

Rowdah Al Mehrizi, Director of Marketing & Corporate Communication Department in RTA, said: “In line with its

commitment to enhance cooperation with external parties in rolling out social responsibility initiatives and conclude agreements at high-class standards, RTA is teaming with Huawei Community in launching the ‘Draw with Salama’ competition.

“The first category of the competition is oriented to students aged 6-14 years, and the second category targets people of determination of all age groups. The idea of the competition is based on employing innovative elements and showcasing the participants’ skills in envisioning the future and lifestyle through expressive drawings,” added Al Mehrizi.

tools needed to adopt autonomous mobility services in its operational processes. This ensures providing added value for customers, in accordance with the effort of Dubai and the UAE in this regard.”

Bahrozian emphasised that RTA is eager to expand its partnerships with the private sector in collaboration with local partners, with the aim of spreading the culture of innovation in the transportation sector, along with integrating such innovations into its operations, to achieve the emirate’s vision in this sphere.

The pilot phase will see the introduction of three “talabots” to serve Cedre Villas residents, a gated community in the heart of DSO, the integrated free zone technology park, which is member of DIEZ. Designed for high efficiency and harmonious urban living, the “talabots” will travel within a 3-kilometer radius from the Cedre shopping Centre launch point, to ensure a speedy 15-minute delivery time.

The launch of autonomous delivery robots is part of ambitions to support riders in the next generation of sustainable delivery by having robots cover short distance deliveries to increase

efficiency, fleet optimisation and reduce carbon emissions.

Dr. Juma Al Matrooshi, Director General of Dubai Silicon Oasis (DSO), said: “Smart mobility is one of the six pillars of DSO’s Smart City Strategy, which is at the core of piloting carbon-neutral delivery robots in a closely monitored and controlled environment within the hi-tech park. We look forward to the success of this trial, and its expansion as part of DSO’s role as an innovation- and knowledge-hub under the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan.”

For his part, Eng. Muammar Al Katheeri, Chief Officer Engineering & Smart City at DIEZ, said: “The pilot of autonomous delivery robots in DSO, in partnership with RTA and talabat, is part of DIEZ’s keenness to implement innovative concepts that support the smart city strategy of Dubai. It also contributes to realizing the vision of positioning Dubai as the smartest city by imagining the future, designing it, and executing it, as well as testing environment-friendly technologies to reduce carbon emissions in line with 2023 being the Year of Sustainability.



Technology Supports Creativity

Commenting on the partnership Peak Yin, the Country Manager of Huawei, CBG, UAE said: “The cooperation between Huawei and the RTA in Dubai offers an exceptional opportunity to employ technology to stimulate innovation and support the talented students. The company is keen to harness its tools and capabilities, such as the infrastructure of information, communication, technology as well as smart devices to develop digital art skills among students.”

Interaction

The competition was marked by wide participation by public school students and students of determination. The student Amr Mohammed Abbad Saleh from Hemaya School won for the



age group 610- years, and the winner for the age group 11-14 years, was the student Emad Nabil from the American Al Shola American School. 20 students from Al Alfiya Primary School for Girls participated in the competition, which was held at Huawei’s headquarters in Deira City Centre.

The competition, which was carried out at the Dubai Centre for Special Needs, attracted the participation of scores of students. Student Hamed Ahmed Al-Rumaithi from the Dubai Centre for Special Needs was the winner of the Digital Drawing contest created by HUAWEI MatePad while Mohammed Obaid Abdullah, from Dibba Al Fujairah Centre for People of Determination won the Painting on Paper and Crafts contest. 14 Students of Determination took part in the contest that was held at the Dubai Centre for Special Needs.

Opening 'Quick Vehicle Testing and Registration Centre' at Seih Shuaib with a Capacity of 500 vehicles

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has recently opened Quick Vehicle Testing and Registration Centre at Saih Shuaib with a capacity of 500 vehicles. The step is being taken as part of efforts to broaden the service scope of technical testing centres in Dubai in order to bring happiness to all community segments, individuals, or entities, in line with RTA's vision of global leadership in easy and sustainable transportation, and its mission to provide safe and easy transportation by developing an innovative and sustainable road and transportation system and services that elevate customers' experiences to global standards.

Quick Vehicle Testing and Registration Centre is in Dubai Industrial City and serves individuals and companies at Saih Shuaib. It has a capacity of 500 vehicles and includes 8 testing lanes: 5 for heavy vehicles, 3 for light vehicles, and one for a comprehensive examination. The centre also offers a mobile testing service for light and heavy mechanical vehicles, a comprehensive vehicle testing service, a VIP service that enables customers to obtain

the required service faster and the chassis number printing service. The centre also has a plate factory and a workshop for repairing light and heavy vehicles. It also provides all services related to the testing and licensing of light, medium and heavy vehicles from 07:00 am until 10:30 pm.

Abdalla Yousef Al Ali, CEO of Licensing Agency, RTA, expressed his delight with the opening of Quick Vehicle Testing and Registration Centre at Saih Shuaib. He stressed

Dubai Taxi enhances school bus services for students of determination

This step is in partnership with Emirates Schools Establishment

The Dubai Taxi Corporation (DTC) of the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has enhanced its fleet and services for people of determination benefiting from its school bus services. The move, which is made in collaboration with the Emirates Schools Establishment (ESE), aims to increase the number of beneficiaries from school bus services in public schools. DTC is keen on providing top-level services that meet the transportation needs of people of determination besides fitting and deploying school buses according to the requirements of schools and the number of students.

Needs Addressed

"DTC is committed to supporting the UAE's efforts in integrating and enhancing the participation of people of determination in various aspects of life, with a focus on the educational system. Overcoming educational

barriers for this group is a crucial social and national duty and we are steadfast in our dedication to fulfilling this responsibility for the betterment of our children," said Mansour Rahma Al Falasi, CEO of Dubai Taxi Corporation, RTA.

RTA's commitment to broadening and improving the level of services offered to the public, including various services relating to vehicle testing and registration.

"RTA is keen to expand, develop and enhance its services to the public, including vehicle testing

and registration services in cooperation with public and private partners to the highest global standards. Achieving and maintaining this service level requires the use of the latest technologies and exchanging Information and expertise to enhance continually enhance these services", added Al Ali. Mohammed Khalifa, CEO of Quick Centre expressed his gratitude and appreciation to RTA's team for their tireless efforts and effective support in opening the centre. He also paid tribute to RTA's team's continuous support of the



services provided by the technical testing centres in Dubai in a way to make people happier.

"We are happy to join forces with RTA in providing technical testing services to individual and corporate customers and look forward to achieving common goals in serving citizens and residents of the UAE. We also hope that Quick Centre will be a quality addition to Seih Shuaib by saving the time and effort of customers residing in this area of Dubai," added Khalifa.

"We have a fleet of 8 buses tailored to serve students of determination in public schools. The capacity of the new buses is four students each, featuring room for two wheelchairs and two seating spaces, all as part of our plans to integrate students of determination with the rest of the students. The service adheres to the highest standards of comfort, and safety to ease the movement of students in Dubai," added Al Falasi.

"ESE is keen to diversify its services with regard to school transportation in cooperation with strategic partners to serve our students. We are seeking to provide integrated services for students of determination that support them in their academic journey according to the top international standards in this regard," said Khaled Al Mazmi, Acting Executive Director of the Corporate Services Sector, ESE.

Safety standards

DTC deploys school bus services on routes that serve and pass by the homes of students of determination to ensure

smooth transportation for them along with their peers on buses equipped to take wheelchairs. The service is in line with the UAE's efforts to integrate these students into the education system by equipping government schools with the necessary equipment. DTC is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of comfort and safety for students of determination and their fellow students onboard.



Udrive and RTA launch exclusive branded fleet to and from Hatta

Udrive, the dedicated pay-per-minute car rental platform, has launched an exclusive fleet to enable smoother mobility to and from Hatta for residents and tourists to explore recreational, cultural and natural attractions in the Highlands of Dubai. The offering has been launched in partnership with Dubai's RTA and Dubai Holding to bring unique exclusive offers to the community.

The Hatta offering is aligned with the UAE's visionary tourism campaign 'World's Coolest Winter', which aims to support domestic tourism within the UAE while attracting global tourism by highlighting the country's most famous recreational, cultural and natural landmarks. Last year, the campaign increased domestic tourism by 36%, reaching 1.3 million tourists. By promoting smoother mobility between Dubai and Hatta, Udrive and RTA are providing a trustworthy and convenient transport system for explorers.

Adel Shakeri, Director of Planning and Business Development, Public Transport Agency, RTA, stated: "RTA's strategy is focused on providing an integrated transportation network between Dubai and Hatta, which continues to strengthen its position as a major tourism destination. With the tourist season in full swing, we align ourselves with key strategic partners, such as Udrive, to

provide seamless travel for both visitors and residents of the UAE who are looking for somewhere special to spend quality time."

Nicholas Watson, Co-founder and CEO of Udrive said: "Hatta, for many, is one of the UAE's unexplored gems that gives a truly fantastic range of possibilities for tourists.

The Hatta fleet has been activated with increased mileage allowances within the Udrive platform to provide affordable mobility solutions to and from the destination. Users will be able to book one of the dedicated cars to travel and/or from the Highlands of Dubai in comfort while having the flexibility to use the car within Hatta to explore some of its best attractions. Currently, the offering is available to Udrive customers in Dubai, with plans to expand it into other Emirates.

The Hatta fleet is branded to stand out among other Udrive vehicles. In these cars, drivers can travel up to

350km in the first day (compared to Udrive's daily fleet, which is limited to 100km per trip), which is extendable to up to two additional days for AED 99 while utilizing the extended mileage limit. The fleet has been launched with spacious Mitsubishi Pajero SUVs so users enjoy a comfortable road trip with family and friends in tow.





HATTA

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RTA

Briefing CIECA delegation on drivers' testing practices, AI applications

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has recently received the Secretary General of The International Commission for Driver Testing (CIECA) and the accompanying delegation, which consisted of 14 members from Lithuania, Belgium, France, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Sweden. The delegation was keen to review RTA's technologies powered by artificial intelligence in training and testing of drivers as well as the measurement of benefits and the value of the information provided. The visitors were also familiarised with the practices and standards of RTA's Drivers Licensing Department as regards the training, testing and licensing of drivers.



CIECA delegation praised the huge advancements made by RTA in the testing of drivers and the sophisticated technologies used to bring happiness to clients seeking to obtain driving licenses, which renders the customer's journey quite smooth and fast. The Licensing Agency participated in the 54th CIECA General Assembly and Congress recently concluded in Naples, Italy, where it was agreed to make this visit of CIECA's high-level international delegation to RTA's Licensing Agency. The visit aimed to acquaint visitors with the AI-powered technologies used in training, testing, and measuring.

Sharing of Experiences

Abdulla Yousef Al Ali, CEO of Licensing Agency, RTA stressed the importance of the visit of CIECA's delegation at this time.

Customers Council considers improvement of Abra services

The Customers Council of Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) discussed the services offered to riders of traditional Abras. Several owners and operators of traditional Abras met with a selected group of frequent Abra riders. Mohammed Obaid Al Mulla, RTA Board Member and Chairperson of Customers Council opened the session which was also attended by members of the council and representatives of relevant RTA's agencies and sectors.

Attendees hailed the services that RTA offers to riders of traditional Abras in Dubai and its commitment to improving the services to keep up with the needs and

expectations of public transport riders.

The council had discussed the services of the Marine Transport Department, the development of stations in the

“CIECA always supports member organisations, including RTA, in the exchange of knowledge and experiences in training, qualifying and testing of drivers. Broadening the cooperation with reputed specialist organisations like CIECA fits with RTA’s vision as ‘The World Leader in Seamless and Sustainable Mobility’, and its mission to provide seamless and safe travel with innovative, sustainable mobility solutions and services to make every journey in Dubai a world-class experience.

Partnership

“RTA always briefs ministries as well as government, semi-government and private entities within or outside the UAE about its successful experiences in various fields, and shares with them the knowledge that fosters partnerships and bilateral relations for the benefit of all,” said Sultan Al Akraf, Director of Drivers Licensing, Licensing Agency, RTA.

Al Akraf gave visitors a brief explanation of the steps of the customer’s journey starting from training until obtaining the driver’s license. He highlighted the process of delivering training services in line with RTA-approved unified training modules, including knowledge test, road test, smart track test system (STS), training and qualifying of trainers and examiners, smart services and technologies adopted in driver licensing services, and plans aligned with Dubai’s plans and RTA’s strategic goals and objectives.

The delegation was briefed on test registration

protocols, the sequence of steps, and the monitoring of knowledge tests and lecture theatres. These activities are accomplished through the Smart Control Centre using cameras and advanced technology systems to ensure fair and transparent administration of theoretical tests.

Site Visits

Members of the international delegation visited Belhasa Driving Centre to learn about the procedures set by RTA in registering, training and licensing of drivers, and the role of employees of RTA and driving institutes in offering customers services at world-class standards.

The delegation was also briefed on the advanced and sophisticated organisation that characterises driving learning activity, which is overseen by the RTA, being the licensing authority in Dubai. Members were also briefed about the quality practices and governance processes approved by RTA for the training and licensing of drivers as well as the assessment of the performance of driving schools.

Members of the visiting delegation expressed gratitude to RTA for offering the opportunity to review RTA’s successful practices in training, qualifying, testing and licensing of drivers in cooperation with driving institutes in Dubai. They also hailed RTA’s ground-breaking pioneering accomplishments in building the infrastructure of the public transport network and contributing to curbing incidents and deaths.

Al Khor area, and the benefits to Abra operators, owners and users. The gathering reviewed Abra’s performance details, such as daily, monthly and annual ridership sent by Marine Transport Department to Abra owners and operators to enable them to enhance the services provided to the public. The council also reviewed initiatives to support owners and operators to switch to biofuel, which is offered at a lower cost compared with the standard market price of diesel and is sustainable, clean, and eco-friendly in terms of minimising the carbon footprint and the emission of harmful gases, which preserves the public health and the environment. These efforts stem from RTA’s standing commitment to making an effective contribution to implementing

the UAE Green Development Strategy, a catalyst to realising the UAE 2021 Vision. The council also discussed the challenges and obstacles encountered by Abra operators and owners as well as the corrective measures needed.



2.8 million rides via Careem BIKE since launched in February

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) and Careem announced the completion of 2.8 million trips via the Careem BIKE service between the service launch in February 2020 to December 2022. The number reflects the rising popularity of using bike services in Dubai.

The trend is consistent with Dubai's strategy of becoming a bicycle-friendly city, and the emirate's direction to encourage the use of environmentally friendly mobility means that contribute to maintaining air quality. Besides that, using bikes has numerous benefits for community health considering it a sporting activity in addition to being a simple, light, and affordable transit means.

The construction of cycling tracks at world-class standards ensures smooth and quick access to many multiple destinations across Dubai. It also enhances the demand for bicycle use and provides suitable alternatives that encourage residents and visitors to practice cycling sport and other healthy activities.

Fruitful Partnerships

Through RTA's partnership with Careem, the total number of Careem stations increased to 175 in 2022, and the number of bikes increased to 1,750. In 2022, Careem BIKE service made 1.4 million trips in Dubai, a 61% increase over 2021. Customers used Careem BIKE to travel 5,993,450 kilometres across Dubai, with the longest single trip spanning 58 kilometres from Al Qudra to the Atria Tower in Business Bay. As such, customers mitigated 912,000 kg of CO₂, which is the equivalent of 289 cars emitting CO₂ in one year. In 2022, bikes made 251,393 journeys between 2 stations and 361,357 trips with two or more connected trips from one station to another. Residents accounted for 83% of total trips, while tourists made up 17%.



1.4 million bike trips completed in 2022 with 61% annual growth

1.9 million kg of CO2 offset since February 2020

Partners introduced 100 new stations and 1,000 bikes in 2022



First and Last-Mile strategy

Eng. Maitha bin Adai, CEO of the Traffic and Roads Agency, at RTA, expressed her delight at the great success of the 'First and Last-Mile strategy' as reflected in the rising demand of residents and visitors for the use of bicycles as an important alternative and sustainable mobility means that enabled public transport commuters to reach their final destinations. The service also contributes to realising the vision of Dubai leaders to make Dubai the world's best city to live and work in.

Sustainable Mobility

Bassel Al Nahlaoui, Managing Director of Mobility at Careem, said: "We're so excited to see the number of Careem BIKE stations and bikes more than double in the last year as more residents and tourists choose to get around Dubai by bike. Through our partnership with Dubai Holding, we've been able to tap into some of Dubai's most popular business districts, residential communities, and retail destinations. In just two years, Careem BIKE has grown into the leading bike-sharing initiative in the region, and we're thankful for the incredible support we've received from the RTA in achieving that."

Positive impact

To encourage sustainable travel, Dubai Holding has welcomed 22 Careem BIKE stations to five of its destinations, including City Walk, Dubai Water Canal, Business Bay, Dubai Media City and Dubai Internet City.

Abdulaziz Al Gargawi, Chief Executive Officer, Dubai Community Management, said: "Dubai Holding has a longstanding commitment to creating a positive impact on the communities in which we operate, in turn supporting the growth of a sustainable, innovation-led economy in line with the vision of the UAE Government. By unlocking access to affordable and healthy travel options across five of our most sought-after communities, our partnership with Dubai RTA and Careem BIKE will contribute to minimising our environmental impact and encourage the adoption of sustainable practices. As a responsible business that operates For the Good of Tomorrow, we are proud to be facilitating and supporting such an important sustainability initiative."

Careem BIKE is the leading bike-sharing initiative in the region and was launched with the ambition to support Dubai's sustainable growth and encourage an active lifestyle among residents. Since launching in February 2020, Careem BIKE has reduced carbon emissions by 1,926,033 kilograms, equivalent to emissions from 600 cars.

Discussing the AI legislation in transport

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has recently organised the first legal forum to discuss rules and legislation related to artificial intelligence in the transport business. The move aims to chart out the structures required to enact laws given the tremendous and rapid technological advancements taking place in the UAE and the world over. The ultimate objective is to make these legislations an integral part of transport plans and strategies in Dubai, which has a prominent standing among the most developed cities in the world.

UAE Leadership

Shehab Bu Shehab, Executive Director, Legal Affairs, RTA's Strategy and Corporate Governance Sector, said, "The UAE's interest in artificial intelligence – AI and the 4th industrial revolution revolving around innovation began early. The country has thus a pioneering role in adopting such strategies and pushing other countries of the region to follow suit.

"The UAE was one of the first countries that launched an independent AI strategy in October 2017. The initiative ushers in a new era beyond the smart government strategy and will form the basis of service, sectors, and future infrastructure in the UAE, in line with the UAE Centennial 2071 aimed to make the UAE the best in the world in all fields," added Bu Shehab.

The inaugural forum aims to anticipate the future of the legislative processes relating to AI and confront legal challenges associated with this emerging reality. It warrants finding out solutions and legal controls under the directives of leaders, which made the first steps in this direction. It requires us to put in place sound frameworks within the process of upgrading the legislative system by a draft amendment to the law of establishing the RTA. The forum sought to develop a proactive and flexible legislative system that simulates reality and anticipates the future by developing legislation that supports operational artificial intelligence along with its flexible legislative framework.

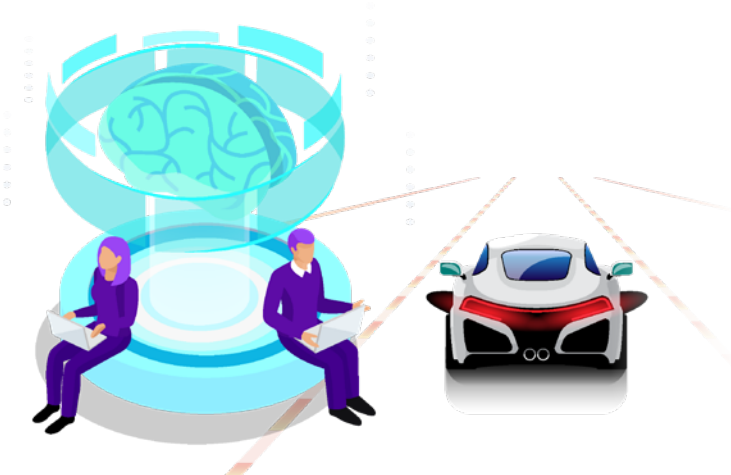
5 Strategic Pillars

The first legal forum extensively addressed five primary topics, including the integration of artificial intelligence within RTA's legislation and assessed its influence on the transportation industry, including autonomous vehicles and the liability of artificial intelligence systems. The forum also explored the concept of a robot's legal personality, along with the regulations that govern its independent actions and the resulting legal consequences, such as financial liability.

The forum also discussed the legal consequences of utilising artificial intelligence technology, specifically the legal obstacles that arise from the implementation of artificial intelligence in smart contracts and the regulations that dictate their usage. In addition to the legal responsibility that arises from causing harm to artificial intelligence systems, as well as offences that are linked to breaching their information systems through hacking and causing harm to their data.

Valuable Deliverables

Participants discussed the legal and technical aspects of artificial intelligence applications and made valuable proposals that included introducing AI technology in transactions to improve the services. A proposal was made for local AI legislation that regulates smart contracts & transportation and defines the civil and criminal liability of manufacturers, operators, users, programmers, and data entry for automated vehicles. It also covers the introduction of smart contracts, blockchain, and cryptocurrency platforms in RTA's transactions, and modifying contract templates to match the smart contract systems.



RTA, Dubai Municipality run inspection campaigns on misuse of right-of-way and beaches

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has undertaken an extensive educational inspection campaign in cooperation with Dubai Municipality, which started in mid-February, to monitor wrongful practices of the right-of-way by occupants of residential units across Dubai and on beaches.

The misuse practices include parking boats, caravans, food carts and trailers on the right-of-way, sidewalks or public parking, installing tents on the right-of-way, propagating horticulture that obscures or impedes the vision or movement of pedestrians, installing umbrellas/shades that block the vision and impact the traffic safety on the right-of-way, installing fences, poles and cages or storing building materials, or parking boats on the right-of-way.

The RTA's rigorous inspection campaign aims to uphold the aesthetic ambience of Dubai while also securing the sustainable functioning of sidewalks. This ensures the safe and unhindered movement of pedestrians on the right-of-way and prevents motorists from encountering any obstacles that could impede their vision while driving along sidewalks.

RTA noted that the initial stage of the campaign will

concentrate on instructing landlords of residential properties to respect the right-of-way and that any misuse of it is considered a violation. The violators will be notified to correct their actions and will be given a grace period of up to one week to rectify the violation on-site. If corrective action is not taken during this grace period, RTA will take the necessary legal measures against violators, as stated in the Executive Council Resolution No. 54 of 2021 regulating works on the Right-of-Way.

RTA urges both current and future owners of newly constructed housing units to observe the right-of-way and adhere to the standards and specifications established in the Emirate by following the relevant procedures and laws related to building permits. Furthermore, RTA stresses that inspection campaigns will be conducted periodically to detect violations of the right-of-way in the neighbourhood.



Open day for health, safety and environment under the theme ‘Using Advanced Technologies’

Dubai’s Roads and Transport Authority held the 8th Open Day for Health, Safety and Environment, under the theme: “Using Advanced Technologies in enhancing the Health, Safety and Environment.” The event attracted experts from RTA and other entities including specialists and officials, who convened on a video conference focused on the use of advanced technologies and their impact on health, safety, and the environment.

Topics

“The strategic goals and objectives of RTA’s Strategic Plan 20232030- provide for three key drivers: improving mobility safety, enhancing the security of assets, mobility; and corporate security, and occupational health,” explained Nada Jasim, Director of Safety, Risk, Regulation and Planning, Strategy and Corporate Governance Sector, RTA.

“RTA is keen on holding the Open Day for Health, Safety and Environment annually, and hosting experts from diverse universities and global institutions to discuss the techniques and practises of motivating innovation in support of sustainable development and awareness, besides showcasing RTA’s efforts in this regard,” added Jasim.

Assigning the Emirates Parkings to tow and impound vehicles

Dubai’s Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has signed an agreement with Emirates Parkings entitling RTA to tow and impound light and heavy vehicles and trailers found in violation of federal and local rules & regulations. The agreement enhances the impounding system and links it with the traffic and electronic systems to enable sharing of information about seized vehicles and calculating the applicable fees.

It also revamps the system used for saving details of vehicles referred to the Vehicle Sale Committee and maintaining all records of auctioning those vehicles. In line with RTA’s vision of global leadership in seamless and safe travel with innovative, sustainable mobility solutions and services to make every journey in Dubai a world-class experience.

Target activity

The agreement establishes the primary goal of towing and impounding loaded or empty light and heavy vehicles and trailers of all types, including mobile

caravans, food carts, boats and bicycles that are spotted in field monitoring and found in violation of the rules and regulations enforced by RTA’s departments concerned with vehicle impoundment, of namely the Passenger Transport Activities Monitoring Department, Right-Of-Way Department, Rail Right-Of-Way Department, Licensing Activities Monitoring Department, and Parking Department as well as any other RTA department to be tasked with responsibilities related to vehicle impounding in the future. Vehicle Impounding Management The agreement outlines the management of the vehicle impounding process, which includes receiving

A representative of the Ministry of Health and Prevention made a presentation at the virtual event in which he spoke about well-being at the workplace and the underlying factors for the use of technology to provide an enhanced liveable environment. Among the participants was Jorge Aldegunde, International Technical Director of Railways from Spain, who spoke to the participants about innovation and technology.

RTA's Participation

The Information Technology Department represented RTA at the video conference meeting, where green technology and printer ink recycling were discussed. In her remarks, Nada Jassim praised the participation of all participants, both inside and outside RTA, for enriching the meeting with meaningful and interactive discussions.



vehicles required for impounding from their owners or representatives at the vehicle impounding yard and using advanced systems for storing vehicles in impounding yard to assist in accurately tracking the number of seized vehicles and the steps taken in respect of each vehicle from its arrival at the impounding yard up to its release. Furthermore, the agreement establishes a system that enables RTA access to all reports about impounded vehicles. Emirates Parkings caters to managing the impounding yard, including providing surveillance cameras and trained personnel.

It is worth noting that the agreement sets out the process of releasing vehicles according to the circumstances of each vehicle. If the seizure was a result of a technical traffic violation, the vehicle will

be released after the designated period and the fine is paid. In case of a technical traffic violation caused by a technical malfunction, the vehicle will not be released until the issue causing the impoundment has been resolved. The vehicle will be released after RTA receiving of all the outstanding fees associated with the impounded vehicle. The payment can be made through RTA-approved payment channels and the customers centre at the Emirates Parkings.



Dubai Roads' Pavements Condition Index hits 95% in 2022

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) revealed that Dubai's Roads Pavements Condition Index scored 95% in 2022, according to the results of a functional and structural assessment conducted by RTA's Traffic & Roads Agency. The assessment is designed to identify surface damage such as cracks, subsidence, potholes and loosening in the sidewalk surface using the Pavements Condition Index and the level of driving comfort or roughness of the roads. Hi-tech laser equipment is used to detect the condition of the roads.

Hamad Al Shehhi, Director of Roads and Facilities Maintenance, Traffic & Roads Agency, RTA, said: "The purpose of the pavements condition assessment is to evaluate the structural capacity of road pavement layers as well as their extent of deterioration. Using specialised equipment and digital systems, the structural coefficients of the pavement layers are calculated, as well as the remaining lifecycle of the pavement. Following pavements maintenance work, 48 highways, main roads, and 34 internal roads in

residential areas were assessed.

"Approximately 60 km of tracks in urgent need of maintenance have been maintained for the entire network of main roads and residential areas, ensuring that 95% of the network is maintained in excellent condition. Among the main roads that have been maintained are: Lehabab Road, Emirates Road, Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Road, Sheikh Zayed Road, Al Khail Road, Dubai - Al Ain Road, and Al Amardi Street," added Al Shehhi.





Bridges and Tunnels Construction Condition Index clocks 97%

“The bridges and tunnels Pavements Condition Index was determined by detailed technical inspections conducted according to international standards. Visual inspections were conducted using digital panels, and the structural elements of each facility were also assessed separately, whereby results were entered into a system for managing bridges and tunnels’ maintenance.

■ **As well as setting business priorities for annual maintenance plans, the Pavement Management System automatically calculates the Pavement Condition Index, which in 2022 reached 97% for bridges and tunnels,” explained Al Shehhi.**

Results

“Traffic movement and safety have been impacted in light of the maintenance works, as roads are maintained in sound working order, ensuring the safety of road users. A good 95% of the network was maintained in good condition with smooth traffic, with lane closures taking place only for safe alternatives accompanied by all necessary traffic controls to ensure all road users’ safety,” commented Al Shehhi.

“These results are the outcome of the Pavement Management System, which is considered as digital copy of roads with the application of artificial intelligence technologies, and underscore the implementation of RTA’s strategies and policies. As well, it can help determine the most cost-effective preventive maintenance within the budget allocated to maintaining the road network and optimise the selection of maintenance,” concluded Al Shehhi.

The World's most beautiful roads

Pleasure for onlookers and outing for travellers

Although the roads were constructed to facilitate the movement from one place to another in a smooth and faster manner, some roads in the world combine smooth mobility with surrounding scenic rendering the journey an excursion outing for travellers. Some of them are:



A road through the Morocco forests.



Asir road in Saudi Arabia.



Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina, United States.



**Cabot Trail in
Canada.**



**Rakaboshi in
Pakistan.**



**Valley of Fire in
Nevada, United
States.**

Chasing latest smartphones: Fashion Trend or Keeping Up with Technology?

Phone obsession may lead to changes in the brain

Do individuals fully utilise all features and functionalities of their smartphones, only to discover that their needs have surpassed their device's capabilities, finding themselves obliged to purchase new phones?

Does the acquisition of the most recent iteration of a phone entail the inclusion of technical specifications that were missing in previous models?

Is it more advantageous to purchase a new phone from the same manufacturer?

Isn't it more advantageous to acquire a new phone from a different company, given that it may have features that are not present in the prior company's phone?

What to do with the old phone after buying a new one?

What are the safety measures that should be adhered to while discarding an old phone to prevent exposing confidential information?



The editorial team at Al Masar Magazine surveyed the views of several individuals interested in tracking the latest phone releases both within and outside of the Roads and Transport Authority. Respondents shared their remarks in the following report:

People becoming a commodity

Ibrahim Mohammed Saeed was astonished to see long queues of individuals at a prominent shopping centre, eagerly awaiting their turn to purchase the latest iteration of a phone. He questioned whether the speed at which one acquires the new version is worth the struggle, especially given that it will soon become widely available in the market.

Additionally, he remarked that people seem to have become captive to promotional campaigns and commercial advertising, transforming them into commodities that manufacturers use to control and steer them in their desired direction.

Lack of knowledge

Majd Nafi stated that the majority of individuals who

express a strong desire for the latest phone models are just following the trend, and are only aware of the device's basic specifications, such as its camera quality. Several scientific studies confirmed that 90% of phone owners are only familiar with around 20% of their phone's capabilities, and upgrading to a new version can reflect negatively on those around them. Some individuals may change their phone two or three times a year, or even switch to a new phone that lacks the same capabilities as their previous one, but they are unaware of these differences and unable to properly evaluate them.

Trend, bragging, and boasting

Mohammed Ali Saleh Al Muaini expressed his disappointment that the trend of buying new phones is driven by the desire to show off rather than a genuine interest in keeping up with technological advancements. He noted that many people do not understand the capabilities of their phones and view them as inaccessible secrets. However, he acknowledged that for specialists and those



Tips to safeguard smart devices

- Only download apps from trusted sources.
- Keep the device's operating system up to date.
- Use passwords or security codes to secure the device and avoid leaving it unprotected.
- Do not leave your smart device to others or leave it unattended.
- Utilise antivirus apps to fortify the device's protection.
- Uninstall unused apps and features from your device.

She also warned against young people imitating this negative lifestyle and stressed the importance of focusing on more rational behaviours.

However, Aziza acknowledged the importance of smartphones for students and professionals who need the latest technology to perform their tasks effectively.

in technical or administrative jobs, upgrading to the latest version of a phone may offer new features and benefits in their work, such as improved fingerprinting, photography, and support programmes.

As for purchasing a new phone, Al Muaini recommended buying from the same manufacturer of the phone, particularly if the company offers strong security features and regular updates. However, he also noted that if a different company offers better services and technical features, it may be worthwhile to switch.

Al Muaini criticised the practice of destroying old phones out of fear of someone accessing personal information and instead suggested that experts should wipe the devices of all data before donating them to those in need. He emphasized the importance of proper data cleaning before distribution and suggested that keeping the old phone may be a better option if it cannot be properly cleaned.

Every Five years

Basem Othman has a different approach to smartphones. He believes that as long as his smartphone meets his requirements, he does not see a need to constantly upgrade to newer versions. He has been using the same device for five years and sees all devices as meeting the same purpose for him.

However, Basem noted that telecom companies often force people to upgrade their devices by revamping software with larger memory space that older devices cannot handle. This leads to older devices becoming slower and eventually unusable, forcing users to upgrade. Basem does not discard his old devices and keeps them at home, fearing that someone may be able to recover his family photos and videos.

Bad Lifestyle

Aziza Khlass expressed concern over the negative impact of smartphones on people's lifestyles, particularly women who are caught up in the trend of constant change and ostentation. She pointed out that smartphones have become a distraction for many and have affected family relationships.





Children and Social Media sites

According to a study conducted by NTT Docomo in Japan, children's ownership of smartphones is not related to their family's income or social status. The study also found that 51% of children primarily use their phones for taking pictures, 44% for listening to music, and 26% for watching videos. Furthermore, children tend to use the applications and features on their phones more frequently than their parents.

Prestige and false reputation

Ibrahim Youssef thinks that changing mobile phones is not a suitable way to keep up with new technologies, especially for the elderly who may not be familiar with the technical features of their current devices, let alone the newer and more advanced models. He suggests that the most common reason for changing phones is the desire for prestige and a false reputation, rather than a genuine need to keep up with the latest technology.

Youssef advises anyone who decides to upgrade their phones to seek the assistance of a specialist to transfer their data and ensure that their personal information is securely wiped from the old device. This is particularly important given the potential security risks associated with outdated phones and the sensitive information they may contain.

World of information technology

Sayed Ramadan emphasised that in the current era, the mobile phone is not merely a commodity or a device used by many, but rather a crucial technology in the world of information technology. This view is supported by the results of various studies conducted by specialised agencies over the past years, which included individuals of different age groups. The studies found that a majority of young people aged 15 to 20 years are willing to sacrifice many of their lifestyles, including their eating habits, to

own a smartphone. Furthermore, some even expressed their willingness to forgo anything that might hinder their use of technology and phones.

In addition, the studies also revealed that a surprising number of respondents consider their smartphone to be more important than staying at home, given the availability of phones with more advanced technologies in the future. These findings, according to Ramadan, highlight the importance of smartphones in the lives of individuals across different age groups and highlight the need for individuals to keep up with technological advancements.

Keep your phones

Mostafa Sadaqat urged people to be careful before disposing of their current phones.

He said: "It is wise to retain your current devices after the third quarter of this year, given the uncertainty regarding the shortage of chips used in the manufacture of computer parts and portable devices. It is anticipated that newer devices will be produced in limited quantities, making it impractical to join long queues or waiting lists to acquire a newer device that is relatively similar to the one you currently have".

The current smartphones have already upheld a high level of advancement, with new models not offering major improvements in functionality or impact on our daily lives. Upgrading to a new phone typically involves only minor changes, such as a slightly larger screen, a longer-lasting battery, or a new camera lens with more megapixels or a



Japanese NTT Docomo

In 2011, the Japanese organisation NTT Docomo conducted a study that focused on children between 8 and 18 years of age and their parents in five different countries: Japan, Egypt, India, Chile, and Paraguay. The study found that 70% of the children surveyed owned mobile phones independently of their families. What might the current situation be, 11 years after the study was conducted?

new lens system that allows for more creative photos, such as a macro lens or wide-angle lens.

“Unless a consumer has a specific need for a new feature, it is wise to stick with their current phone as replacing it after several years of use is a better option than upgrading every year,” he added.

Storing a phone without a battery

Azzam Mohammed suggests that if you no longer need your phone but wish to keep it, you should remove the battery or let it run until it is completely drained. He emphasises the importance of upgrading to newer phone models periodically to keep abreast of rapidly advancing technologies. He believes that advancements in technology are valuable for work and other applications that provide services, noting that people do not need to use or be familiar with all of their phone’s features, as knowing what they need and how it benefits them is sufficient.

Saving money through clearing operations

Mohammad Mazen Mohammed suggests that individuals who frequently upgrade their phones should consider renewing with the same company that sold their previous phones. This can allow them to benefit from clearing operations that some companies offer, which can help reduce losses. He stresses the importance of properly clearing all content from the phone in a scientifically correct manner before disposing of it. Even if the owner believes there is no significant or private information, such as a colleague’s phone number, it must be deleted before handing it over to someone unknown.



Phone Addiction

The BBC has reported that initial research suggests that individuals who are addicted to the internet experience changes in their brains that resemble those observed in drug and alcohol addicts.

Additionally, Chinese specialists conducted a medical examination of the brains of 17 young individuals addicted to the internet and detected imbalances in certain brain functions.

Experts believe that these findings will help identify new methods for treating addictive behaviour. Internet addiction is characterised by several clinical disorders that result in the loss of control over one’s internet use.

A team of researchers led by Hao Li from the Chinese Academy of Sciences conducted brain scans on 35 men and women aged between 14 and 21.

Out of the 35 individuals scanned, 17 were diagnosed with internet addiction disorder based on their affirmative responses to several questions, including whether they had attempted to quit using the internet repeatedly without success.

The study utilised Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to scan the brain and identified changes in the white matter of those diagnosed with an internet addiction disorder.

The scans revealed disturbances in the connections between the white matter, which contains nerve fibres that link regions of the brain associated with emotions, decision-making, and self-regulation.

Gunter Schumann, Chair of Biological Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry, King’s College London, told the BBC: “We observed similar results for video game addicts”.

“For the first time, two studies have revealed modifications in neural connections between particular brain regions, as well as changes in certain brain functions in individuals who excessively use the internet or play video games,” he added.

Nonetheless, several experts emphasise that additional studies with a larger number of people are required to validate the accuracy of these findings.