

Dubai school buses safest for children

VEHICLES HAVE HAD ZERO FATALITIES OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS

DUBAI

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Staff Reporter

Dubai school buses have had zero fatalities in road accidents over the past three years, making them the safest mode of transport for children, traffic officials said.

As many as 4,076 school buses operate on Dubai roads everyday, transporting over 131,491 schoolchildren, according to the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA).

Although four school buses were involved in separate accidents last year, no deaths occurred.

The RTA's Public Transport Agency chief, Eisa Abdul Rahman Al Dossary, attributed the high levels of child safety on school buses to the School Transport Law established in 2008. "The ridership of school buses has consistently gone up. High safety levels have boosted the confidence of parents, increasing the numbers by more than 25 per cent compared to before the law," he said.

While 2,727 fines were issued to school buses for violations during the 2011-2012 academic year, 1,887 fines were issued in 2010-2011.

Recommendations

Al Dossary was speaking at an event held to announce an upcoming conference, the recommendations of which are likely to be adopted by the Dubai government to improve the School Transport Law.

The International Conference for School Transportation and Exhibition will be hosted by the RTA in partnership with the National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT), a not-for-profit organisation in the US responsible for the safe transportation of over 1.1 million students everyday.

The event will be held at



Javed Nawab/Gulf News

Reliable mode of transport

- Over 4,076 school buses operate on Dubai roads everyday, transporting over 131,491 schoolchildren.

STATISTICS

The logistics of safety

	2010-11	2011-12
■ School buses	4,025	4,076
■ Pupils	124,483	131,491
■ School bus supervisors	3,401	4,902
■ School transport providers	240	259
■ School bus drivers	5,683	6,482
■ Fines issued	1,887	2,727

the World Trade Centre from April 21 to 23, under the theme 'Shaping Sustainable School Transport with Policy, Attitude and Action'.

"The recommendations are likely to make 30 per cent changes to the existing law," Al Dossary said.

Experts from around the world will discuss international best practices and exchange know-how, he said.

The conference will have sessions on regulation and legislation, planning and operation, safety, technology and security in school transportation, student management and management of challeng-

es faced by special needs students. "School transportation is fundamental to a quality education," Alexandra Robinson, president of NAPT, said.

The NAPT is participating in the event because nothing can ever be taken for granted and a good safety record is only as good as it is today, she added.