

Dubai has best buses to woo passengers

PLANS ON TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES TO 1,900 BY THE END OF THIS YEAR

BY ASHFAQ AHMED
Chief Reporter

Dubai Dubai is using one of the best city public transport buses in the world in a bid to attract more people to use buses instead of private cars, said a senior official.

"I challenge that we have the best city transport buses in the world and we are determined to further improve our public transport system by completing the ongoing and the new projects," said Eisa Abdul Rahman Al Dossari, Chief Executive Officer of the Public Transport Agency (PTA) at the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority (RTA).

Al Dossari told *Gulf News* that the PTA has not abandoned any of its expansion plans to ensure a fully integrated public transport system in the city.

"We have just stretched the implementation period a little bit to suit the changing needs of public transport," he added.

Al Dossari, however, ensured that all plans prepared by the PTA are in place. "We will increase the number of buses from the current 1,575 to 1,900 by the end of this year in addition to the completion of the bus depots.

Transitional period

He said the PTA plans to cover 95 per cent of the city areas within the next three years. "We are passing through transitional period in a bid to turn the city from a car oriented city to public transport oriented city.

The PTA, he said, is carrying out a number of projects in order to achieve its objectives and have an efficient transport system.

Currently, work is going on the completion of a number of bus depots at the cost of around Dh1 billion.

Construction work at Al Rawaiyah and Al Kha-



HADRIAN HERNANDEZ/Gulf News

Comfort on wheels

The Public Transport Agency has plans to cover 95 per cent of the city's areas within the next three years with their state-of-the-art buses.

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wanej bus depots, costing about Dh690 million, is gaining momentum. Each project includes construction of a bus yard capable of accommodating 295 buses, including 144 standard buses and 151 articulated buses. It also includes a maintenance workshop for electrical and mechanical works. It

is capable of accommodating 20 buses at a time.

In addition to that it includes supply line to serve 12 buses, and a washing and cleaning bay with an intake of 20 buses at a time.

Phase II of the project includes construction of an administration office for about 40 employees,

in addition to drivers' quarters with a capacity to house 444 drivers.

These units contain rooms, toilets, wash basins, dining halls and recreational facilities. Also comes under this phase is the construction of investment buildings spanning an area of 3,005 square meters containing food courts, shops, and a mosque.

Bus depot

Al Aweer bus depot, which is being built at a cost of Dh102 million, comprises a 28-bay workshop fitted with the latest technical systems and tools needed for maintenance works.

The PTA is fast completing the Jebel Ali Bus Depot at the cost of Dh229

million. The depot has capacity to accommodate about 300 buses. It is fitted with 24 bays capable of housing 36 buses at a time for conducting various works such as washing, cleaning and refueling. The station has an office complex to accommodate 50 employees as well as residential quarters for 1200 bus drivers

Al Dossari said that apart from the construction of new depots, the PTA is also continuously doing adjustment of existing bus network and level of service based on population density, coverage area, road availability and new developments.

"We keep tracks of all the changes and conditions and respond to changes accordingly," he added.



PROJECT

Development: Public Transport Depots

Developer: Public Transport Agency at the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority

Location: Al Ruwaiyah, Al Khawaneej and Jebel Ali

Cost: Dh1 billion

Completion: 2010



PANKAJ SHARMA/XPRESS

Charting new course

Eisa Al Dossari spells out the plans of Public Transport Agency to improve public transportation in Dubai.



HADRIAN HERNANDEZ/Gulf News

Easy access

Dubai boasts of the best buses used for city public transportation in the world. They include single and double-deckers and are attracting more passengers by the day.



JAVED NAWAB/Gulf News

Busy station

Passengers at the Satwa Bus Station ride the Public Transportation Agency buses to work, home and other places.