Providing safety for 46 thousand buildings in Dubai

Electronic protection for buildings receives 35 thousand alarm through 6 years

Lt. Col. Ali Al Mutawa, Director for Operations Department, Dubai Civil Defence, informed that 24/7 smart electronic protection system in Dubai has recorded 35,517 alarms since it started six years ago, noting a total of 46,539 buildings which have been connected to the system. This advanced system implemented by Dubai Civil Defence has a significant role in reducing fire incidents gradually. It recorded 347 fires last year; a decrease of 8.7% from 2013 with 380 recorded fire incidents and has no record of any large fire for the connected buildings. The system monitors the connected buildings from Dubai Civil Defence Control Room around the clock, including any defects in alarm systems, which helps in the sustainability of safety systems in these buildings and increases the safety level as well to building residents.

He added that the system has received 35,517 alarms since August 2008 till end of 2014, including 1,914 fire alarms; 3,448 from defective elevators; 44 gas leakage; 3 failure alarms in fire water tanks; and 89 alarms from fire panel fault. The system accurately monitors voltage drop in the buildings and all kinds of faults that may cause adverse incidents. It was explained that for any fault alarm signal detected, which has been pending for 2 minutes, a warning letter will be sent to the fire contractor, and also to the building owner, to rectify said fault. But in cases of fire alarm signals, the operator will immediately contact and verify with the building in-charge; and if there is fire incident, the nearest firefighting team will be dispatched to the accident site.

He further pointed out that Civil Defence announced a strategic goal to connect about 60,000 buildings in the Emirate, which as of now, 46,539 has already been connected. Most notable factors in achieving such goal are enthusiasm of the building owners and perception to achieve maximum security and safety ratings. However, the Civil Defence also faces challenges such as variation in the

nature of buildings, and it actually depends on modern and flexible alarm systems that facilitate the connection to the smart system of electronic protection. But the situation is different with old buildings, where minimum requirement is a keen application in connecting to the smart systems for safety and security.

He stated that Dubai government's decision for mandatory implementation of the system to new buildings contributes to the widening umbrella of installations of the electronic protection system. Many segments of the society are concerned with identification to the system, and owners of private villas and residences requested to connect also their premises to said system.

He emphasized that the system was developed according to careful studies based on gradual implementation to prevent any major incidents. As faced with difficulties and challenges in developing and implementation period of the system, Dubai Civil Defence is expecting to avoid all of them during its implementation in other Emirates, as the system (24x7) is now to be enforced in all Emirates under Resolution No. 24 of 2012 issued by the Council of Ministers.

Al-Mutawa added that as DCD has immediately moved forward after completion of survey and connection of most buildings and facilities to the 24x7 system, it is implementing an equally important system, the "Smart Systems for Homes". It offers the possibility of direct communication between the residents and DCD Command Control Room, enabling them to directly report an emergency incident at one click of a button. This will also give a better opportunity to deal with any emergencies, which can reduce the incidents of large losses. The Directorate has now started in providing technical requirements such as panel selection and identification of its location for installation. He stressed that because this is a non-profit project, Dubai Civil Defence is keen in cost of panel and installation fee.

Al-Mutawa then predicted that the project Smart Systems for Homes will contribute in reducing the rate of fire, because it provides early detection and rapid response.

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