



“Smart Homes” is an essential step to have a “Smart City”, said Col. Salim Al Mugarrab



During a press conference at Gitex Technology Week, in the presence of Mr. Khalil Ibrahim Alistaad of Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Housing Organization, in kicking off the Smart Homes scheme as part of the wide strategy to make Dubai a smarter city, Col. Salim Al Mugarrab, Assistant Director General of Dubai Civil Defence for Safety & Protection Affairs and Head of Smart Services Committee said **“We believe having Smart Homes is an important pre-step to have a Smart City.”** He likewise expressed the keenness of Civil Defence as a main partner to complete smart safety infrastructure in UAE, particularly in Dubai, by introducing and implementing a package of smart services which provides aspects of smart life to population, projects and business environment.

In line with 24x7 Smart System which was introduced in 2009, under the local Order No (2) of 2009, pertaining to mandatory implementation of fire safety stipulations in all public and private establishments and buildings of Dubai (except private apartments), Dubai Civil Defence has already connected about 41,590 establishments/buildings, which is more than 90% of its existing buildings, to smart operations room - the Command Control Center. The remaining 4,039 premises have already been electronically surveyed and are currently in completion of required technical aspects for connection and monitoring purposes.

In pursuance to this, the Cabinet Ministry issued Federal Law No (24) of 2012 for Smart System to be mandatory in the entire UAE effective 1 January 2013. Relatively, “24x7 Direct Alarm System for Homes” project was launched for the realization of this ideal.



In its initial stage, the project implementation was optional for the people, whether they like it or not. But Col. Salim added that this will become compulsory upon completion of the new operations room in Dubai Civil Defence GHQ Building.

In the same context, he applauded the initiative of Mohammed Bin Rashid Housing Establishment for signing an agreement with Dubai Civil Defence as first partner to implement Smart Homes scheme in its new housing project in Al Barsha South - Third District with 1240 houses constructed in June 2014. The subscription fee is Dhs 1900, which is cost of alarm device and installation, plus annual subscription of Dhs 500 as monitoring fee. To be fully monitored 24x7, each home can subscribe to more than one device and fees will be fixed based on the number of alarm devices.

The Asst. Director General further emphasized that HOME, being the basic dwelling of families and stone foundation of society with all its variations, is considered by Civil Defence as very strategic place where safe environment must originate, to ensure a safe and smart life of the society as a whole. With this kind of social innovation, Smart City is achieved. Apparently, this project is being implemented based on analytical and statistical studies of fire incidents on villas and homes during the most recent years, with approximately 57 in 2012 (about 17% of the total fire accidents), 77 in 2013 (about 20% of total fire accidents), 88 in 2014 (about 20% of the total accidents), but all were considered as minor accidents. According to the records of Dubai Statistics Center, the total number of residential villas in Dubai is 53,483, and traditional Arabic houses is 8,903 .

Despite these numbers of accidents, there was no death case reported and total numbers of injuries were: in 2012 (4 injuries - 2 were medium, 1 major and 1 minor); in 2013 (6 injuries - 4 minor and 2 major); and in 2014 (2 injuries - 1 medium and 1 minor).

Implementation of this project aims to achieve Civil Defence' strategic goals to complete smart fire safety infrastructure in Dubai. Sophisticated communication and information technologies are put in place to ensure protection of lives and properties through advanced methodology, such as monitoring safety environment, automatic reporting in case safety is threatened, quick and prompt response by Civil Defence teams from different areas of jurisdiction across Dubai whenever accident is reported.

Using innovative M2M technology, smart devices installed in homes and connected to Command Control Center at Civil Defence enable occupants to alert Civil Defence in case of any emergency by just pressing the alert button, which allows the operators to view detailed stored information and responding teams can immediately proceed to accident scene.



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On the other hand, Mr. Khalil Ibrahim, as questioned by journalists, answered:

The systems which enable residents to directly report accidents were installed already in 32 houses, and within the two coming months, 190 extra houses are expected to be provided with the same. Plans are set to provide all the houses that belong to Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Housing Organization before the end of 2014.

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