# Interview with Director General, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors, RTA

## Questions

*As Chairman for RTA, how would you describe the urban mobility sector in Dubai?*

The urban mobility sector in Dubai is dynamic. Change is constant, and adapting to change is what the RTA is striving for. This helps the entity plan and deliver the transport infrastructure and services for the emirate in a flexible way. Thanks to the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the RTA has been able to develop an advanced and integrated transport network and services, which have resulted in the public transport mode share reaching 16% in 2016 from 6% in 2006, when the RTA was established.

RTA's long-, medium- and short-term multi-modal transport plans are developed and continuously updated based on the economic and urban growth of Dubai. Clearly, this growth will lead to significant increases in population and employment, and consequently to continuous growth of Dubai's road and public transport infrastructure and services.

RTA tackles urban mobility in a holistic approach through concentrating on the physical and digital integration of transportation infrastructure and services. In this context, RTA is currently working on the development of "Dubai Integrated Mobility Platform, DIMP," which aims to provide a one-stop shop for all of the available and potentially emerging mobility services, including public transport, taxi and e-hail services. RTA is also delivering the "Enterprise Command Control Center, EC3", which aims to optimize and synergize the operation of all transport modes at the Dubai city-wide level.

*What lessons learned would you like to share with other leaders on RTA's journey in this rapidly changing mobility ecosystem?*

The main lessons that we would like to share include:

- Clear visions and plans come at the top of success factors. Everybody in the organization shall direct his efforts to the same vision.

- Timely and informed decision-making is also a key success factor for delivering projects within planned time, budget and quality, and for achieving the goals and objectives of the organization.

- Timely planning and execution of projects, which has helped us deliver an advanced, smart and sophisticated transport network. Careful planning and programming puts us in a much better position to deal with unforeseen risks. For example, we immediately re-prioritize our focus and efforts in terms of resources, budgets and time.

- Smooth horizontal and vertical communication and coordination at different levels within RTA, and between RTA and stakeholders, are one of the main lessons learned, as well as one of the main success factors of RTA.

- We use international best practices of portfolio and project management and optimization techniques to align our priorities.

- We also have adopted the overruling corporate strategic planning approach, which allows us a lot of flexibility in adapting to any new trends. We also study main risks and prepare alternative plans (scenario planning).

*How have you shaped RTA's strategy in light of the "Smart Dubai – happy living" vision? To what extent is "smartization" an opportunity for RTA?*

- Once HH Sheikh Mohammed launched the initiative of transforming Dubai into a smart city on March 5, 2014, giving three years for accomplishing this target, RTA announced its plan for supporting the efforts of the Dubai government in this regard. It has charted out a roadmap comprising 22 creative and innovative initiatives tailored to the happiness of people. Thanks to the relentless efforts of the team, RTA has accomplished 29 initiatives – seven more than the approved roadmap – and in the process, the RTA has become the first government entity to announce the completion of its smart initiatives. The completion of this vital project is in the implementation of the initiative of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to transform Dubai into the smartest city worldwide within three years. It also follows the directives

of HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Dubai Crown Prince and Chairman of the Executive Council, the driving force behind the smart-city initiative. The smart city envisioned by HH Sheikh Mohammed is a city focused on the convenience and welfare of its residents, and offers highly efficient services using sophisticated technologies. Dubai's smart-city strategy features six key dimensions, such as smart economy, smart living, smart mobility, smart governance, smart environment, and smart people, whereas smart ICT infrastructure acts as the common enabler underlying all smart-city services. Smart mobility is obviously a key pillar of the smart city.

- The smart initiatives of the RTA have garnered multiple awards, both nationally and internationally. The smart app (RTA DUBAI) has clinched the Best Mobile Phone Service Award in the World in the World Government Summit 2017. It had already won the Best Mobile Phone Service Award in the UAE in the World Government Summit 2016, and the Best App in the Hamdan bin Mohammed Program for Smart Government in 2015 and 2016.

- RTA is responsible for contributing to the smart-mobility dimension of Smart Dubai's strategic vision and plays a critical role in transforming Dubai into the Smartest City on Earth in collaboration with other strategic partners (eight public sector organizations and two smart districts – Dubai Silicon Oasis and Dubai Design District).

- RTA is often regarded and recognized as the foremost Dubai government entity, synonymous with change, advancement and rapid transformation of Dubai.

- The Emirate of Dubai is expected to receive 25 million visitors during the World Expo 2020 event. By 2021, Dubai aspires to be a pivotal hub in the global economy, a smart and sustainable city with an inclusive and cohesive society and a pioneering and excellent government. As part of its endeavors to deliver best-in-class services and keep pace with the technological advancements worldwide aimed at maximizing people's happiness, several projects, initiatives and studies have been added to the next phase of the smart-city program up to 2021. This brings the total number to 63 initiatives, projects and studies, including 34 initiatives currently under way. The new projects and initiatives comprise four key aspects. The first is the sustainable smart transport, which focuses on the implementation of the Dubai Integrated Mobility Platform. The second is the Monitor Project, which monitors the condition of bus drivers during driving to spot any negative

driving attitudes. The third is the digital bus timetable project and instant passenger information project. The fourth is congestion management inside the metro stations and coaches.

- RTA also revised its corporate strategy and introduced Smart Dubai and People's Happiness as key strategic objectives. RTA's smart-city roadmap consists of over 50 projects.

- The Smart Mobility vision of RTA includes all modes of transport, such as metro, tram, buses, private cars, water taxi (called Abra), Dubai taxi and non-motorized modes such as walking and cycling.

**Some noteworthy examples of RTA's smart-city projects are:**

- Enterprise Command and Control Center (Integrating all modes of transport)
- Unified fare collection – smart card
- Smart bus shelters
- Parking guidance system
- Self-driving transport (under study)
- Connected vehicles (under study)
- Hybrid buses
- Smart navigation system (smart drive)
- Real-time passenger information
- Different smart apps serving diverse customer segmentation (public transport, road users and corporate users)

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