

RTA completes construction of new dockyards for marine transportation on both sides of Floating Bridge

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UAE - Marine Agency at Roads & Transport Authority (RTA) recently finalized construction of dockyards for marine transportation in front of and behind the Floating Bridge (Bur Dubai side) in a bid to upgrade the level of services rendered to marine mass transit mode users.

The project comprises construction of additional dockyard to accommodate 17 boats of different sizes.

Khalid Al-Zahid, Acting CEO of RTA Marine Agency, said: 'The Agency is working towards upgrading marine transit services by undertaking multiple and ambitious projects. Among these new vital projects is Ferry Dubai Project (Phase 1); which is one of the biggest & most important projects undertaken by Marine Agency. It is the third project envisaged in the Strategic Plan of Marine Transport, following the Water Bus and the Water Taxi. Marine projects portfolio also includes Renovation of Abras, and Automatic Fare Collection systems.

These projects aim to uplift the level of marine transport services rendered to cater for the rapid growth in the emirate of Dubai. They provide safe services to a wide spectrum of the community in commuting across Dubai Creek, waterways and maritime projects. RTA is keen to enhance the multi modal integration between various transport systems in the emirate such as Dubai Metro, Public buses and taxis.

The underlying objective of providing swift service is to slash the average waiting time and enhance the integration between public transport services.

'The Agency is currently surveying an appropriate location at Dubai Creek for following up all activities & services of marine mass transit modes. This location will be constructed at the highest global standards and fitted with highly specialized electronic and wireless communication systems used in the field of tracking & surveillance, with a view to delivering the best services delivered to commuters across Dubai Creek.

'Marine Projects Dep't at RTA Marine Agency has completed the methodology & integration study of marine transit modes; which comes at the forefront of priorities of the Agency, as it is part of the drive to realize the vision of the RTA to provide 'safe and smooth transport for all'. Among the current illustrative examples of these efforts is the frequent integration between abra stations and Water Bus Stations vis-à-vis public buses and taxis.

Marine Agency is working towards applying this methodology in future to Ferry stations such that each of the first four stations (initial stage) will be integrated with Dubai Metro, Public Transport and Taxis. New illustrative charts had been produced to provide prompt and smooth explanation of information about marine transport modes. The overall aim of this exercise is to boost customer satisfaction with the services rendered by Marine Agency and provide information on trip route, time and locations for the sake of the public in general and users of marine transit systems in particular.

There are 8 stations at Dubai Creek currently being developed for the use of abra and the Water Bus. Coordination is in hand with the concerned bodies to add those stations to Creek Front Project. Two new stations have been established within the Creek; namely Al-Bastakiya Station, which is situated near the Ruler's Court at the old & historical Al-Bastakiya, and Al-Shindaga Station, which has been fully renovated.

Two initial designs of abra and Water Bus stations have been developed. The first one is modeled after heritage architecture, and the other has a flavour of a modern design. The remaining six stations are Seef, Dubai Old Souk, Bur Dubai, Bani Yas, Sabkha, and Deira Old Souk Station.

The design of stations & services delivered to marine mass transit commuters entails a two-storey air-conditioned building comprising the main station, service offices, mosque, restaurant, waiting areas, and retail outlets.

These facilities are connected to a direct exit to the dockyards of Water Buses and the Water Taxis. Renovation of Abra dockyards entailed separation of boarding and alighting passenger traffic, provision of shelters throughout the corridors, and provision of waiting lounges and dockyards. These facilities are part of key demands reflected by current abra commuters. The Agency took the initiative of renovating abras through introducing model motorized and rowing abras as part of its implementation of Marine Agency Operational Plan; which is aligned with the Strategic Goals of the RTA, particularly those related to improved safety levels of marine mass transit system, protecting the environment and preserving the heritage.

Accordingly, the design and manufacturing of a model motorized and rowing abra was completed and showcased in a Boats Expo held in Dubai in March 2008, and the designs were fully identical to traditional abras.

The Agency is keen to implement RTA goals and strategies such that marine mass transit systems will enhance the integration with other surface transport systems. This could be achieved through building a modern & integrated marine transport network to meet the requirements of Dubai community, comply with the development & strategic plans of Dubai Government, and further the sense of pride of Dubai marine heritage.

The technical specifications provided to developers with regard to the volume & capacity of marine transport modes through construction of bridges, wide tunnels and waterways, depends on the type of marine mode and locations of stations. For instance in case of using the Water Bus and the Water Taxi, the elevation of the bridge shall be 8 meters above the waterway, the width of the navigational path shall not be less than 30 meters, the width of the waterway shall not be less than 60 meters, and the depth of the waterway shall not be less than 4 meters.

Standard specifications are therefore approved in respect of the remaining marine transport modes such as Ferry Dubai in the internal & external waters.

These approved standards and specifications have been dispatched to all developers for taking them into consideration in order to ensure delivery of marine transport services in conformity with the vision of the RTA to provide 'safe and smooth transport for all' in all new projects. Moreover, there is also a joint and effective cooperation and coordination with all developers to apply those standards & specifications approved by the RTA.

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