

Fines force taxi accidents down in Abu Dhabi

Sunday, 18 October 2009



SAFER RIDE: Accidents in Abu Dhabi involving taxis have fallen by up to 20 percent since fines for drivers were introduced.

The number of accidents involving taxis in Abu Dhabi has fallen by about 20 percent since authorities began handing out automatic fines to drivers, it was reported on Sunday.

Saeed, which began enforcing the AED500 (\$140) fine in May, said the measure had reduced taxi accidents but could not provide the exact number of accidents, UAE daily The National reported.

Ibrahim Ramel, president of Saeed, estimated that the accidents caused by taxi drivers made up almost one-third of all road accidents in the capital last year.

"After the new traffic system was imposed, taxi drivers started feeling the burden of the fines, so they started driving better and following the rules," he told the paper.

Huda al Kaabi, a senior communications officer for TransAD, the agency that oversees public transport in Abu Dhabi, said most drivers blamed passengers for their accidents.

Among the punishable offences are stopping suddenly and cutting across multiple lanes of traffic.

In August, the Roads and Transport Authority in Dubai said taxi journeys were safer than they were a year ago.

There were 0.3 accidents per 1,000 trips in the first half of 2009, compared to 0.7 in the same period last year, the RTA said in a statement.