



More Than US\$147 billion Committed to Essential Development of the Middle East's Road, Rail and Public Transport Infrastructure

Gulf Traffic 2009 Exhibition to feature essential product and service innovations from global industry leaders

Middle East governments, facing the challenges presented by the world's highest levels of population growth, have recognised that sustained long-term economic growth is heavily dependent on their transport infrastructures, with investment in excess of US\$147 billion currently committed to address the region's transportation needs.

"The number of transport and infrastructure projects actioned by Middle East countries continues to grow at a rapid pace due to the pressing need to deliver world-class transportation systems," said Sarah Woodbridge, Group Director - Exhibitions, IIR Middle East - organisers of the Gulf Traffic Exhibition, which takes place in Dubai this December. "The Gulf's 36 million residents are currently restricted to travel either by car, bus or air, and a rail network would accelerate cross-border travel, trade and tourism - infrastructure development that is dependent on road and rail, including the essential industrial, logistics and manufacturing sectors, will not be possible without the implementation of effective solutions designed to meet the demands of today and the future."

Among the many projects underway, Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has initiated projects with a total investment in excess of US\$4 billion. Saudi Arabia's first phase of bridge and railway network construction saw an investment of US\$5.6 billion, while Bahrain has invested US\$1.8 billion in the causeway project that will link Bahrain and Qatar, which has also committed a budget of some US\$3.4 billion over the next 7 years for road projects.

Following the successful launch of Dubai's metro system, attention has now turned to the many other metro and heavy rail projects across the Gulf, including a Pan-Gulf network to connect the major cities of the region.

"Work on the rail network that will link all six members of the GCC is expected to start in late 2010 or 2011, according to the UAE's Union Railway Company," said Woodbridge. "It is estimated that the rail network will cost more than \$60 billion and will boost cross-border trade considerably, cutting freight costs and resulting in faster movement of cargo and passengers – this will help reinforce the region's position as a major global energy and trading hub."



Abu Dhabi Executive Council is reviewing bids for a 131km metro system that is projected to partially start in 2015. The completed transport system will include a network of underground metro lines, trams and high-speed rail - the country's plans to connect the emirates with their respective railway projects are also reaching their final stages, according to the National Transport Authority.

Saudi Arabia, the largest of the Gulf countries, has already begun work on four different railway projects that are unparalleled in size in the region. Of these, the Landbridge, a 1,000km East-West railway project, will effectively bridge the gap between the Red Sea and Arabian Gulf, creating the potential to move goods between the Red Sea and the Gulf in under 48 hours.

When the individual projects being undertaken throughout the GCC are completed, the next step is to connect the numerous rail systems to create a true GCC-wide network, which will include one rail line of 1,970 km connecting the GCC countries and Qatar via a bridge, while a second of 1,984 km will stretch between Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, ending in Oman.

Against this backdrop of high activity, Gulf Traffic immediately established itself as one of the world's most important traffic and infrastructure events and a must attend event for the Middle East's road, rail and public transport sectors. The 2009 show will be officially opened by Major General Mohammed Saif Al Zafeen, Director, General Department of Traffic - Dubai Police. Sponsored by 3M, it will feature over 200 exhibitors from more than 30 countries, including major global innovators such as Siemens, Quixote, Carrier Sutrak and Transpo and regional involvement in the form of Dubai's RTA and Emirates Driving Institute.

In order to give managers and professional engineers the opportunity to find out about the latest developments that will help them achieve their demanding objectives, a programme of free to attend seminars will also run during the exhibition, while the Gulf Traffic Conference, will cover a range of vital transportation related topics, with invaluable key learnings and practical case studies presented by acknowledged international experts.

"Another new feature this year is the Gulf Traffic Awards, an independent and prestigious recognition of the outstanding achievements of individuals, departments, teams and organisations within the road, rail and public transport sectors," added Woodbridge. "Our objective is that they will serve to encourage excellence throughout the industry." A special Awards dinner, which will be attended by the region's leading industry professionals, senior government officials and key VIP industry guests, takes place on Sunday 6th December.



Entry to the Gulf Traffic 2009 exhibition, a comprehensive showcase of the world's leading manufacturers and suppliers and the latest product, service and technology innovations for the traffic and transport industry, is free for industry professionals. The show runs from Sunday 6 to Tuesday 8 December at Dubai International Exhibition Centre, and is open from 10am to 6pm daily.

ENDS

For further information, please contact:

Neil Tyrer,

Coalface Marketing Communications

Office #502, 5th Floor, CNN Building, Dubai Media City, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

t: +971 4 3672886, f: +971 4 3661076, m: +971 50 6532854

e: neil@coalfaceme.com

www.gulftraffic.com