

Reckless drivers face having licences revoked electronically

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Dubai: Bad drivers face having their licences revoked for two years and banned for a similar period from obtaining another licence, unless they immediately stop driving dangerously on Dubai's roads, a chief traffic prosecutor warned.

Traffic prosecutors have also started seizing driving licences electronically, immediately after a traffic court issues a verdict, punishing a reckless driver and revoking his licence, Salah Bu Farousha, Head of Dubai's Traffic Public Prosecution (TPP), told *Gulf News* on Saturday.

"Our team of traffic prosecutors will ask the traffic court to confiscate the driving licences of inattentive and reckless drivers for three months to two years, besides punishing them with a fine and/or imprisonment. We also ask the court to prevent convicts from obtaining a new licence for another two years... which forces a reckless driver to spend a period of four years without a driving licence. However, court verdicts are based on the judge's discretion. Moreover, we started this year revoking driving licences electronically... earlier we used to send letters to the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) and Dubai Police asking them to seize a convict's licence upon a court judgment. Earlier this month, we started doing that electronically through a unified e-system between us, the RTA and police. This process helped us save time," he told *Gulf News*.

He said the traffic court recently revoked a number of driving licences and banned the offenders from applying for new licences for certain periods.

Part of the TPP's 2010 strategic goals, he said, is to continue spreading awareness concerning safe driving, road safety and well-mannered driving.

Their primary goal is to empty the roads of reckless and inattentive drivers who will ultimately be prosecuted and punished by the Traffic Court of First Instance.

"Based on Dubai Attorney-General Essam Eisa Al Humaidan's directives, TPP continues to teach the traffic academic course 'Safe and Legal Driving'... nearly more than 1,000 students benefited from the course at Dubai Men's College and Fujairah Men's College in the past two years. This year we will teach the course for 575 students at Fujairah Women's College," he said.

In terms of statistics, the TPP's Head said more than 3,000 individuals contested their traffic violations in 2009. In cases involving suspects driving without a licence, there were 155 Pak-istanis, 151 Indians and 67 Emiratis in 2009.

"Upon Al Humaidan's instructions, we call on motorists to respect and commit themselves to traffic laws and regulations and maintain excellent road manners and respect all road users," he said.

Statistics

- 3,954 licences revoked
- The total number of registered cases at TPP: 6,906 in 2008 compared to 6,430 in 2009.
- Drink-driving cases: 1,204 in 2008 , which decreased to 1,188 in 2009.
- Contestations registered against traffic violations: 767 contestations in 2008, these increased to 1,003 contestations in 2009.
- Driving without a licence: 1,026 cases in 2008 compared to 916 in 2009.
- Licences revoked upon court judgment: 4,745 licences in 2008, the number decreased to 3,954 in 2009.