

Prompt help for people with special needs

Personal Connector ensures swift assistance in times of emergency

DUBAI

By **SHAFAT SHAHBANDARI**
Staff Reporter

A personal connector for people with special needs and the elderly that enables them to seek emergency help from the authorities or from their family was announced by the Dubai Civil Defence yesterday on the concluding day of the Gitex Technology Week. The device will be distributed to hundreds of people with special needs, an endeavour that is in line with the UAE's objective of making itself

entirely disabled-friendly by 2020.

The tiny device, which has a mobile chip embedded in it, comes equipped with a push button, and can be worn on the person as it tracks the mobility patterns of the wearer. In times of emergency, pressing the button will send out an alert for swift aid and assistance.

Being provided free of cost to special needs individuals, the Personal Connector can be purchased by others at a cost of Dh250.

Speaking at the event, Major General Rashid Thani Al Matroushi, director-general of Civil Defence, said: "Dubai's Smart City initiatives are not merely about automation. They are about connecting people to their needs."

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Civil Defence offers emergency services at the click of a button

Personal Dashboard app will help locate nearest fire station, check weather updates and report safety violations

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A mobile dashboard launched by the Dubai Civil Defence promises access to emergency services at the click of a button.

The Personal Dashboard, which is a smartphone app, can be downloaded free on the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. It also allows users to import personal data and interact with Civil Defence on an intuitive interface.

Among the interesting features on the dashboard is a panic button, which will connect a person to emergency services and My Family, which allows a person to import live data on residence, safety and CCTV feeds, along with personal information about health and vehicles.

Launching the dashboard on Thursday at Gitex Technology Week, Major General Rashid Thani Al Matroushi, director-general of Civil Defence, said: "Dubai's Smart City initiatives are not merely about automation. They are about connecting people to their needs. At Dubai Civil Defence, we care about the happiness of people and the dashboard will enable us to engage with people directly."

Apart from offering direct emergency services, the dashboard also provides access to services of other government department.



Virendra Saklani/Gulf News

Innovation

- Maj Gen Rashid Thani Rashid Al Matroushi and Dilip Rahulan, chairman and CEO of Pacific Controls, launch the Personal Dashboard and Personal Connector in Dubai yesterday.

NEW DEVICE

Connecting special needs people to help

Dubai Civil Defence will distribute hundreds of Personal Connectors free to the elderly and people with special needs.

Personal Connectors are tiny devices with mobile chips that can help track the movement of people using them while also enabling them to seek instant emergency services at the push of a button.

"The device is specially designed for people with special needs and the elderly, who need constant attention. They can use this device to call their family members or emergency services by just pushing a button on the Personal Connectors," said Major General Rashid Thani Al Matroushi, director-general of Dubai Civil Defence.

The device has a string attached to it and can be worn around the neck so that it is with the user at all times.

Others can buy the device for approximately Dh250.

— S.S

The dashboard will also help people to locate the nearest fire station, check weather updates and report safety violations.

"The personal dashboard is a sophisticated way to digitally track critical information online. It is like a car dashboard ... it keeps all important information in front of you; things

that you want to monitor and an SOS button to connect with DCD in case of an emergency," Al Matroushi added.

The personal dashboard comes close on the heels of DCD's launch Life Safety Dashboard in June, which directly connects buildings in Dubai to DCD's emergency system.