**Press Release**

**UAE Young Drivers Behavior and Attitudes (Research)**

* Young drivers cause the majority of UAE road accidents
* Young drivers score worst in many dimensions of dangerous driving
* Lowest levels of seat belt use and knowledge of the new seat belt law
* Stakeholder engagement is key to protect young drivers

**Dubai, 2nd April 2019;** According to Ministry of Interior (MOI) data published earlier, 45 per cent of all road accidents UAE-wide have been caused by young drivers and even 63 per cent in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, as well as 34 per cent of all road traffic fatalities. These data illustrate the vital importance of understanding the root causes of young driver behavior and to address them accordingly. Although the official MOI figures refer to the broader age bracket of 18-30 years old drivers, we want to focus on the novice driver segment of 18-24 years. RoadSafetyUAE has conducted broad behavior studies since 2015 giving us the opportunity to compare the behavior of the young novice driver segment with the total driving population.

The problem is not a UAE specific one alone, as the UN mentions that the young novice driver segment is greatly overrepresented in crash and traffic fatality statistics. They pose a greater risk to themselves, their passengers and other road users. Death rates for 18-24 years old drivers typically remain more than double those of older drivers.

UAE’s MOI stated, that the main causes for accidents within this age group are speeding, using phones behind the wheel and not keeping a safe distance between vehicles. Young drivers score worst in many dimensions of reckless driving when compared with older drivers, as our studies testify. It seems only with experience and when growing older, UAE’s motorists adjust their behavior and drive safer. Here are some selected data points linking young driver behavior to the main causes of accidents on UAE roads:

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| **INDICATOR USE** |  |  |  | **SPEEDING** |  |  |
| Sample Size: 1007 | Total | 18 to 24 |  | Sample Size: 1005 | Total | 18 to 24 |
| Indicator used when required? A: 'Almost every time' | 67% | 56% |  | Reasons for speeding: | - | - |
| Reasons for no- using your indicator: | - | - |  | Running late | 67% | 72% |
| The traffic around me demands my full attention, so I cannot think of using the indicator | 23% | 31% |  | Knowledge of speed camera locations | 39% | 53% |
| I don't indicate out of habit | 16% | 28% |  | To test car’s abilities / cars are designed for speed | 22% | 30% |
| In my opinion, it is a sign of inexperience to indicate | 15% | 25% |  |  |  |  |

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| **SEAT BELT USE** |  |  |  | **DISTRACTED DRIVING** |  |  |
| Sample Size: 1016 | Total | 18 to 24 |  | Sample Size: 1007 | Total | 18 to 24 |
| As a driver, I use my seat belt 'Always' | 72% | 62% |  | I am always fully focused behind the wheel | 66% | 57% |
| Sitting next to the driver, I use my seat belt 'Always' | 73% | 65% |  | I occasionally get distracted from my driving | 29% | 38% |
| Sitting in the back seat, I use my seat belt 'Always' | 27% | 20% |  |  |  |  |
| When driving a car, I ask my passengers to use their seat belt 'Always' | 56% | 46% |  | **TAILGATING** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | Sample Size: 1010 | Total | 18 to 24 |
| Why don't you always wear your seat belt or ask your passengers to do so: | - | - |  | **As the driver of a vehicle do you tailgate:** | - | - |
| On short trips, it is not needed to wear seat belts | 32% | 42% |  | Regularly | 4% | 7% |
| I am a safe driver and I will not be involved in an accident, hence I don't need seat belts | 17% | 19% |  | Never | 59% | 51% |
| Seat belts crinkle my cloths | 11% | 17% |  | **Main cause for tailgating?** | - | - |
|  |  |  |  | I am running late | 23% | 32% |
| Are you aware of the new seat belt laws in the UAE? A: 'Yes' | 82% | 71% |  | **When I am tailgating other motorists:** | - | - |
|  |  |  |  | I don't care how the driver of the vehicle in front feels | 11% | 16% |

Thomas Edelmann, Managing Director RoadSafetyUAE states: “Simply put, young drivers behave more dangerously and protect themselves less than older and more experienced motorists. Young drivers are significantly more distracted, tailgate more, use their indictors and their seat belts less than the average motorist. When probed for the reasons for their behavior, some patterns crystalize: running late is a key ingredient both in speeding and tailgating. A lack of a caring attitude can be observed by statements like having less empathy for tailgated motorists, indicating less out of habit or not wanting to appear inexperienced, less demanding towards passengers and children to use their seat belts, which is coupled with a significantly lower level of knowledge about the new seat belt law.”

Mark Jenkins, CEO, Al Ghandi Auto Group adds: “Our brands attract young drivers and hence we decided to support RoadSafetyUAE for the topic ‘Young Driver’, and we also acted on the vital element of seat belt use. Our role as an enterprise with pioneering social responsibility objectives led us to invest and introduce in the UAE the ‘Seat Belt Convincer’ as part of a nation-wide campaign called ‘I am convinced’. We cooperate with corporations, universities and schools to deploy the seat belt convincer, in order to provide users with the tangible experience of how indispensable seat belt use is.”

Stakeholders interacting with young motorists need to be cognizant of their vulnerability and need to engage with them to protect them by passing on their experience of safe conduct on our roads. In this context we refer to driving institutes, young novice drivers’ parents and families, schools and universities, their friends and peers. In driving schools for example and beyond teaching the technical aspects of good driving, we need to add 'life skills' curriculum content to teach new drivers about the proper road culture and addressing the root causes of young driver related dangerous driving. Like in other countries, the lawmaker could consider 'staged driving licenses' for cars and motorcycles, meaning: initially only lower horse power cars/motorcycles are allowed and upon no-fines and safe driving within a couple of years, stronger performing vehicles can be used by novice drivers/riders. Schools and universities need to address young drivers and raise the awareness for proper conduct on the roads. Ideally, this should happen with mandatory road safety curriculum content. Parents and families need to provide a lot of hand-holding especially at the vey beginning of the young drivers driving careers, as they have the credibility and closeness to share their experiences first hand. Friends and peers of young drivers need to step up to their responsibility and they must not encourage dangerous or risky driving and rather proof they are true and caring friends and encourage safe driving.

The research projects were conducted by an international on-line research company by using UAE-representative samples of n>1,000 between 2015 and 2018.

-ENDS-

**Note to the editor:**

The quoted research findings are attached to this press release as an excel file, and can also be downloaded from the ‘featured research’ section on: <http://www.roadsafetyuae.com/statistics/>

RoadSafetyUAE’s topic with tips & tricks for young drivers can be found on <http://www.roadsafetyuae.com/young-drivers/>

Al Ghandi Auto’s ‘I am convinced’ video can be found on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=yrBZKnlDBns>

**About RoadSafetyUAE:**

RoadSafetyUAE’s vision is to contribute to reducing the number of road traffic fatalities, injuries and accidents in the UAE. RoadSafetyUAE’s mission is to raise the awareness for proper conduct on our roads, in an engaging manner and on a broadly communicated and permanent basis. RoadSafetyUAE’s award-winning platform engages with the stakeholders traffic participants, governmental entities, the media, and more than 30 corporate social responsibility (CSR) minded partners. ‘Tips & Tricks’ are the content backbone, provided for more than 60 topics of road safety, all specifically relevant to the UAE. More information can be found on [www.RoadSafetyUAE.com](http://www.RoadSafetyUAE.com)

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**About Al Ghandi Auto Group:**

Al Ghandi Auto is a leading General Motors Automotive Dealership selling Chevrolet and GMC vehicles in Dubai and the North Emirates and is part of the Al Ghandi Auto Group. Al Ghandi Auto has grown to become one of largest automotive industry organizations in the Middle East with over 50 years of automotive experience. Our vision is to be the premier provider of automotive products and related services across the UAE. We will earn our customers, suppliers and shareholders’ satisfaction and confidence through continuous improvement, driven by the integrity, teamwork, and innovation of our employees. With this vision, Al Ghandi Auto is dedicated to selling world-class products and outstanding services that provide exceptional value to our customers.

For more information please visit [www.alghandi.com](http://www.alghandi.com).

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