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May 28, 2008 | The Work

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As gridlocked Abu Dhabi commuters learn there are 2,000 taxis sitting idle, awaiting trained drivers, the UAE capital presses on with production of a new fleet of buses. No word on its plans for bus drivers.



Bus in search of passengers

Hafilat Industries will manufacture aluminum buses from a new purpose-built assembly plant in Abu Dhabi's Industrial City. The company will build Volgren's 'New Generation City Bus' on a Euro IV Mercedes Benz chassis originating from Spain, says [Khaleej Times](#), all of which will feature multiplexed electrics, sophisticated video surveillance, electronic signage, and a full aluminum body.

It has won a Dh30m export order from Australia, and will produce for the local market. The company claims to be the first in the region to build European-quality buses - a real market opportunity given the growth, and public transport commitments, of Gulf cities. Hafilat has a full range of public transport buses, including articulated city, double deck, compressed natural gas (CNG), hybrid (electric) and trolley buses.

Kippreport.com

May 28

Unfortunately, the buses will not drive themselves. **The National** reports that 2,000 shiny new taxis are stood idle because of failure to recruit and train enough drivers. The Centre for Regulation of Transport by Hire Cars (TransAD) is currently in Egypt looking for talent. Given the standard of Egyptian driving the training period could be lengthy, TransAd estimates three months.

According to TansAD, in most cities, one out of 10 public transport passengers used taxis, whereas in Abu Dhabi, eight out of 10 travelled by cabs. This city's 9,000 taxis carry about one million passengers each day.