

Company: Abu Dhabi Customs

Company Description: Abu Dhabi Customs is considered one of the first government entities in Abu Dhabi to ensure the security and integrity of the country's borders. As such, it is responsible for all customs trade-related activities to meet international standards and best practices.

Nomination Category: Management Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Maverick of the Year

Nomination Title: H.E. Fahed Gharib Al Shamsi

1. Which will you submit for this nomination, a video of up to five (5) minutes in length or a written essay of up to 650 words? Choose one:

Essay of up to 650 words

2. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the nominated video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video:

3. In bullet-list form (up to 150 words), provide a brief summary of up to ten (10) of the nominee's chief achievements since 1 January 2023:

Total 150 words used.

1. Completed successfully the 1st Strategic-Roadmap (2019-2023) with 64 strategic and operational-projects.
2. Launched ADC's 2024–2028 strategy: 42-projects, 825-KPIs.
3. Increased employee-satisfaction from 73% (2018) to 93% (2024).
4. Achieved the GPTW certification, for 3 consecutive years, where the GPTW Survey scores increased from 70% (2022) to 90% (2024)
5. 2 SCORM-Based interactive Digital-Learning, 3 Hologram-classrooms, VR-academy, Simfox-Simulator.
6. Implemented Trade Chain blockchain platform, reducing clearance costs by 80%.
7. Achieved #1 ranking in HR maturity in Abu Dhabi (97.5% – 2024). ranking first in key areas such as HR, Customer Experience, IT, Employee Engagement and Statistics. and Achieved the Gold Stevie HR department of the Year 2024.
8. Reached 72% pre-arrival clearance, up from 3% in 2018, and reduced average clearance time from 31 to 13.77 minutes (56% faster).
9. Delivered AED 8.8M in HR cost savings through automation and AI tools.
10. Led ADC to be adopted as a benchmark model by 55 government entities.

4. If you are providing a written essay for this nomination, submit in this space an essay of up to 650 words describing the nominee's accomplishments since 1 January 2023:

Total 465 words used.

Since January 2023, H.E. Fahed Gharib Al Shamsi has led a revolutionary transformation within Abu Dhabi Customs, demonstrating unprecedented leadership in innovation, digitization, and employee-centered excellence. With over 40 years of experience in aviation, military operations, and public service, he brought forward a clear vision rooted in performance, technology, and human capital development.

Under his leadership, ADC achieved historic milestones. He supervised the completion of 1st roadmap 2019-2023, which included 64 projects, followed by launching the 2024–2028 strategic roadmap, featuring 42 key projects (28 strategic + operational) supported by 825 KPIs. He directly supervised the successful execution of several strategic initiatives that raised ADC's global competitiveness, from securing 145 international awards (including multiple Stevies and Brandon Hall awards) to achieving 27 ISO certifications, reflecting unparalleled organizational performance.

Notably, he championed people-first innovation. He introduced personalized AI-driven learning paths that empowered 567 employees, generating over 100,000 training hours in 2024 alone. Virtual reality (VR) centers, hologram classrooms in 3 geographical locations, SIMFOX Simulators, AI-powered talent platforms, and upcoming Metaverse Offices, which have made ADC a benchmark for modern HR. As a result, employee productivity jumped from 46% in 2018 to 78.6% in 2024, while employee satisfaction soared to 93%, ranking ADC #1 in Abu Dhabi Government surveys.

Al Shamsi's transformation of the work environment earned ADC the "Great Place to Work" recognition for three consecutive years (2022,2023,2024), achieving a 90% GPTW index in 2024. His belief, "**Give employees what they want before they ask**", became a mantra that shaped a proactive and empowered organizational culture.

He spearheaded innovation on multiple fronts. His leadership delivered Trade Chain, a blockchain-based customs clearance system that cut operational effort and reduced the costs. His strategic alliance with **Mohamed bin Zayed University of AI** (MBZUAI) advanced AI adoption, enhancing decision-making and predictive analysis in customs operations.

Furthermore, he amplified ADC's global influence through over 58 keynote participations, 70 benchmarking sessions, and 2 publications in WCO journals. His commitment to innovation catalyzed over 2,300 employee-submitted ideas, with 33 projects implemented and 41 labeled as high-impact innovations.

Despite the scale of change, Al Shamsi's people-centered leadership ensured seamless execution. He established automated promotion tracks, revamped employee incentives, and introduced hybrid work frameworks, all while enhancing compliance (cybersecurity rates increased from 79% to 97% between 2019–2023) and boosting revenue collection by 53.3% in a single year, reaching AED 2.3 billion in 2023.

Internationally, his leadership has been honored with the Stevie People-First Leader of the Year 2023, GCC HR Awards 2024 and Best Executive Leader 2025 by ICMG, cementing his role as a visionary at the forefront of government transformation.

Al Shamsi's impact is not just about numbers—it's a story of reshaping government excellence, driving innovation, and putting human capital at the core of institutional success.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[H.E. Fahed Gharib Al Shamsi](#)

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