

Company: Ports, Customs and free Zone Corporation (PCFC)

Company Description: The Ports, Customs and Free Zone Corporation was officially established in 2001, under the authority of the Dubai Government, there are a number of entities and institutions operating under its umbrella, including the main ports in Dubai, as well as the investment arm and security arm of the corporation, represented by Investment Department and Security Department.

Nomination Category: Management Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Emerging Leader of the Year

Nomination Title: Noura Abdulla Alshamsi

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 146 words used.

- **Mystery Shopper Program:** Boosted customer satisfaction by **22%** via anonymous feedback & real-time dashboards.
- **Internal Excellence Award:** Cut costs by **95%**, honoring **9 individuals & 3 departments** (e.g., 20:1 license ratio).
- **Specialized Strategies:** Slashed cargo clearance time by **30%**, achieving **77% of 2024 goals**, lifting Dubai to **11th global maritime rank**.
- **Risk Mitigation:** Reduced high-impact risks from **52% to 11%**, saving **AED 4.2M** via automation/workshops.
- **ISO Compliance:** Secured **ISO 44001**, advanced **ISO 56002**, zero non-conformities in **50+ audits**.
- **Innovation Week:** Co-developed **Dubai Ports Code** with ARUP, projected **15% port cost cut by 2030**.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Automated **45 processes**, hit **98% work completion**, slashed HR onboarding to **5 days**.
- **Community Impact:** Launched **27% more initiatives: 1,200 STEM students, 8-ton marine cleanup**.
- **Awards:** First PCFC woman to win **TITAN Gold**; secured **Stevie Awards & Maritime CSR Award**, making PCFC UAE's **1st CSR world leader**.

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 636 words used.

As a pivotal leader within the Strategy and Institutional Governance Directorate, my contributions in 2024 directly advanced the Corporation's strategic goals, operational excellence, and global stature. Below is a concise overview of my achievements in leadership, innovation, and impact:

1. Strategic Initiatives: Elevating Service Excellence

I spearheaded the **Mystery Shopper Program**, a 2024 initiative to assess service quality through anonymous customer evaluations. By training evaluators and integrating real-time feedback into dashboards, the program identified 32 improvement areas, driving a **22% increase in customer satisfaction scores** within nine months. Concurrently, I designed the **Internal Excellence Award**, a zero-cost, data-driven recognition system that eliminated subjective evaluations. Leveraging existing performance metrics, it autonomously identified top performers, reducing administrative costs by **95%**. The inaugural awards recognized **9 individuals** (e.g., staff who cut turnaround times by 40%) and **3 departments**, including the Licensing Unit, which achieved a **20:1 ratio of new-to-expired vessel licenses**.

2. Strategic Governance and Performance

As architect of the **Specialized Strategies Methodology**, I aligned corporate goals with unit-specific initiatives. For example, the Customs Unit adopted a risk-based inspection framework, slashing cargo clearance times by **30%**. This methodology contributed to **77% achievement of 2024 strategic objectives**, including an **86% on-time delivery rate**—a corporate record. During the **2021–2025 Strategic Plan** review, I led 12 cross-departmental workshops, integrating feedback from 200+ employees. These insights informed the **2026–2030 Strategic Plan**, incorporating predictive analytics for challenges like digitization and climate resilience. My benchmarking efforts supported Dubai's rise to **11th globally** in maritime competitiveness.

3. Risk Management and Compliance Excellence

In response to 2023 findings that **52% of enterprise risks were high-impact**, I orchestrated mitigation strategies, including **3 enterprise-wide workshops** mapping 150 processes and identifying 28 vulnerabilities. Automated fraud detection and vendor protocols reduced high-impact risks to **11%**, averting **AED 4.2 million in potential losses**. My compliance leadership ensured **zero major non-conformities** across 50 internal and 8 external audits. The Corporation also achieved **ISO 44001** (Collaborative Relationships) and advanced preparations for **ISO 56002** (Innovation Management).

4. Innovation and Future Readiness

Collaborating with the Dubai Future Foundation, I co-designed **Innovation Week**, exploring AI-driven logistics and decarbonization trends. My keynote workshop on strategic foresight engaged 50+ leaders, including H.E. Eng. Abdullah Belhoul, shaping the **Dubai Ports and Marinas Infrastructure Code**. Partnering with ARUP, we conducted 6 stakeholder workshops to establish emission controls and quay durability standards, projected to reduce port costs by **15% by 2030**.

5. Operational Efficiency and Social Impact

I streamlined workflows across 8 departments, automating 45 manual processes to achieve **98% work plan completion** and an **8% rise in documented procedures**. For instance, HR reduced onboarding time from 14 to 5 days using my digitized checklists. My community initiatives grew by **27%**, including a Dubai Cares partnership funding STEM programs for 1,200 students and a coastal cleanup removing **8 tons of marine debris**, aligning with UAE sustainability goals.

6. Awards and Leadership Recognition

I am the first employee and woman in PCFC who won the gold award in The TITAN Awards in the Architect of Strategic Excellence category, also my strategic vision secured the Corporation's **Stevie Awards** for "Executive of the Year" and "Business Technology Solutions" and the the Maritime Standard CSR Award with an outstanding recognition in making PCFC as the 1st entity in the UAE to be recognized as an CSR world leader.. Internally, I mentored 5 junior staff to promotions, reflecting my commitment to talent development.

7. Conclusion: Visionary Leadership

My leadership—rooted in collaboration, data-driven decisions, and anticipatory governance—has driven transformative outcomes. By fostering innovation, mitigating risks, and prioritizing sustainability, I have solidified the Corporation's reputation as a global benchmark. As we advance, I remain dedicated to leveraging technology and partnerships to sustain Dubai's competitive edge. This portfolio exemplifies my commitment to excellence, making me a strong candidate for individual recognition in leadership and innovation.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[Noura Abdulla Alshamsi](#)



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