**ALERT ON DRIVING THROUGH MOUNTAIN AREAS**

Dear colleuages,

We have heard the unfortunate news of the fatal Motor vehicle incident, while descending from Al-Jabal Al-Akhdhar using his 4X4 Wheel Drive vehicle and there were few issues found to be the underlying causes of the incident!

According to the ROP’s statement in the local newspapers said: “A car crashed with a mountain and caught fire on it is way to Jabal Akhdar, resulting in the death of four people and the injury of eight.”

Some of the underlying causes for such incidents are:

* Unfamiliar with the terrain and the surrounding areas.
* Poor vehicle maintenance.
* 4WD Driving experience and usage of the right gear.

We would like to share with you the following best practices before going to the mountain areas and while negotiating driving uphill or downhill:

* Ensure the full maintenance of the vehicle as per the agency/manufacturer recommendations before embarking into such journeys. (Brake and gear fluids are filled up)
* Ensure the brake pads are new or in a good condition.
* Having sufficient experience to drive on such terrains; depend on experienced drivers to take you if needed.
* Avoid using the brakes continuously and ensure full time engagement of 4WD locks and usage of low gears (gear 1 or 2 maximum with High/Law Range lock).
* Do not worry about the engine sound while on low gear, it is normal.
* Maintain a very low speed, be fully vigilant, and remain on your side/lane of the road.
* Take extra cautious while approaching any curves and take your time.
* Keep away and with a safe distance from any vehicle in front of you. Do not tailgate at all!
* Get familiar with the road and having clear vision of your surroundings.
* If you are going in a group of vehicles; then do not attempt to overtake and keep safe distance between all the vehicles.
* **All vehicle occupants** must wear their seatbelts; by law, it is prohibited to have more passengers than the allocated seatbelts.
* Read the Vehicle Owner’s Manual for further details/familiarity on gear functionality.
* Remember, you are going there to enjoy; so take your time please.

We have selected the following youtube link to give you more details on driving up/down hills: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7MF3q0v1hw>

You can explore and search for similar video clips online.

Wish you a pleasant and safe driving wherever you go.

PDO Road Safety Team (MSE/7)