

## UNIT 8 – Tomorrow's Robots

### Reading 1

#### Skills:

- Details
- Scanning
- Author's purpose
- Infer information
- Understand word formation

**Getting started:** Where do we need robots the most, assisting firefighters, police officers or doctors?

### DUBAI'S ROBOCOPS



It is a terrifying vision of the future: you're walking on the street and you see a robot police officer with dark eyes and no visible mouth that can identify criminals and collect evidence. Well, that robocop with a police hat was shown to the world outside the planet's tallest tower, Burj Khalifa, in Dubai, some weeks ago.

But since then, what have these police robots done? And is Dubai's love affair with robotics nothing more than just a desire to spend money to have modern technology everywhere? PAL Robotics, the company behind the robot, talked a little bit about its **duties**, which seemed more tourist guide than police officer. "This robot joined the Dubai police to help citizens in an innovative and attractive way, and it is located by now in tourist attractions and shopping malls," the company told the BBC.

The robot can provide useful information in multiple languages thanks to **its** software and can also guide people to a requested point of interest. Besides, it is a tool for citizens to contact the Dubai Police call centers by using the microphones integrated into the robot. Additionally, people can use other police-related services through it, such as paying traffic fines.

The robot is part of a wider move to make the region's police service "smarter", which will include many more computer-controlled, **unmanned** police stations. The Dubai government wants robot police to make up 25% of the force by 2030. As a member of the Dubai police told the BBC when it was launched: "These kinds of robots can work 24/7. They won't ask you for leave, sick leave or maternity leave as they will be on duty all the time."

Noel Sharkey, a professor of computer science at Sheffield University has worked with the Dubai government on its integration of bots, says that these robots were originally planned in Dubai to help the elderly or as tour guides. However, he is not convinced by the current policing role. "I think there was a plan to have an emergency button, which would send your location to the police, and that could be a good application, but people could just make fun of them or knock them over." In fact, there is precedent for this. In July 2017, a security robot used to patrol an office building in Washington was found "drowned" in a fountain.

While police robots might currently be rudimentary, Prof Sharkey predicts they will become "more intense" in coming years, taking on the role of surveillance bots or as machines to discover explosives or other dangerous materials on the streets.

\*Adapted from <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-41268996>

Answer the following questions:

1. What's the purpose of the author in this text?
  - a. Describe a dangerous consequence technology can bring.
  - b. Give examples of the types of robots they use in Dubai.
  - c. Inform about the use of robotics for security purposes.
  - d. Explain how Dubai's robots are built.
2. How are cop robots presented in paragraph 1?
  - a. As criminals
  - b. As frightening machines
  - c. As robots with a human-like appearance
  - d. As machines that can climb very tall buildings
3. Who built these robots?
  - a. The BBC
  - b. Pal Robotics
  - c. A group of citizens
  - d. Dubai Police Department
4. According to paragraph 2, where are you most likely to see one of these robots?
  - a. Near an important monument
  - b. Next to a famous TV studio
  - c. In a police station
  - d. At a restaurant
5. The word **duties** in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to
  - a. taxes
  - b. offices
  - c. professions
  - d. responsibilities
6. The word **its** in paragraph 3 refers to
  - a. robot
  - b. people
  - c. software
  - d. information
7. What is the connotation of the word **unmanned** in paragraph 4?
  - a. Without weapons
  - b. Using many men
  - c. Without people
  - d. Using some arms

8. What is stated in paragraph 4?
  - a. Dubai police officers are pretty intelligent.
  - b. In 2030, one quarter of Dubai Police will be robots.
  - c. Computers are essential for the Dubai government.
  - d. The BBC work together with Dubai Police to fight crime.
9. How does Noel Sharkley seem to feel about cop bots?
  - a. He criticizes the fact that the robots do not include an emergency button.
  - b. He does not think this implementation is safe for the citizens.
  - c. He's happy to hear the robots will work as tourist guides.
  - d. He's worried people can mistreat these robots.

### What do you think?

If these robots were implemented in your country, would this imply something beneficial for the community?