

## Dr. Sulaiman M. Al Dhalaan appointed as Managing Director for the Saudi office

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The International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL), the internationally recognised computer proficiency standard, owned by the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), has expanded its operations in the Middle East further by opening an office in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



ICDL Saudi Arabia has been established to address the growing interest across the region in the ICDL program. Dr. Sulaiman M. Al Dhalaan has been appointed as the Managing Director of the Saudi office where approximately 30 staff will oversee the implementation of the program as well as the accreditation of training and testing centers in the Kingdom.

Dr. Al Dhalaan holds a PhD from Bradford University in England and a Masters degree in Electrical Engineering. He has worked in the public and private sectors for more than 18 years. Also, Dr. Al Dhalaan has been involved in technical education and vocational training, as well as national skills development, throughout his time in the public sector.

As well as being highly educated and possessing a wealth of experience in the public and private sectors, Dr. Al Dhalaan has also attended several international conferences on technical education and vocational training, including the UNESCO Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Training and the Second Saudi Technical Conference and Exhibition (SATEX 2002).

"I am very much looking forward to the challenge of heading the newly established regional office of ICDL. The basic computer training of citizens in Saudi Arabia is of utmost importance as we now live in an IT-driven society," said Dr. Al Dhalaan. "The ICDL programs equip citizens with basic computer skills that are needed in the workplace and in day to day life. The ICDL programs have proved to be a popular way to educate one self in computer skills. The programs are practical, flexible and cost-effective and ICDL is the only provider of vendor-neutral computer training in the region."

"The ICDL programs are comparatively new to the Kingdom but we are already expanding rapidly. We are now in the process of accrediting 25 private institutions and training centers across the Kingdom as well as 25 community service centers and technical colleges. There has been a lot of interest in the program from the Government sectors such as the General Organisation of Technical Education and Vocational Training (GOTEVOT) as well as King Fahad University for Petroleum and Minerals and King Khalid University. GOTEVOT has already adopted the ICDL program as a requirement for all of its students. More than 10,000 students have been trained to date, with a vast amount of students currently being trained and tested," added Dr. Al Dhalaan.

The ICDL program has been gaining increasing acceptance in the Middle East, with several GCC governments adopting or recommending it to their employees.

ICDL offers three basic categories of programs: the ICDL Core, which is divided into seven modules; e-Citizen, aimed at those with little or no computer experience and ICDL Advanced which offers advanced certification in Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Databases and Presentations.

### About ICDL

International Computer Driving License (ICDL), is an internationally recognized computer proficiency standard that is owned by the European Computer Driving License (ECDL) and introduced by the UNESCO's Cairo Office (UCO) for Arab states in 2001. ICDL is gaining increasing acceptance in the Middle East, with several governments adopting as a requirement to their employees. The ICDL program exists in over 132 countries, and is offered in 32 languages, including Arabic. The programs offered are all based on one standard syllabus and question set. There are more than 15,000 centres worldwide, and over 10 million exams have been taken globally since the launch of the program.

### About ICDL GCC Foundation

ICDL GCC Foundation was created by the ECDL Foundation, the not-for-profit global governing body of the ECDL and ICDL member countries, dedicated to helping raise the general level of computer skills in societies and providing access for all to the information society, to serve the to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States with their implementation of ICDL and for providing them with localised support to ensure quality of ICDL programs. The ICDL-GCC Foundation is the sole ICDL licensee and accreditation body that is responsible to support ICDL accredited training and testing centres in the GCC. It also acts as the

## In the news

reviewing and approving body for the local adaptation of ICDL programs, including authorizing the sale of Arabic ICDL content and testing material in the region.

### **For further information contact:**

Orient Planet PR and Marketing Communications  
P O Box 23345, Dubai, UAE.  
Tel: 00 971 4 3988901; Fax: 00 971 4 3988941  
Email: [info@orientplanet.com](mailto:info@orientplanet.com)  
Website: [www.orientplanet.com](http://www.orientplanet.com)