

**Press Release**

**ICDL announces 7 millionth registration in its digital literacy program worldwide**

*GCC region is among the top three contributors to the global achievement of the program*

October 18, 2007

ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body and certification authority of the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) program in the Gulf States, has announced that the ICDL certification program has achieved its 7 millionth registration worldwide, with the GCC region and neighbouring Iraq contributing more than five per cent to this achievement in ICDL's global digital literacy movement.



"Digital literacy has been at the heart of the region's growing economy and governments are strongly advocating IT awareness among its citizens to advance their countries' socioeconomic development. Our shared goal with these governments is to create a social movement to bridge the digital gap by empowering everyone with basic computer skills to realize the benefits of technology. ICDL GCC Foundation has been working closely with the concerned authorities to widen the reach of digital literacy to all sectors of society, including women, retirees, and people with special needs," said Jamil Ezzo, Director General of ICDL GCC Foundation.

ICDL is available in 146 countries and has been translated into 38 languages. Internationally recognised as the global standard in end-user computer skills, the ICDL program has been endorsed and adopted by governments, international organisations and the international business community as a benchmark for computer competence in the workplace. Consequently, organizations around the world have required their employees and prospective job applicants to earn their ICDL certification as evidence of their computer skills. Fuelled by such proactive approach, the GCC has become one of the three top contributors to the growth of the program.

"We are delighted with the worldwide achievement of the ICDL program, which reached 7 million enrolments last month. We are even more delighted and proud of the our region's contribution to this success. It is very encouraging to see such acceptance and participation from governments and the

public in digital literacy. However, more work is still needed to establish a digitally literate population able to take advantage of the new online services and technologies being introduced,” Ezzo said.

The unprecedented success witnessed by ICDL is attributed to the support extended by policymakers in the region to incorporate the certification program as part of national IT strategy. The collective endorsements the ICDL syllabus and standard received from virtually all the education ministries, educational zones, state run universities and colleges in the region, as well as the rapid adoption by the national authorities responsible for IT strategies in UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and KSA have effectively made the ICDL program the de-facto standard for computer competency in the government workplace.

ICDL is an inclusive digital literacy program that empowers individuals with the essential concepts of computers and practical use of common desktop applications. The program is based on a recognized global standard acknowledged through testing and proves that the certificate holder has fundamental skills in Information Technology, using the computer and managing files, word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, and information and communication (Internet and e-mail). The ICDL syllabus offers a broader perspective on computer netiquettes by concentrating on the responsible use of computers and the internet, covering important social areas such as intellectual property rights, virus protection and recycling.

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