

ICDL IT literacy programme stretches to the remote areas in the Gulf region

Residents in remote areas around the GCC show keen interest in the programme

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ICDL GCC Foundation, the regional arm of the ECDL Foundation and the governing body of the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) programme in the Gulf region, has reinforced its commitment to continue to support the widespread of digital literacy and into remote areas in the Gulf countries as increasing number of individuals are enrolling in the ICDL programme.

“Computer skills have become a necessity in a modern society and to a knowledge-based economy. Our ambition is to bridge the digital gap and provide all GCC citizens, regardless of where they live, the opportunity to become part of the digital society we live in. To further encourage the rollout of digital literacy in the GCC, we are working closely with a number of governmental and educational institutions in the GCC to ensure that people living in remote areas are not disadvantaged by the cost and time needed for travelling to obtain their ICDL training and testing,” said Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL GCC Foundation.

“The success of ICDL in the Gulf States is attributed primarily to teachers and students increasingly enrolling in the programme. This reinforced the popularity and the significance of the programme among people across the region. ICDL GCC Foundation had accredited 36 centres with an additional 6 centres currently undergoing accreditation, to provide ICDL training and testing in remote areas in the GCC, ,” added Ezzo.

“We are committed to extend our cooperation to all the initiatives that support the spread of IT literacy for all members of society,” added Ezzo. “The popularity of the ICDL programme in remote areas is clearly demonstrated by the programme’s success in the western areas of the UAE, where annual ICDL summer camps for students are being held and an increasing number of individuals from the education, government and petroleum sectors are enrolling in the ICDL programme.

The key to a successful e-Government, e-Banking, e-Shopping, or any other online service is citizens’ receptiveness to adopt and adapt to a different way of transacting. The Gulf region has remote areas with vast distances, dispersed population with low IT skill levels. The challenges faced by remoteness in the delivery of e-services and information will not be overcome by just the advancements made in the Internet, but also by developing a society’s IT skills and building its confidence in the reliability of today’s technologies.

The ECDL/ICDL organizations around the world, including ICDL GCC Foundation, share a charter to foster IT literacy programmes for the economic and social development of countries. The ICDL concept is an IT literacy standard evidence whereby the holder of the ICDL certificate has the knowledge of the essential concepts of IT and is able to use a personal computer and its common applications at a reasonable competency level. The ICDL programme is open to everyone, regardless of age or background, and is designed to ensure equal opportunity and fair participation in the digital society by all people.