



Press Release

ICDL GCC Foundation calls for more awareness programs in support of campaign against cyber-crimes

ICDL lauds UAE government's recent move to establish cyber crime unit

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ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body and the certification authority of the International Computer Driving Licence program in the Gulf States, is calling on all GCC governments for the implementation of more education and awareness programs to boost the ongoing campaign against the proliferation of cyber-crimes across the region. The Foundation's urge for action seeks to intensify the effort to educate and familiarize the general public on the practice of cyber security and how to protect oneself from online criminal activity, in line with the UAE Government's recent move to set up a Cyber Crime Department to prevent financial scams, hacking, pornography, fraud, promotion of bogus companies, extortion and other online threats.

According to recent ICT industry reports, the recorded instances of cyber-crimes, which include financial scams, pornography and hacking into computer systems, have become increasing

threats to governments, companies and individuals. In fact, GCC countries stand to lose an estimated AED 2.07 billion (USD 550 million) to AED 2.68 billion (USD 735 million) annually to cyber-crimes. This figure is likely to increase as more and more individuals as well as organizations are now using Internet as means for communicating and conducting transactions online.

Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL GCC Foundation, said, “The occurrence of cyber-crimes in the our region has proliferated due to the lack of awareness on what actually constitutes a cyber-crime and lack of laws against it. ICDL GCC Foundation is calling for the implementation of more education and awareness programs that aim to educate individuals as well as organizations and companies on ways to protect themselves. Moreover, we are also urging everyone to be more vigilant of fraudulent and harmful online sites and report them to the local proper authorities. Parents, in particular, should be mindful of the sites that their children visit and should also teach them to be cautious about revealing personal information and photos online to protect them from pedophiles.”

The ICDL GCC Foundation is currently working closely with a renowned American Universities which are interested in this area on the development of a qualification program that can help assist parents in monitoring and regulating the online activity of their children. Another qualification is also under development focusing on cyber security and how users can protect themselves from fraudulent online activities like phishing, spamming and hacking.

“We commend the UAE Government on their recent move to establish a Cyber Crime Department that will lead the battle against cyber-crimes. This new crime fighting unit not only reflects on the country’s continued commitment to create a virtually safe and secure online community but also brings us closer to the creation of a fully integrated digital society. ICDL GCC Foundation also reaffirms its strong support to the different regulatory bodies in the GCC and local telecommunication providers who have taken definitive steps such as adopting cutting edge technologies to filter out pornographic and other harmful websites,” Ezzo added.

ICDL is an integrated IT certification program recognised worldwide. It is a digital literacy programme intended to empower individuals with essential skills in computers and the practical use of common desktop applications. The ICDL certification is based on recognised global standards acknowledged through testing and proves that the certificate holder has the fundamental skills in IT, using the computer and managing files, word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, and information and communication (Internet and e-mail). ICDL is endorsed by education ministries, universities and government organisations all over the world and it is available in more than 168 countries, in 48 languages, with more than 10 million participants around the world.

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