



### **Press Release**

#### **Abu Dhabi Systems and information Centre (ADSIC) and ICDL GCC Foundation agreement to Tackle Cybercrime**

#### **All Government Employees including the Police Force to undergo cyber-safety awareness programme**

Abu Dhabi, UAE, (5 September 2012): The Abu Dhabi Systems and Information Centre (ADSIC), a government authority founded with the mandate to oversee the implementation of e-Government and to administer the execution of policies and technology standards within government and relevant entities; and ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body and certification authority advocating computer competency across the GCC and Iraq, today announced the signing of an MOU agreement to promote cyber-safety across the Emirate.

Under the agreement, all government employees including the Police Force will undergo mandatory training that leads to certification in the safe use of information technology. The

syllabus being used will help individuals learn how to use computers securely, surf the web safely and be aware of potential threats and how to prevent them.

HE Rashed Lahej Al Mansoori, Director General of ADSIC said “The usage of Internet is continuously spreading across the GCC region; there are consequences for neglecting the security gaps in the internet home network or office network which expose users for the risks such as identity theft and personal harm. Lack of experience and cyber crime awareness has contributed in increasing the cyber attacks between users; therefore ADSIC is constantly trying to provide users with the needed defensive skills of networking and internet environments whether it was connected to the internet or not.”

“We would like to create a virtual environment that’s much safer for citizens in the emirate, starting with focusing on governmental workforces, to arm them with knowledge, awareness and the necessary skills to enable them to use computers and the internet without fear or getting exposed to any harm. With our cooperation with ICDL GCC Foundation and concerned authorities we will launch community awareness campaigns that speak directly to teachers and parents, children and societies as a whole on achieving our same purposes that we all aim for, to create a protected IT world for everyone and providing users with the necessary technical skills to fight and prevent cyber crimes.” HE Al Mansoori added.

Computer crimes are not new but increasingly more daring specially while using a public domain. Recent research conducted by one of the leading trusted security software providers showed an increase in the volume of malicious attacks in its latest ‘Global Internet Security Threat Report’. This provider reported that it alone blocked 5.5 billion malicious attacks in 2011, a rise of over 80% from 2010. According to the report, there were 232 million identities compromised in 2011 with the number of such instances in the Gulf region rising exponentially due to its citizens being less tech savvy as compared to some of their neighboring countries.

This was illustrated by a number of striking facts relevant to our region which were collated by Norton/Symantec and published in Gulf News on September 21 2011. Their statistics revealed that in 2009 28% of internet users in Dubai were victims of identity theft, that figure rising by 75% in 2010 to 49%. Identity theft also affected half of the 2.55 million internet users across the UAE in 2011 costing the nation 1.44 billion AED in dealing with such attacks. Along the same theme of IT Security, an article entitled “*Young Generation in UAE at Risk*” included a survey conducted and published by Gulf News on July 27<sup>th</sup> 2012 highlighted that two thirds of

respondents felt that they were not qualified to teach their children about online security and that the crucial issue of safe internet usage should be dealt with at school.

Mr. Jamil Ezzo, the Director General of the ICDL GCC Foundation, commented “We are proud to expand our partnership with ADSIC in addressing the pressing need to educate the general public on how to prevent and protect themselves against cyber threats. With the widespread of computer and Internet use, Cybercrime can take many guises and are becoming increasingly sophisticated and common, be it in the form of scam emails, phishing, malware, spams, malicious viruses, identity theft, hacking or pedophiles trawling the net targeting children”.

The IT Security programme from ICDL educate and certify teachers, public sector workers, law enforcement personnel, parents as well as students of all ages, to arm themselves with the necessary knowledge to be able to use computers and smartphones safely whether in the workplace, at home or on the move. The content will cover all the basics of computer safety, demystify technical jargon in an easy to understand, interactive fashion based on real-life circumstances. Participants will also be able to gain an internationally recognized certificate upon the successful completion of the official IT Security test.

The MOU signals the expanding long term relationship with ADSIC following the collaborative work on the e-Citizen programme, an initiative rolled out by the Abu Dhabi government aimed at promoting the use of ICT and online services across all social groups.

“Our aim is to spread digital security awareness to the masses so that ordinary people can go about their digital lives safely and confidently. Together with ADSIC and our delivery partners, we will provide them with the ammunition they need to defend themselves in cyberspace from criminals and bullies” added Mr Ezzo.

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*The International Computer Driving License (ICDL) concept is a global computer literacy initiative developed to raise the level of knowledge about Information Technology (IT) and increase the level of competence in using personal computers and common computer applications for all the citizens of the world. The ICDL GCC Foundation is the sole body to implement and disseminate the program across the GCC States and Iraq with the support of leading educational institutions and accredited bodies. The ICDL GCC Foundation mission is to enable proficient use of Information and Communications Technology that empowers individuals, organizations and society, through the development, promotion and delivery of quality certification programmes throughout the world.*