



**Press Release:**

**ICDL Launches New Initiatives in Support of the Visions of Rulers  
and Policy Makers in their Emiratisation Drive**

**Over 200,000 UAE nationals enrolled in ICDL as part of government and educational  
reforms and emiratization efforts**

Dubai, UAE (31, January 2013) - ICDL GCC Foundation, an activist in digital skills use and safety for-all and the sole operator of the ICDL certification program across the GCC and Iraq, today revealed key milestones in its ongoing efforts to support the UAE government's Emiratisation initiatives. Since it commenced operations in the country and region over a decade ago, thanks to the great support received from the rulers and policy makers in the country, over 200,000 UAE citizens have undertaken ICDL's programs, 2.5% of the total population, learning new skills in using information and communications technologies (ICT) resulting in improved employment opportunities and quality of life, key cornerstones of Emiratisation.

ICDL has anchored itself closely to key government initiatives such as Emiratisation from the onset in order to make a real difference in terms of employment and learning for local citizens, particularly youth,



women, jobseekers and the disabled, and 2012 was a year of stellar achievements in this regard, as over 7 thousand women and 6 thousand men participated in ICDL programs throughout the year. Out of this, almost 4 thousand women and 2.5 thousand men gained the ICDL certification. To date more than 100 thousand UAE nationals have completed ICDL certification requirements.

ICDL has successfully developed and implemented creative initiatives such as the Summer Camps for young people, supported by educational authorities and the private sector, benefiting more than 6 thousand youth from across the region in 2012 alone with over 50 thousand youngsters so far since the camps dissemination in the region.

Mr Jamil Ezzo, Director General of ICDL GCC, commented “One of the founding principles of the UAE as introduced by the late His Highness Shaikh Zayed is that the citizen comes first, something we fully support. Emiratisation is all about human development and capacity building to create greater employment opportunities and quality of life for UAE nationals. We have assisted many tens of thousands of Emirati citizens, with well over 15 thousand in 2012 alone.”

“ His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai announced towards the end of last year that 2013 was the year of Emiratisation with a focus on job creation for UAE Nationals, we plan to play an active role in helping to achieve this goal, by focusing on key growth employment pillars that are cyber safety and social media” Added Ezzo.

Research carried out by ICDL GCC Foundation as well as by industry leading research firms point to a healthy stream of job openings in the field of cyber security and social media. Results of a study undertaken by Frost and Sullivan last year pointed that spending on IT security would be almost double that of overall spending in IT between 2012 and 2018 whilst ICDL’s own survey conducted in conjunction with Canon Middle East found that the importance of cyber security amongst respondents was rated as very low suggesting the need for increasing awareness.

The UAE along with the GCC region has also witnessed a boom in the use of social media and networking with more than 70% of the MEA region’s internet users visiting social networking sites but with internet penetration still relatively low as compared to the USA and Western Europe, this number is only going to explode.



“We are witnessing a digital revolution in the UAE and across the region with cyber security and social media at the epicentre, one which offers great commercial and employment opportunities to its citizens. By offering unique and innovative programs to all social groups, ICDL GCC is committed to serve the government to realise its vision of Emiratisation.” concluded 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 programmes 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.**