

## **Kuwaiti Government delegation visits UAE to assess implementations of the ICDL program**

***ICDL implementation in Kuwait to include 200,000 government employees and job seekers***

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ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body and certification authority of the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) program in the Gulf States, has announced that a delegation from the Kuwaiti Government Federation's Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) and Civil Service Commission has recently concluded a three-day visit to the Foundation's regional offices in Dubai, following a recent cooperation agreement signed by the two parties. During the official visit, the delegation visited a number of government bodies in Abu Dhabi and Dubai to study their experience in implementing the ICDL standard for employee IT education.



The visiting Kuwaiti delegation was headed by Muna Jassem Al Asfour, Support Services Administrator/Information and Decision Support Secretariat, and included Faedah Al-Kandari, Dr. Mohammed Al-Mulla and Dr. Salah Al Najim. CAIT is a governmental body established in 2006 to prepare national plans and policies regarding the implementation of Information Technology in the workplace.

The activity was a precursor to the full implementation of the ICDL standard across all Kuwaiti Government agencies starting from January 2008, in a move aimed at increasing ICT skills

development and digital awareness within the government. A partnership agreement was signed by senior representatives from ICDL and CAIT, which will enable more than 200,000 government employees and job seekers in the government sector to receive the ICDL certification over the next five.

Dr. Salah Al Najim, CAIT Agency Counselor, said: "The success achieved by the ICDL program globally and in the Gulf region particularly was a strong reason to adopt an international standard for the basic computer skills use, as applied by all governments throughout the region, and adopted by all Ministries of Education for many years."

The delegation visited the Abu Dhabi Civil Service Department to get first hand look at the implementation of ICDL for thousands of employees in the Abu Dhabi Government. The initiative, which was adopted by the Abu Dhabi Executive Council and implemented under the guidance of H.H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, and H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Ben Zayed Al-Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Member of the Supreme Council, aims to ensure that every government employee is empowered with the essential computer skills needed in today's workplace..

The delegation also visited the UAE Academy to observe the implementation of the ICDL certification standard in governmental and social training programs targeting government employees, job seekers, retirees, and women. The visit also included an overview on the preparation for the launch of the 'e-Citizen project', an ICDL digital literacy program is being sponsored by the Ministry of Presidential Affairs intended for the general public.

Visits were also made to the 'H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid IT Education Project (ITEP)', in addition to GHQ of Dubai Police, and Department of Health and Medical Services in Dubai, to study the implementation of the Dubai Government's ICDL project. An ICDL project that was executed from July 2005 to August 2007, initiated by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, included the training and testing of about 19,000 government employees, teachers and administrators in the Dubai Educational Zone.

Mrs. Mona Al Asfour, CAIT's Support Services Administrator, said: "The ICDL program is owned and governed by a non-profit organization, and it is not linked to any distinct manufacturer in the IT sector; moreover, it helps the individual to get an internationally-recognized certificate regardless of

the kind of software used. Hence, ICDL has gained our support. These factors will help us to start executing our plan as decided in the beginning of 2008. The ICDL GCC Foundation has undertaken diligent efforts and commitment to protect the credibility of the ICDL certification program in the accredited centers. This will contribute to the success of our initiatives to enhance IT skills in the Kuwaiti society."

Jamil Ezzo, Director General of ICDL GCC Foundation commented on the visit: "On behalf of the Foundation, I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the UAE Government, the Government of Abu Dhabi and the Government of Dubai for taking the time to share their experience in the implementation of a nationwide digital literacy program based on the ICDL global standard and the impact this had their employee performance. I would also like to thank the Kuwaiti Government delegation for the time spent here and wish them all the success with their initiative to creating a digital society in Kuwait."