

Sub 2

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From: rebecca [rebecca.boyce@nzcs.org.nz]
Sent: Tuesday, 15 April 2008 9:19 p.m.
To: Submission@DigitalStrategy.govt.nz
Subject: Public Feedback Called for on Digital Strategy

To whom it may concern

An introduction to the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL)

First of all please allow me to introduce myself as the General Manager for Computing NZ Limited whom are a subsidiary of the NZ Computer Society. I am responding to the article asking for public feedback on the Digital Strategy in NZ and would like to open a discussion to see how the ICDL (International Computing Driving Licence) or our- e-Citizen program could be incorporated into the Digital Strategy given that we are currently working with the AOTEAROA Peoples network and a number of Secondary Schools in New Zealand and have very similar goals and visions towards improving digital literacy in NZ.

Computing NZ are the Licensee for ICDL and e-Citizen distribution in New Zealand. The International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) is an internationally recognized computer qualification that enables people to demonstrate their competence in basic computer skills. As you will be well aware, there are many different computer courses available in New Zealand. This makes the choice of courses and providers daunting for employers and individuals alike, as well as for schools and educational institutions. ICDL provides a standard definition of and an actual measure of computer skills that is internationally recognised, and a balance between employer needs and employee skills. Training providers including schools who provide training in basic computer skills are being offered the opportunity to have their students assessed against an international standard that will provide assurance to employer and employee alike that the students who qualify for the licence have mastered the basics.

ICDL covers seven modules as specified in the expert-designed and constantly updated ICDL Syllabus:

- Basic Concepts of Information Technology
- Using the Computer and Managing files
- Word Processing
- Spreadsheets
- Database management
- Presentation
- Information and Communication

e-Citizen is a basic computer skills certification designed to cater for those with limited knowledge of computers and the Internet. e-Citizen is intended to help citizens bridge the digital divide by giving them the necessary skills to participate online across a broad range of environments, from dealing with government departments to searching information and buying products and services online. By giving citizens these skills they will have access to the life-enhancing aspects of the Information Society.

Testing is carried out at Accredited Test Centres. Accreditation of Centres is strictly controlled. Regular, rigorous audits are carried out to ensure compliance with the established standards. We consider that the testing system is very robust and has integrity.

Some other facts about ICDL, briefly, are:

- The International Computer Driving Licence Limited is owned by the European Computer Driving Licence Foundation (International) Limited ("ECDL"), a company registered in Ireland, the purpose of which is to promote and develop the ECDL Concept and ECDL Foundation Certification Programmes outside of Europe.
- It is fast becoming the most widely recognised computer qualification worldwide because of its relevance to employers and individuals and the support and monitoring of the organisations behind it.
- Has been offered in NZ since 1998.
- Currently being offered at a percentage of NZ Secondary Schools.

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- The ICDL is approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority under the provisions of the Education Act 1989, and earns 19 achievement credits for NCEA level 2. The NZQA has approved the use of the ICDL tests as assessment for the relevant unit standards.
- ICDL is vendor independent.
- All ICDL marking is done online – this saves time and money for all.
- ICDL is becoming more recognised in the government sector. A number of government departments, local councils and more recently libraries through the umbrella sponsorship of the National Library, are using the qualification for their staff.

A number of commentators have recently pointed out that candidates entering the workforce have limited knowledge of basic computer applications such as Word or Excel. Moreover, while younger employees who have recently completed tertiary education know how to use the internet for music downloads and web surfing, fewer can use internet search software properly. ICDL offers a means of addressing this challenge.

We consider that the ICDL and e-Citizen Qualification could form an integral part of the New Zealand Digital Knowledge Strategy and a ready means of addressing the ICT skills shortage in New Zealand, and would like to talk with either you or appropriate colleagues on how we might better engage ourselves. We are keen to assist the Government and the Ministry meet its objectives for increased ICT skills uptake in New Zealand.

I have listed below examples of how ICDL has been adopted in other countries in their commitment and efforts to bridge the digital divide.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RECENT ENDORSEMENTS

1. An agreement has been made between **ICDL Iran Foundation** and the chief manager of **Iran National Bank**, in order to provide all staff of the bank, and their families, with training and certification for the e-Citizen and ICDL Core programmes.
2. An agreement has been made between **ICDL Iran Foundation** and **The Mining & Industry Ministry of Iran**, in order to provide all staff of its 48 associated companies and factories with the ICDL programme.
3. An agreement has been made between **ICDL GCC Foundation** and **The Society of Engineers in the UAE** to develop and certify the computer skills of more than 16,000 engineers and their respective families.
4. ECDL Hungary supports the political coalition to train 2.2 million people over the next 3 years. On January 8th, the five parties of the Hungarian Parliament jointly announced their commitment to increase their efforts to bridge the digital divide in Hungary. A steering committee was set up to determine the necessary actions that government, business and civic society need to undertake. Under this high profile political initiative, that takes into account a survey conducted by the Ministry of Economy, Hungary aims to raise the level of digital literacy by providing **training to 2.2 million people over the next 3 years.**

Recently, the parliamentary committee has established a sub-group to implement the strategy on e-Inclusion and **István Alföldi**, CEO of John von Neumann Computer Society, (ECDL Foundation Licensee in Hungary), is involved in the coordination of the digital literacy policy area. John von Neumann Computer Society, having an active role in building this coalition for e-Inclusion in Hungary, has set a target to deliver the ECDL programme to at least three hundred thousand people within the next three years.

Hungary's social and economic progress over the last decade is impressive but the digital gap remains higher than the average in the EU. In this respect, Hungary is committed to the **i2010 strategy for growth and employment** of the EU that will allow the country to reap the benefits of technology.

5. ECDL Italy - e-Citizen offered to 6500 residents in Valle d'Aosta, Italy 26-03-08
Families in Valle d'Aosta have been offered the opportunity to obtain a basic internet skills certification. It is planned to distribute the e-Citizen certification kit to up to 6500 residents.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Regards,

Rebecca Boyce
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