

Inside this issue:

- **4rth CPE meet- 1**
ing on
“Continuous
Monitoring”
- **Next CPE meet- 1**
ing: “Overview of
Audit Command
Language”
- **ISACA Chapter 2**
officer—from in-
side from outside
- **President’s mes- 3**
sage
- **Miscellany 3**
- **About us 4**
- **CISA, CISM— 4**
employ certified
IT Professionals

4rth CPE Meeting on “Continuous Monitoring”

The 4rth CPE meeting was held on Wednesday, July 26, 2006 at the College of Banking and Financial Studies, Bausher. The presentation was on “**Continuous Monitoring**” by Mr. S. Ravichandran MBA, CISA, CISM, CISSP, CQA, Manager IS Audit & Continuous Monitoring, Internal Audit Department, Emirates Group, Dubai, UAE. He is also the past President of ISACA’s UAE chapter.

Ravichandran began the presentation by getting volunteers on the stage as “Transaction”, “Line Manager”,



“Application System”, “Auditor”, “IS Auditor” and “Probe”. Never did the Muscat chapter witness such a novel presentation with so many members on the stage! It was a complete success and the audience got to see what happens in real life and the effective role Continuous monitoring could play.

After the skit, Ravichandran continued with his presentation mentioning the other names by which this auditing is called. The terms used are “Continuous Auditing,” “Non-stop auditing,” “Continuous Assurance,” “Continuous Controls Monitoring” and “Ever-green reports

Ravichandran explained that Continuous Monitoring defined control points in the process. It identifies control objectives and establishes a series of automated tests. Transactions are subjected to these tests and transactions that failed are investigated. It is important to correct the transaction if appropriate and ensure that controls are strengthened

The relationship between Monitoring vs. Auditing shows that there is an inverse relationship between Management response and the audit effort. Where there is comprehensive monitoring of internal control by the management there is a reduced audit effort. Significant audit effort or expending greater resources is needed when there is little monitoring of controls. This was clearly shown in the presentation.

Ravichandran explained the methods of continuous reprocessing where the copy of the input data was reprocessed on a secure audit server and the resultant output was compared with the earlier output.

The presentation was successful in driving home the point that the real benefits of the

Next CPE Meeting: “Overview of Audit Command Language (ACL)”

The next program, date to be announced would be on “Overview of Audit Command Language (ACL)”. The presentation would be made by Mr. Mohamed Moosa Ibrahim, CISA, CIA.

ACL is the preferred audit software used by top Fortune 500 companies. The soft-

ware’s ability to effortlessly access voluminous from any source or from any format would make it an ideal tool for the auditor. Another impressive factor is that the source data remains unchanged. Please await the announcement of the date for the meeting. This event should not be missed.

4th CPE Meeting on “Continuous Monitoring” (Contd..)

(Continued from page 1)

system of continuous monitoring was timely reporting, shorter audit cycle, accurate reports and finally reduced audit related costs. Continuous audit will change the audit paradigm – audits would not be viewed as a post-mortem of what has happened. Here there is an opportunity to correct and strengthen internal controls as events unfold

Ravichandran advised that “as auditors we need to obtain and nurture audit committee and senior management support for the concept and implementation of continuous auditing. We need to develop and maintain the technical competencies and enabling technology necessary to access, re-classify and analyze the data contained in disparate information systems.

We need to use (or implement) data analysis techniques to support audit objectives, including the use of appropriate analytic software tools and development and maintenance of data analysis techniques and expertise within the audit team.



He went on that “We need to Sponsor, promote and encourage the adoption and support of continuous monitoring by management and Ensure that continuous auditing is adopted as part of an integrated, consistent approach to risk oriented audit planning. Auditors need to manage and respond to continuous auditing, determining appro-

priate use, follow-up and reporting mechanisms and ensure that appropriate action is taken on the audit findings reported to management”

“As IS Auditors we need to know that continuous auditing evaluates the operation of controls and the organization’s ability to detect and correct error conditions in a timely manner. As most of these controls are IT controls, the IS Auditors have a key role to play”

Finally the Question and Answer session effectively showed the interest that was generated. Ravichandran’s finesse in replying to all the questions showed the immense command he had on the topic.

The thunderous applause that followed was a fitting finale to a memorable evening.



ISACA Chapter officer – from inside & from outside

This month, let us open the curtains to view what goes behind a program.

Programs are discussed before they are scheduled and maximum discussion time at Board meetings is allocated for this. Sometimes these happen many months before the actual program date. Armed with the approval and eager to get the speaker, one of us follows up with the speaker for a suitable date when he is free. I should put in bold letters **THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GUEST SPEAKERS** for sharing their time, knowledge and experience

with us. For members’ convenience and CBFS availability we prefer Wednesday evenings. Fixing a suitable date (we try to avoid holiday season, Board election time, and fasting days) can sometimes be a long drawn process – for example, the program on ISO 9001 took place 9 months after we decided to hold it but the program on network architecture was held within 3 weeks. Generally we prefer presenters who have spoken at ISACA Chapters or have been heard by one of the Directors.

Next is coordination with

CBFS to get the venue and other arrangements. Distributing and coordinating tasks among 20 Board members is a task in itself - three years ago, we started with a list of activities and it is now refined into a detailed responsibility matrix with prime responsibility & backup identified for each task. It contains all the nitty gritty right from preparation of invitation, distribution, release of advertisement, fix up for photography, press release etc.

It is the Program Chair’s envious job to follow up to confirm and ensure each one

gets done. Tasks requiring lot of effort like telephonic reminders are distributed among 5 – 6 Directors and some last minute reshuffling is done due to sudden commitments. To avoid slips between cup and lip, the program coordination group + others meet at least once or twice before the D-day to iron out things.

How do you find these articles – please send your feedback to subramaniam-cisa@yahoo.com

President's message

ISACA – THE POWER OF LEARNING TOGETHER

Human development came about when group activity was directed in a structured manner. Historically, humans discovered new techniques and ways to creating group activity.

During the agrarian age man came together by eating together – the family concept

During the industrial age man came together by playing together – the games concept

And now during the age of IT technology, we come together by learning together – the education concept

ISACA and several other organizations are unconsciously following education concept. Even in Muscat Chapter, you

will note that we come together at the College of Banking and Financial Studies with the intention of learning. Today LEARNING IS HIGH PRIORITY and CONTINUOUS LEARNING IS ESSENTIAL.

ISACA, Muscat Chapter provides a useful platform for all of us to come together and LEARN. We should extend this platform to others in the local community. I strongly urge each member to introduce one new Omani member into the ISACA fold. Our bonds with the local community can be strengthened when we LEARN TOGETHER. The torch of learning must pass on and the torch bearers of future are the local community members.

The pace at which Information Technology is expanding and the speed at which information can be accessed is amazing. We need to constantly stay ahead. In this age of knowledge boom we cannot keep ourselves afloat alone. We need to draw inspiration, strength and direction from others.

The story of the Geese in Flight is a classic example of strength and speed derived from each other. When Geese fly along in a V formation, there is a scientific reason why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation, the whole flock adds tremendous flying range and power than



when each bird fly on its own.

In ISACA Muscat Chapter, let us position ourselves into that V formation so that we get maximum viewing range at minimum effort. Think about it, and let us realize the POWER OF LEARNING TOGETHER.

ANTONY ISAAC

Miscellany

2006 December Exam Registration

You are saving US\$35.00 by registering online!

This registration on line function will take you through a step-by-step process that will result in establishing your registration for the chosen exam. The final step will enable you to pay online using a credit card, or indicate that payment will follow by check or wire. If you prefer to fax or mail your registration, see the CISA BOI or CISM BOI for the appropriate form. Upon clicking 'Continue', you will be required to login if you have not already done so.

You will be able to login to your existing ISACA profile, or create a new one. Please Note: If you registered online for a previous exam or you

are an ISACA member, you already have an account with ISACA. Please use your previously established login credentials

Recognition to seek

How about our Chapter getting recognized for highest member retention? Victoria (British Columbia, Canada) Chapter achieved the highest member retention percentage (97 percent) of any ISACA chapter worldwide.

The Rome (Italy) Chapter achieved the highest increase in retention worldwide from 2004 to 2005. Awards were presented at the Leadership Conferences in Orlando, Florida, USA, and London, England, respectively.

ISACA's Career Centre is Now Online!

The Career Centre is now available for IT professionals

seeking to hire and those searching for a job. Members can look for jobs online and specify criteria to limit each search. Job seekers can search by geography, professional certification, experience level and a number of other factors. Act now. Be among the first to post your résumé in the members-only résumé database. Members have the added advantage of being able to receive e-mail notification when new jobs are posted. For those seeking to hire, the ISACA Career Centre is the source for IT audit and information security professionals. The Career Centre highlights the CISA and CISM designations, thus providing a special opportunity for those interested in hiring CISA or CISM holders.

Attention!

For those who were present at a June 2006 exam site, ISACA would appreciate any feedback (**positive** or **negative**) regarding the exam administration. Please send your comments to the certification department, certification@isaca.org.

Your comments would surely help in getting the examinations addressed better.

Please attend



At Bangalore, India
Region's premier event:
Aug 31, Sep 1, 2006

Visit us at www.isacamuscat.org
or
www.isaca.org

CONTACT DETAILS

P.O Box No: 397,
Medinat Sultan Qaboos, PC -115,
Sultanate of Oman,
E-mail: isaca_muscat@yahoo.com

Antony Isaac, President, 9921 3008
Hamza Baqer Al Lawati, Vice President, 9922 4410
Kishor Rabi, Secretary, 9923 8067
Nachiappan T, Treasurer, 9947 7891
Gokul Krishnan, CISA Coordinator, 9933 9637
S Ramamoorthy, CISM Coordinator, 2481 7888 x 328
Badri N Subudhi, Membership, 9981 2050
Biswajit Majumdar, Program Chairperson, 9946 0285
Itticheria Joshua, Newsletter Editor and Website
Management, 9938 9583
C.Gopakumar, Research Liaison, 9932 0595
A.Subramanian, 9931 8597
Ashwini Sawrikar, 9920 1720
Dileep Somani, 9931 6512
Balasubramaniam D, 9938 4599
Hitendra Dutia, 9906 4960
Mohamed Moosa Ibrahim, 9933 1363
Muralidar Venkateshan, 9942 5427
Nabil Abdullah Al Raisi, 9933 2985
Sachin Ravindra Toprani, 9288 3116
Sandeep Menon, 9288 9027
I.M Nayaz, Past President, 9942 9679

About us..

Muscat chapter is one among more than 170 chapters of ISACA established in 60 countries worldwide. ISACA, as an international body has been in existence since 1969. ISACA with a worldwide membership of over 50,000 members is characterized by its striking diversity. Members live and work in more than 140 countries. They work in nearly all industries including financial and banking, audit and consultancy firms, government bodies and educational institutions. This rich diversity enables members to interact with each other. One of the strongest strengths of ISACA is the enormous resources it provides to its members through its website, regular regional and international conferences, free delivery of its technical journal -the *Information Systems Control Journal*, free access to *K-NET* an internet based compendium of reference materials and a bookstore covering the latest developments in the fields of IS assurance, control, security and governance.

Muscat chapter was established in 2000 under the sponsorship of the College of Banking and Financial Studies (CBFS) which is affiliated to the Central Bank of Oman. The chapter has a membership of 250 members. The chapter membership also mirrors the diversity of its parent body. The chapter's mission is to promote education for the CISA and CISM certifications, spread awareness of IS audit and controls, provide a framework for regular meetings and interaction amongst local IS audit and control professionals, thereby helping in raising standards and promoting best practices to manage Information technology effectively in their organizations.

CISA, CISM—Employ Certified IT Professionals



CISA (Certified Information Systems Auditor) is ISACA's cornerstone certification. Since 1978, the CISA exam has measured excellence in IS auditing, control and security. CISA has grown to be globally recognized and adopted worldwide as a symbol of achievement. The CISA certification has been earned by more than 40,000 professionals since inception. The technical skills and practices that CISA promotes and evaluates are the building blocks of success in the field. Possessing the CISA designation demonstrates proficiency and is the basis for measurement in the profession. With a growing demand for professionals possessing IS audit, control and security skills, CISA has become a preferred certification program by individuals and organizations around the world.



Both CISA and CISM certifications have received the American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) accreditation.



This could be you!



CISM (Certified Information Security Manager) is ISACA's groundbreaking credential earned by over 5,200 professionals in its first two years. It is for the individual who must maintain a view of the "big picture" by managing, designing, overseeing and assessing an enterprise's information security.

The program is developed specifically for experienced information security managers and those who have information security management responsibilities.

The certification is for the individual who manages, designs, oversees and/or assesses an enterprise's information security (IS). Individuals earning the CISM certification become part of an elite peer network, attaining a one-of-a-kind credential.