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Open Session for Omanis for CISA & CISM

An open session for promoting the CISM certification program among Omanis was held on 26 March 2006 at the premises



of the College for Banking and Financial Studies.

Invitations were extended to Heads of IT in select Government and Private Sector organizations, Ministries, banking and financial services, oil and gas sectors.

Antony Isaac, President of ISACA Muscat Chapter,

welcomed the gathering of 24 Omanis who had accepted the invitation to participate in the Open session. He stressed that the focus of ISACA Muscat Chapter would be to attract Omanis to increasingly take up the Certified Information Systems Auditor ("CISA") and Certified Information Security Manager ("CISM") certification programs.

"Oman needs more Omani professional in key areas and here was an opportunity in the field of Information Security Management" he said

Mr. S. Ramamoorthy, CISM Co-ordinator, in his 90 minute presentation explained to the gathering ISACA's core objectives of spreading awareness on IT governance and information



security management. He guided the audience, who listened with rapt attention, the core subject matter of the CISM program developed by ISACA. Ramamoorthy also explained the benefits of the CISM certification and ISACA membership.

There was a live demonstra-

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Review classes and exam preparations

The review classes for the CISA and the CISM examinations are held regularly at the spacious premises of the College of Banking and Financial Studies, Bausher Heights. There are 35 students attending the CISA classes and 7 attending CISM classes. One of the CISA students comes every week from Salalah.

The focus is on reviewing the Review materials given by ISACA. Students gain

from a structured coverage of the syllabus. The practical experiences shared by the faculty serve to reinforce the concepts learnt. After completion of each chapter, a mock test of 25 questions is administered in the CISA classes. These tests help to prepare the students for the actual exam. It goes a long way to give students the required confidence. Many believe that answering multiple choice questions do not need much preparation. The

truth is different.

The Review classes provide a forum to meet and form study groups with members from different backgrounds. Such an association is extremely rewarding as each person in the group gains from the skills and experiences of others. Such associations even last beyond the examination!

Almost all the students

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Open Session for Omanis for CISA & CISM

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tion of how the examination questions should be answered. The audience actively participated in the discussions. All the participants evinced keen interest in the subject and looked forward to ISACA, Muscat Chapter approaching their respective organizations

with similar presentations.

Omani members of the Chapter, Hamza Baqer and Yasir Al Lawati were available on hand to respond to the questions of the participants.

Abraham Kuruvilla, a faculty member, who was instrumental in organizing the program, counseled the

participants during the open session on how they could enroll and participate in the review classes, examination and educational programs of the Chapter.

The feedback of the Omani participants was encouraging. One participant immediately enrolled for the CISM Review classes.

Message from the CISA Coordinator

Preparing for the CISA Examination

All those appearing for CISA Exam, have asked this question "How best to prepare for the exam". The answer is that candidates are expected to have understanding of the latest technological developments and to be aware of inheriting risks involved with new technologies. Candidates must remember that Confidentiality, Integrity and Availability of Information have to be maintained at all times. The CISA review manual should be read and understood carefully. The

other good source of information that provides valuable insight to the latest technology and challenges is ISACA's publication "Information Systems Control Journal". There are several articles on the website that can be read at www.isaca.org. Again it is important to remember that 200 questions have to be completed in 4 hours. Therefore, intelligently managing time plays a critical role in successfully completing the examination. The Questions and Answers CD published by ISACA contains domain-

wise database of questions. These questions can be used for practice.

Professionals from different backgrounds like Accounts and Information Technology take this exam. The exam is held twice a year, in June and December. This reflects the growing popularity of the examination. Muscat Chapter conducts Review classes for both the June and December examinations. Wish you all success in the June 2006 Exam

Gokul Krishnan
CISA Coordinator

June 2006 Exam Deferrals

Members unable to take the June 2006 exam can request a deferral of their registration fees to the next exam date.

Those requests received on or before 1 May 2006 will be charged a US \$50 processing fee.

From 2 May 2006 through 2 June 2006, a processing fee of US \$100 will be charged.

Deferral requests will not be accepted after 2 June 2006.

For the convenience of ISACA members, a deferral can now be requested online at www.isaca.org/examdefer.

If members have additional questions concerning cancellations or deferrals, please contact the

certification department at certification@isaca.org

or call +1.847.253.1545, extension: 403, 471 or 474.



Each April, ISACA conducts its annual ISACA membership purge. Members who have not renewed their memberships are requested to do so either by renewing on-line or by mail **before April 30, 2006** to keep their membership benefits intact. After the purge, members who have not yet renewed will no longer receive member benefits, including the Information Systems Control Journal ® and access to K-NET ® and all other member-protected areas of the ISACA web site.

The April JOnline articles are posted online and may be accessed at www.isaca.org/jonline. These are the online-only articles noted in the table of contents page in the Volume 2 2006 print edition. The Journal's online-only articles are provided exclusively for one year to members as an additional membership benefit.

Following is a list of April's articles:
Strengthening Access Control: Using Smart Cards,
by Tara Kissoon, CISA, CISSP

Road Map for Information Security: What to Do After BS 7799 Certification,
by Sekar Sethuraman, CISA, CIA, CISSP, CSQA

Delegating Root Authority and Auditing Activities on UNIX/Linux Systems,
by Edward Blunt, CISA

President's message

Preparing Omani Youth of the E-Present for the E-Future

Oman is a young modern nation. The strength of Future Oman lies in its vibrant youth, which forms a significant part of the population. Their inherent and hidden talents need to be discovered, nurtured and put into productive use. The process starts with creating thinking minds in various spheres of human activity. Educational institutions, universities and professional bodies are the solid rock on which thinking minds are developed.

Information explosion has rocked the present generation like never before. And systems that manage information are at play both in its constructive and destructive forms. Therefore a new need has arisen to sift between the two forms and prepare our thinking minds to build on

the constructive part, while we safeguard our society from the ill-effects of the destructive part.

What ever the ill effects, the constructive part is so valuable that Government is increasingly moving in the direction of e-governance, businesses are greatly assisted by e-commerce and individuals are significantly resorting to e-transactions. Given this unprecedented shift to a new e-system, there is a need to develop a new breed of e-professionals who will support and control that e-system. In this development ISACA has a significant role to play.

In Oman, ISACA, Muscat Chapter has opened new vistas for our Omani youth to gain cutting edge knowledge in the areas of Information Systems Audit and Controls

and Security Management. The two certification courses Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) and Certified Information Security Manager (CISM) are flagship knowledge certifications offered by ISACA.

Further, ISACA, Muscat Chapter conducts review classes for students, educational programs for members and seminars for public awareness – all related to Information Systems Control and Security Management. March was a very eventful month. There were two educational programs for members and a third program exclusively for Omanis to promote the CISM certification. ISACA, Muscat Chapter will take steps to spread this awareness at various organizational



platforms. At the same time, I urge our members to talk to Omani colleagues in their own organizations regarding ISACA and its CISA and CISM certifications.

I foresee ISACA Muscat Chapter playing a very significant strategic role in preparing our Omani youth of the E-Present for the E-Future. We members have a significant role in that effort. If you are able to contribute your time, effort and ideas, share it with us. There are many willing to join hands with you.

ANTONY ISAAC

Review classes and exam preparations

(Continued from page 1)

who attend the classes are employed. After an exacting day at the office and with the demands of personal life, few would really get quality time to study.

Attending the review classes enables disciplined regular reading. There is a deadline to meet as every week there are classes and one has to read up somehow to keep

pace with the schedule.

Successful students have time and again testified that regular reading of the Review manual, the ISACA journal, K-net and other resources provided them with enough material to meet these tough examinations.

Students who would be appearing for the June 2006 CISA and CISM examination should take time to read a

must read article by accessing www.isaca.org/knet. Select Professional Development >> and under "Career Planning and Development" select "**Preparing for the CISA or CISM examination** by Derek J. Oliver CISA, CISM, CFE and Max Shanahan, CISA, FCPA.

This article, written in a disarmingly simple style would be a needed stimulant to pep up your confidence as you

will be knowing all that you need to know about the exams. There is nothing left out.

Therefore, between now and the exam, time is running short. Prepare well. Prepare intelligently. Benefit from the classes



Introducing the December 2005 CISA Exam toppers

FIRST RANK

Shalabh Agrawal



Shalabh is the Head of Internal Audit, Alliance Housing Bank. He is a post graduate in Commerce and is a Chartered Accountant, Cost Accountant and a Certified Internal Auditor. Shalabh has over 10 years of internal audit experience of financial services. He was Head of Internal Audit, OIFC and prior to that was with ONIC Holding SAOG for 7 years, as Head of Internal Audit. He was involved in a number of assignments during the restructuring phase of the company. He started his career with the 20th Century Finance Corporation in India (now Centurion Bank).

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What do you think is the relevance of CISA to enterprises in Oman?

Omani enterprises are part of a digitally connected business world, so the issue is no more country specific, in my opinion. Well managed IT structures and practices are becoming increasingly important for the success of any enterprise. Apart from enabling IT audit related skills, CISA course helps in spreading overall IT awareness and provides good familiarity with IT jargons. I would say a must-read for all professionals, even if formal certification is not the aim.

How does it feel to be top ranker?

Amazed!! Need to seriously study next time, can't be riding on luck always.

SECOND RANK (Joint)

Rajeev Nair



Rajeev works for the State Bank of India, Muscat Branch as Deputy Manager. Rajeev holds a Masters Degree (M.Sc) in Electronic Science (First Rank Holder from Cochin University of Science and Technology). He was the second rank holder for his Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Physics Major (1992) – from Mahatma Gandhi University.

He was the second rank holder for his Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Physics Major (1992) – from Mahatma Gandhi University.

How does it feel to be a second ranker?

I am happy to scale the initial step in joining the professional group of certified IS Auditors. The refresher course conducted by ISACA Muscat Chapter was really a good learning experience.

SECOND RANK (Joint)

Subash Gopi



Subash is an Assistant Manager, Internal Audit at Suhail Bahwan Automobiles LLC. He is a Chartered Accountant from The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, qualified in Nov'97. Subash holds a Bachelors Degree in Mathematics. He worked for 3 years with Tata Tea Limited as an Internal Auditor. He was earlier an Internal Audit Officer with Zuari Industries Limited -a KK Birla Group Company having its head office at Goa.

He is a Chartered Accountant from The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, qualified in Nov'97. Subash holds a Bachelors Degree in Mathematics. He worked for 3 years with Tata Tea Limited as an Internal Auditor. He was earlier an Internal Audit Officer with Zuari Industries Limited -a KK Birla Group Company having its head office at Goa.

What do you think is the relevance of CISA to enterprises in Oman?

Audit is given very high importance by enterprises in Oman. Enterprises in Oman are investing significantly in Information Systems and related technology. So there is an obvious need of using the skills and knowledge of a Systems Auditor. The CISA profession will certainly add value to enterprises in Oman by ensuring that enterprises get good quality IS auditors.

THIRD RANK

Hemant Kumar Dutia



Hemant works as the Business Manager in The American International School,

TAISM, Muscat. He is a Commerce Graduate from Bombay University and has passed the CPA Examination held in November 1999

What do you think is the relevance of CISA to enterprises in Oman?

All that we learn in CISA studies is very helpful to us in our day to day operations, be it part of software implementation team, planning for disaster recovery, or internal audit. I have already started implementing some of the concepts learned in my day to day work. I am sure enterprises will benefit in a big way by having CISA certified professionals as these people will use acquired knowledge in their day today work.

K-NET®

K-NET® is an Internet-based database of knowledge specifically developed to provide

ISACA® members with direct access to educational opportunities, books and CDs, articles and papers, and web resources relevant to information systems governance, control, security and assurance. For K-NET, pertinent knowledge has been sought, identified and peer-reviewed by volunteers who are practicing IT professionals. The references have then been organized into logical categories of interest to ISACA members and other constituents. K-NET includes:

- *Full access for ISACA members
- *13 subject areas
- *More than 180 topic areas
- *More than 5,000 knowledge references
- *Weekly updates
- *Search engines
- *Personalization features

ISACA members are encouraged to add to the value of K-NET by identifying additional web sites for inclusion. Member participation is vital to maintaining the quality and variety of coverage and the value derived by K-NET users. To suggest a site for inclusion on K-NET, please e-mail the exact URL of the web site(s) to knet@isaca.org



Introducing the December 2005 CISM Exam toppers

FIRST RANK Pavel Turek

Pavel is the Head of IT Operations and Support at Nawras Telecommunications.



He is a honors graduate in Telecommunications from Special Technical School of Telecommunications, Kolín,

Czech Republic with Major in Computers and Electronic Devices and Minor in Communication technology. He is also a A+ Certified Service Technician (November 1998), Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (May 1999), a Compaq Accredited Systems Engineer, March 2001

What do you think is the relevance of CISM to enterprises in Oman?

With security awareness growing everywhere around the globe, it is only natural that Omani enterprises are taking steps to secure their IT infrastructure. CISM certification proves that a person has a confirmed skill set to manage various aspects of IT security.

How does it feel to be a top ranker?

Single word : awesome!

SECOND RANK Manikandan Natarajan

Manikandan works for Nawras Telecommunications as IT Networks and Security Consultant.



He has over around 10 years of accomplished experience in IT Sector handling

networks, infrastructure, security, Systems & Operations

How does it feel to be a top ranker?

Being one of the top rankers in the CISM certification encourages me to approach top management to explain the importance Information Security in any progressive organization answers to management in order to reduce risks and protect the organization's information assets.

THIRD RANK Abraham Kuruvilla

Abraham is employed with Oman Air as their Sr. Network & Telecom Officer. He is an Electronics & Communication Engineer and has more than 15 years of experience in the field of Network Design and Technology man-

agement. He has worked with various companies in the Middle East in the field of Data Networks and IT infrastructure project imple-



mentations. He is also a certified CISA and certified CCNP.

What do you think is the relevance of CISM to enterprises in Oman?

Gaining the right certification in the field of Information Systems and Security Management has become important in order to address management concerns on the quality of professionals. CISM will definitely address this aspect as it is a world recognized certification. At a time when businesses in Oman face increasingly complex security threats, certified information security personnel are the ones who can provide answers to management in order to reduce risks and protect the organization's information assets.

K-NET[®]

K-NET's personalized service enables members to remain current on the topic areas most important to them.

ISACA members may request and receive weekly e-mails about new references that have been added within their specified areas of interest.

To activate this personalized service and register to receive updates on topics of interest, visit www.isaca.org/KNET and click on TRACK UPDATES on any interior page. K-NET Access to K-NET is open to current members of ISACA and is a benefit of ISACA membership.

Limited access is available to all others that seek knowledge of IT governance, control and assurance.

Felicitations for toppers of the December CISA and CISM examinations

A function is being organized on Tuesday, April 25 2006 at 7.00 PM, at the CBFS, Bausher heights to felicitate the toppers of the December 2005 CISA and CISM examinations.

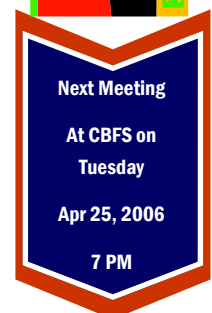
The event will include a presentation on the Profession of

Management for Information-Technology professionals by Mr. Vivek Albuquerque, CEO of Louis Allen International, India.

H.E Ahmed Sulaiman Saleh Al-Maimani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry for Administrative

and Financial Affairs and Regions Affairs would be the Chief guest.

Aspiring CISA, CISM candidates would benefit a lot by hearing straight from the toppers their thoughts about the examination.



Visit us at
www.isacamuscat.org
or

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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 248 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. This 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.

Take some time ... What would you like to read in the next edition. Please send your feedback / comments to itticheria@gmail.com or call 9938 9583