

SIG Update

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Special Interest Groups



Since my election to the RGGB Board last year I have been tasked with the Special Interest Groups. There have been some considerable developments regarding the SIGs, which I thought I would share with you as we start a new year:-

Aviation SIG

Please see the separate articles in this edition by Paul Dugan, OBE, FRAeS, Chairman of the Aviation Special Interest Group.

Education & Training SIG

The first Meeting of this revived Special Interest Group will take place on Sunday, 28 March 2010.

Information Technology SIG

The first Meeting of this revived Special Interest Group will take place in April. The date, location and host are to be confirmed.

Financial Services SIG



Sebastien Long
SIG Chairman,
Financial Services

Our industry has found it hard to avoid public scrutiny this past decade: Bernie Madoff and accounting scandals, bankers and their bonuses, the rise of sovereign wealth funds and the fall from grace of Dubai World, the credit crunch and nationalised banks... But Saudi Arabia and the region provide more than a warm, safe refuge for exiled bankers. We're at the centre of a growing market with a window on fascinating innovations in Islamic finance and new sectors such as insurance opening up - so there are certainly a lot of positive headlines to be made as we start this new decade...

The Financial Services Special Interest Group became active in 2009 with meetings in July and December, and the first meeting of 2010 in late February. The SIG provides RGGB members in the industry both a professional and social networking platform. Our informal meetings traditionally hosted in a member's home over drinks and food provide a casual environment in

which to talk shop, share best practice and discuss local, regional and international issues. In between meetings, articles of interest are circulated between members to keep us informed and the dialogue going.

In 2010 we look forward to meeting new members - our SIG welcomes both veterans of the industry and novices, career expats and first-timers.

Security SIG



Jim Mann
SIG Chairman
Security

I am the Chairman of the RGGB Security SIG and have served thus for about five years now, after being duped unsuspectingly into the role one dark night by that scoundrel Charlie WINK - late of the Royal Hong Kong Police. Our SIG operates a call chain system for the real time transmission of security related information across its members and stakeholders throughout KSA and beyond. We also operate a 'mail out' to our members on an almost daily basis whereby articles 'of interest' are disseminated.

From time-to-time we hold a membership 'get together' at a suitable venue and often 'press gang' a guest speaker into attending. These events usually involve a networking dinner and suitable refreshment. Our most recent success on this front was the much lauded event held in the Riyadh Diplomatic Quarter during January 2010.

Upwards of forty five 'players' showed up to listen to an expert orate on the unfolding events in Yemen and the prognosis, as far as KSA is concerned, viz AQAP who are now very much ensconced therein.

I hope 2010 will see more 'real life' meetings and networking sessions en masse as well as the continuance of our virtual information exchange efforts. Most of our stalwart members meet up independently regularly anyway for a chat and 'catch up'. This happens throughout the course of their operational tasking across KSA and indeed the region. We are now closely linked to our colleagues in Bahrain who operate a similar SIG system within their business group. Additionally, many of us 'cross pollinate' (in the nicest sense of the phrase) into, and out of, the US State Departments Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) which broadens, even further, our 'open source' information assimilation capabilities".

Finally, for any RGGB Members that are not part of any Special Interest Group - please let me know if you would like to make a contribution in order to exchange ideas and interact with a few more like-minded Members, in order to augment your Membership Benefits.