

Press release

United Arab Bank doubles its commitment to SMEs

Dubai, UAE (March 19, 2013) – United Arab Bank (UAB), the fastest growing bank in the UAE, has ambitious plans to expand its services to the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) segment.

UAB have been providing working capital solutions to commercial entities for several decades. In 2012, the Bank responded to growing demand from SME customers for a specialized service offering. The bank now offers a full range of simple SME solutions, backed by a commitment to provide market-leading levels of service.

In the past six months, the bank has seen a four-fold increase in the number of SME applications it receives, with a similar impact on its business volumes and number of customers. In 2013, UAB expects to:

- Further double its SME business in the next six months
- Support this growth by doubling its specialist SME team
- Provide SME services throughout 10 new branches that are opening during the year
- Continue to provide top-class service in 10 languages, including Arabic, Farsi, Russian, Hindi and all other major languages of the sub-continent.

The bank is firmly committed to the UAE national vision for the SME sector. Importantly, UAB recognizes that its SME customers require fast and accurate service, whether opening an account or conducting any type of transaction. Such services are often provided at the location of the business for additional customer convenience.

Paul Trowbridge, CEO of United Arab Bank, commented: “With an unrivalled understanding of the local banking sector and having been catering to the UAE economy for the past 37 years, we are well positioned to contribute to this segment with innovative offerings. Our commitment to the SME sector is further reinforced by the fact that our director, Najla Al Midfa, is actively associated with the prestigious Khalifa Fund for Enterprise Development.”

Explaining further, Brian West, Chief Financial Officer and Head of Strategy, said: “Our new SME offering is proving to be a key driver for attracting new customers to the UAB portfolio. The segment is already proving to be a significant contributor to the Bank’s balance sheet and profitability.”

He further added: “We are building a sustainable and rewarding SME business based on understanding the customers’ specific needs and addressing them through a highly experienced team of SME relationship, risk and operational professionals.”

Sreeram Subramaniam, Head of SME Banking, explaining the product offerings commented: “Simple customer solutions form the core of UAB’s SME Banking offering. Exclusive product and service propositions are designed to take care of all business needs – from short term cash flow requirements met through Business Installment Loans to Working Capital and Trade Services for medium enterprises.”

Trowbridge concluded: “We are proud of our position as the fastest growing bank in the region, as demonstrated by our strong financial performance in 2012. The net profit of AED 410m was a record for UAB that we expect to surpass in 2013, supported by a significant contribution from the SME business.”

About United Arab Bank:

United Arab Bank (UAB) was established in 1975 as a joint venture between UAE investors and Societe Generale. The Bank is operating with a network of 20 branches and offices spread across the UAE with its headquarters in Sharjah. UAB offers a range of financial services in both Corporate and Retail and is acknowledged as a leading solutions provider to the growing commercial and industrial base across the seven emirates.

Through the provision of a comprehensive range of Corporate Banking, Retail Banking, Trade Finance, SME Banking and Treasury services, UAB is the Bank of choice among major corporate clientele segments in the UAE. With the launch of its 'Sadara' premium banking service, Islamic Banking Services and 'UAB Rewards' loyalty programme, the Bank has grown its retail customer base, aiming to expand further. All these initiatives and a consistent year on year performance have positioned UAB as one of the fastest growing banks in the region.

The bank is ranked 23rd amongst the top listed companies in the UAE and is one of the top 50 banks in the GCC in terms of market capitalization. UAB announced a record net profit of AED 410 million for the year ended 31 December 2012, an increase of 24% over 2011 and the highest annual net profit ever reported by UAB.

In December 2007, UAB became part of a GCC regional banking alliance upon the acquisition of 40% interest by The Commercial Bank of Qatar (Cb), Qatar's largest private sector bank. United Arab Bank's strong financial performance in 2012 is also indicative of the benefits gleaned from its strategic alliance with the Qatari Bank.

The Commercial Bank of Qatar has a similar alliance with National Bank of Oman (NBO), which has positioned all three banks more strongly for future growth. UAB is not only the fastest growing local bank but also is one of the most profitable. The Bank has the strategic vision and momentum to continue on its growth trajectory, as its executive team seeks to create long term value for its shareholders.