

## NUMBERS

# £1.05bn

Value of fraud and financial crime in 2013, as reported in the UK courts. The total is down 23 per cent from the 2012 figure. (BDO Fraudtrack report)

# £1,700

The figure raised every hour so far, in 2014, for investment in business through UK online "crowdfunding" sites. (The Crowdfunding Centre)

# 2.3%

Projected GDP growth rate for the Scottish economy in 2014. The figure has been revised upwards 0.5 per cent from just four months ago. (Fraser of Allander Institute, Economic Commentary March 2014)

## MEMBER BENEFITS



## VIRTUAL FLEET MANAGER

**IF YOU'RE** not sure if you're managing your company vehicles efficiently, ICAS may have the solution. ICAS is happy to announce its partnership with Camargue Group, experts in vehicle management.

ICAS members can use Camargue's "virtual fleet manager" in conjunction with vehicle costs audit. This is a bespoke outsourcing resource to drive down the "whole life cost" of running vehicles.

Camargue carries out a forensic review of all components of the vehicle acquisition, finance, maintenance and compliance process and, coupled with its Europe-wide buying power, implements ways to drive down these costs.

As part of your audit, Camargue looks at every aspect of how you manage your vehicles, then provides realistic options for reducing the costs of running them.

It's like having your own fleet managers, but without the cost.

**i** For more information go online to [icas.org.uk/ca/offers/carmargueaudit](http://icas.org.uk/ca/offers/carmargueaudit)

## WHERE I AM TODAY

# Q&A



**NAJWA EL IRAKI CA, PRINCIPAL ADVISOR – HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CASABLANCA FINANCE CITY AUTHORITY**

### WHEN DID YOU QUALIFY AS A CA AND WHO DID YOU TRAIN WITH?

I qualified in 2008, and trained with KPMG in London.

### BRIEF CAREER HISTORY

Before joining Casablanca Finance City Authority (formerly the Moroccan Financial Board) in 2010, I was senior manager within Mazars' financial services group in London. Prior to this, I worked in Lehman Brothers/Nomura within their EMEA equity derivatives business and, before that, with KPMG in London where I worked for many years with banks, insurers and investment funds in various consulting areas.

### WHAT DOES YOUR JOB INVOLVE?

A thousand moving parts! I head up business development and advise institutional prospective investors worldwide, so my job involves a lot of travel, but also keeping up to date with legislation and tax to advise investors accordingly. I have input into our strategy and value proposition. Much of my time is spent promoting the centre, meeting people and networking. It is not a nine to five job.

Casablanca Finance City (pictured below) is Morocco's flagship project, launched in 2010 by His Majesty King Mohammed VI to develop a state-of-the-art financial centre and business hub in Casablanca. This platform is a comprehensive business ecosystem aimed at giving international firms access to African markets. CFC benefits from the support of numerous government agencies and ministries, and has signed partnerships with major international financial centres.

### WHO DO YOU REPORT TO?

The CEO, Mr Said Ibrahim.

### WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The huge variety of things I'm involved in, from business development to technical work to client relationships. No two days are the same.

### ...AND THE WORST?

Waiting for reforms to be passed, as the legal process can be long and complex.

### PROUDEST MOMENT SO FAR?

I am proud of things I have had to work hard to achieve, such as convincing key international companies to set up in Casablanca Finance City. Recently, for example, we had AIG which has set up its regional office for north, west and central Africa in CFC. Ultimately, this will create employment and contribute to Morocco's GDP. The aim is also to contribute to regional financial integration within Africa.

### HOW'S YOUR WORK/LIFE BALANCE?

The pace is quite frenetic and it's always a challenge trying to fit everything in and leave the office in the evening. However, thanks to my son, I am becoming more disciplined...

### HOW WOULD YOU "SELL" MOROCCO, AS A PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK?

Morocco may still be developing, but I would say it is moving pretty quickly. The Moroccan hospitality, the excellent food, the variety of landscapes, the lifestyle and the exceptional sunshine all year round have definitely inspired me to return, but to really get an idea of what it is like, I recommend visiting and getting in touch for advice!

### WHAT DO YOU DO TO RELAX?

Most of my spare time is spent entertaining my 16-month-old son. I also like reading, meditation and tennis.

### HOW HAS YOUR TRAINING AS A CA HELPED PREPARE YOU FOR THIS ROLE – IF IT HAS?

The CA qualification was very adaptable – it showed me clearly that my future career could be wherever I wanted it to be. It provided a sound ethical base and the technical skills to practice. It was also essential in helping me look at the big. I now approach all business situations with confidence.

### WHAT SINGLE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE FOR A CA LOOKING TO PURSUE THIS CAREER ROUTE?

Network, and be prepared to work hard.

