

Engaging Globally

ACI Traveled to the Middle East North Africa Region to Engage Globally

As outlined in the ACI Strategic Plan, one of ACI's five primary goals is to "engage globally." ACI welcomes involvement from everywhere in the world and takes pride in engaging with the concrete industry internationally.

During the first quarter of 2025, ACI leadership and participating international chapters had multiple opportunities to connect with allied organizations throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Michael Paul, ACI President (2024 to 2025); Frederick Grubbe, ACI Executive Vice President; and members of ACI's International Affairs team visited Algeria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Saudi Arabia.

The trip began in Algiers, Algeria, at Djamaa el Djazaïr, also known as the Great Mosque of Algiers, marking ACI's first delegation visit to Algeria. The Great Mosque is the third-largest mosque in the world and includes notable incorporations of hydraulic systems within its structure to mitigate seismic activity. The Great Mosque of Algiers also features the world's tallest minaret, standing at 265 m (869 ft). The team also visited The Maqam Echahid, a concrete monument commemorating the Algerian War of Independence.

The ACI team then traveled to the building code department at the Ministry of Housing to participate in a 2-day conference hosted by Le CTC, Organisme National de Contrôle Technique de la Construction. This conference attracted 250 attendees and was broadcast on national television. Paul, Grubbe, and ACI Distinguished Engineer Khaled Nahlawi presented on ACI's international update; new initiatives for sustainable concrete; ACI's collaborative efforts to enhance concrete quality worldwide; and the ACI 318

Building Code, past, present, and upcoming ACI CODE-318-25. This visit resulted in two memorandums of understanding (MOUs)—one between ACI and Le CTC and another between ACI and the Algerian Concrete Society (ALCOS).

The congregation continued to Dubai, UAE, to conduct the 2025 ACI Middle East Conference (MEC). The fifth edition of ACI-MEC included the theme "From Gray to Green." Organized in collaboration with the ACI UAE Chapter and Dubai Municipality, the conference attracted more than 300 attendees. ACI-MEC brought together industry leaders, local and international experts, and government officials to explore the latest practices and innovations driving the concrete industry toward a carbon-neutral future.

During the event, ACI signed two important agreements: one with the Gulf Organisation for Research and Development (GORD) to collaborate on sustainability, education, and certification activities within the concrete industry in Qatar and the region, and another with the Concrete Industry Association (CIA), a professional association based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The ACI group wrapped up their trip in Saudi Arabia, visiting two key cities—Riyadh and Dammam—where they engaged in a series of meetings with government officials, private-sector leaders, educational institutions, and local associations. The visit also included delivering technical sessions at Big 5 Construct Saudi.

In Riyadh, the itinerary included a visit to Transgulf Readymix and site tours of notable projects, along with a meeting with leadership from the Oil Sustainability Program (OSP) to explore potential areas of collaboration. A highlight was the signing of a tripartite agreement between ACI, the National Construction Academy (NCA), and the CIA to



Scott Anderson, Michael Paul, Antonio Nanni, Carol Hayek, Matthew Adams, Fouad H. Yazbeck, and Dean Frank attending the 2025 Middle East Conference in Dubai, UAE



Dean Frank, Ibrahim Abotaleb, Ihab Bassiouni, Carol Hayek, Ali Said, and Alireza Biparva conducting the "From Policy to Placement" panel discussion at the 2025 MEC in Dubai, UAE

Engaging Globally

collaborate on delivering ACI certification programs.

In Dammam, ACI leadership met with Aramco executives to explore avenues for deeper collaboration, followed by discussions with SABIC engineering leadership at SABIC's headquarters in Jubail, Saudi Arabia. They also participated in two workshops, one hosted by King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM) and another organized jointly by the Concrete and Construction Association (CCA) and the ACI Saudi Arabian Eastern Province Chapter. The visit concluded with a meeting at the Arab Center for Engineering Studies (ACES) in Al-Khobar, a leading construction laboratory and consultants in the region.



Michael Paul, ACI President (2024-2025), signing MOU with Yousef Alhorri, Founding Chairman of Gulf Organisation for Research and Development (GORD)



ACI Leadership Team meets with SABIC's Lead Engineering Team at its headquarters in Jubail. From left: Ahmad Mhanna, Khaled Nahlawi, Scott Anderson, Michael Paul, Fahad Al-Mutlaq, Frederick Grubbe, and Saad Alshehri

ACI leadership and the international team are continuing these efforts to increase global awareness and participation, striving to constantly improve and expand concrete knowledge around the world. To learn more about international activities in the MENA region, visit www.concrete.org/middleeast.



Ahmad Mhanna, Frederick Grubbe, Scott Anderson, Michael Paul, Antonio Nanni, and Khaled Nahlawi at the Big 5 Construct Saudi

Cementitious Materials Congress 2025

The International Congress on Cementitious Materials was held June 3-4, 2025, at the Sheraton Cairo Hotel & Casino, Cairo, Egypt. Dedicated to the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) regions, Cementitious Materials Congress 2025 attracted industry experts and professionals to discuss advancements and opportunities in the field of cementitious materials.

One of the speakers included Ahmad Mhanna, ACI Middle East and North Africa Regional Director. Mhanna provided an overview of ACI's mission and its latest initiatives to promote sustainable concrete practices worldwide. He highlighted recent updates to ACI codes and standards, emphasizing their role in ensuring safe, durable, and environmentally responsible concrete projects. The session also focused on the Sustainability Appendix of ACI CODE-318-25, which outlines key provisions for incorporating sustainable materials and practices into concrete design and construction. He also highlighted NEU: An ACI Center of Excellence for Carbon Neutral Concrete and its critical role in guiding the industry toward greater sustainability in concrete construction.

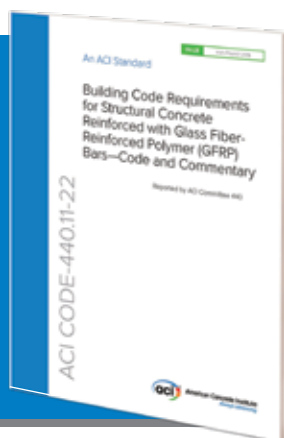


Ahmad Mhanna presenting at the Cementitious Materials Congress 2025



Ahmad Mhanna networking with a group at the Cementitious Materials Congress 2025

The Standard for GFRP-Reinforced Concrete Design



Design with Confidence Using GFRP Bars

This ANSI-approved Code sets the design, material, and construction requirements for concrete structures reinforced with glass fiber-reinforced polymer (GFRP) bars.

It covers strength, serviceability, durability, reinforcement detailing, and inspection standards.



Scan the QR code or visit www.concrete.org/store



American Concrete Institute
Always advancing