
ARP Digital Receives In-Principle Approval from Dubai's Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (VARA)



Bahrain-headquartered firm extends regulated digital asset infrastructure across a second GCC jurisdiction, establishing dual-framework regulatory coverage across both the Central Bank of Bahrain and the Dubai Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority.

DUBAI, UAE - April 28, 2026 - ARP Digital, a regulated digital capital infrastructure platform, today announced that it has received in-principle approval from the Dubai Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (VARA) to provide Broker-Dealer services in Dubai. The approval extends ARP Digital's multi-jurisdictional regulatory framework into the UAE, the region's largest digital asset market by transaction volume.

The UAE has emerged as one of the world's largest concentrations of digital asset wealth, held by individuals and institutions that lack a compliant, institutionally governed pathway to deploy that capital into local financial markets. VARA's in-principle approval positions ARP Digital to serve that demand directly, providing regulated digital asset conversion to local fiat currency for UAE-domiciled corporates and capital markets participants.

ARP Digital was co-founded by Abdulaziz and Abdulla Kanoo, fifth-generation members of the Kanoo Group, which has operated continuously across the Gulf for 135 years and is one of the largest family-owned multinationals in the Middle East.

“The UAE has accumulated a significant concentration of digital asset wealth over the past three years, held by individuals and institutions that are sophisticated in their understanding of that capital but constrained in their ability to deploy it into local assets. The gap has never been a matter of appetite. It has been a matter of regulated infrastructure. The VARA in-principle approval is ARP Digital’s commitment to close that gap from within the Gulf, under the same regulatory rigour our Bahrain clients have relied upon since our CBB licensure.”

- **Abdulaziz Kanoo, Co-Founder, ARP Digital**

ARP Digital is currently licensed as Capital market crypto asset service provider (Cat 3) by the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), the region’s digital asset regulatory framework, under which the firm has processed over \$3.5B in volume across a client base exceeding 450 institutional and corporate counterparties. The VARA in-principle approval marks the first formal extension of the firm's regulatory perimeter into a second GCC jurisdiction. Pending completion of final conditions established by the authority, ARP Digital is not yet authorised to operate in Dubai under a full VARA licence. The firm will provide a further update upon receipt of the full operational licence.

“Digital assets are becoming a structural component of how capital moves globally. Regulators across the region, and in UAE particularly, have made a deliberate choice to build digital asset frameworks that meet institutional standards, not to accommodate speculation, but to integrate digital capital into the financial system. ARP Digital's role is to be the infrastructure layer that makes that integration operational. The VARA in-principle approval is one step in building a regulated platform that can serve Dubai as the region's leading digital capital market across a whole range of sectors ”.

- **Abdulla Kanoo, Co-Founder, ARP Digital**

The VARA approval follows a period of accelerated operational expansion for ARP Digital. The firm is in the process of obtaining additional licences across multiple jurisdictions, maintains a 99.99% platform uptime, and recorded 4x year-on-year volume growth in 2025. The VARA in-principle approval advances the firm’s multi-jurisdictional regulatory strategy, under which ARP Digital is building the GCC’s regulated digital capital infrastructure platform, one that connects global digital asset liquidity with the real-world financial rails on which Gulf commerce depends. The firm is committed to fulfilling the conditions established by VARA and views the authority’s regulatory framework as the appropriate foundation upon which to build institutional-grade digital asset services in Dubai.

About ARP Digital

ARP Digital is a regulated digital capital infrastructure platform headquartered in Bahrain. The firm operates an integrated suite of institutional services encompassing an OTC liquidity desk, international corridor settlement rails, on/off-ramp conversion infrastructure, and regulated wealth management services. ARP Digital is licensed as a Category 3 Capital Markets - Crypto Assets Service Provider by the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) and has received in-principle approval from the Dubai Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (VARA). The firm was co-founded by Abdulaziz and Abdulla Kanoo, fifth-generation members of the GCC's 135-year-old Kanoo Group. ARP Digital serves institutional investors, exchange houses, global payment companies, and high-net-worth individuals across the Gulf Cooperation Council and international markets.

To learn more about ARP Digital, visit: <https://www.arpdigital.ai/en>