

# AMI COUNTRY REPORT

AMI INTERNATIONAL, INC. – P.O. Box 30, Bremerton, WA 98337, USA – 360-373-2686

OMAN

## Worldwide Naval Projections Report Oman

### Table of Contents

#### Country Briefing

- [Executive Summary](#)
- [General Data](#)
- [Economy](#)
- [Defense Budget](#)
- [General Procurement](#)
- [Supplier Trends](#)
- [Defense Policy](#)
- [Defense Organization](#)
- [Defense Forces](#)
- [Naval Organization](#)
- [Active Naval Vessels](#)
- [Shipbuilding Infrastructure](#)
- [Shipbuilding Projections](#)
- [Key Defense Organization Personalities](#)

#### New Construction

##### Combatants

##### [Project Khareef Corvette](#)

##### Patrol Vessels

##### [Future Police Coast Guard Patrol Craft](#)

##### Auxiliaries

##### [High Speed Vessel \(HSV\)](#)

##### [Rescue Catamaran](#)

##### [Modernization](#)

##### [Decommissionings, Transfers, & Receipts](#)

##### [Naval Aviation Assets/Programs](#)

##### [Other Naval Associated Acquisitions/Programs](#)

## Oman

Rewritten – June 2009

**Executive Summary:**

**Map of Oman**

The Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) and the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard (ROP CG) have a small, but relatively modern fleet of corvettes, offshore patrol vessels (OPVs), fast attack craft (FAC), patrol vessels and amphibious vessels. From 1995 through 1997, the RNO took delivery of two Qahir class corvettes and three Al Bushra class OPVs as part of a naval modernization and expansion effort. Both of these procurements had options for additional ships, however, were cancelled due to the contraction of oil prices and subsequent budget cuts. Since 2002, increased oil prices and corresponding revenues have enabled the sea services to re-institute its modernization efforts although at a slow pace.

Oman is a small country, which primarily depends on petroleum products for its financial existence. Budget dollars are at a premium, and the depressed oil prices of the mid-1990s cancelled or delayed many governmental programs, including military modernization efforts.

With concern over the limited amount of their oil reserves Oman, over the past decade has made huge investments in natural gas, petrochemicals, aluminum smelting, and the fertilizer industries. It has also encouraged foreign investment, and stepped up privatization efforts internally to make the economy less dependent on the oil sector. These steps, in conjunction with the steep rise in oil prices from 2002 to present, have increased Oman's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and government revenue surpluses. Oman will continue

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to heavily invest its revenue surpluses into its economic transition rather than for the modernization of the Royal Oman Armed Forces (ROAF), which will continue at a slow measured pace for the foreseeable future.

Since the delivery of the Qahir class corvettes and the Al Bushra class OPVs in 1997, the RNO continued planning for several new vessels including corvettes, landing craft and troop transports. A construction contract for three new corvettes under the Project Khareef Program was signed in January 2007, and construction of the first unit is currently underway. Two High Speed Vessels (HSV) were contracted for in May 2006 through Austal of Australia and were delivered in 2008. The HSVs were ordered for the tourism industry; however, will be utilized by the RNO as troop transports when required. In March 2006, Rodriquez Cantieri Navali was contracted for the construction of five catamarans, two of which will be utilized for high speed search-and-rescue operations.

## General

### Geographical Information:

**Coastline:** 2,092km (1,300 miles)

**Maritime Claims:**

**Contiguous Zone:** 24nm

**Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** 200nm

**Territorial Sea:** 12nm

**National Capital and Defense Headquarters:** Muscat

**Language:** Arabic (official), English, Baluchi, Urdu, Indian dialects

**Population:** 3,418,085

## Political

**Country's legal name:** Sultanate of Oman

**Type of Government:** Monarchy

**Branches of Government:**

Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said

**Executive Branch:** Chief of State and Head of Government: Sultan and Prime Minister Qaboos bin Said Al Said (since 23 July 1970). Cabinet: Appointed by the Monarch.

**Legislative Branch:** Bicameral Majilis Oman consists of an upper chamber (Majilis as-Dawla) (58 seats; members appointed by the Monarch; has advisory powers only), and a lower chamber (Majilis ash-Shura) (83 seats; members elected by universal suffrage for four-year term; body has some limited power to propose legislation, but otherwise has only advisory powers).

**Judicial Branch:** Supreme Court. The nascent civil court system, administered by region, has judges who practice secular and Sharia (Islamic) law.

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