



U.S. Department of State

FY 2000 Country Commercial Guide:

Qatar

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Chapter I. Executive Summary

This Country Commercial Guide (CCG) presents a comprehensive look at Qatar's commercial environment, using economic, political and market analyses. The CCG's were established by recommendation of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC), a multi-agency task force, to consolidate various reporting documents prepared for the U.S. business community. Country Commercial Guides are prepared annually at U.S. embassies through the combined efforts of several U.S. government agencies.

Among the smaller countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Qatar is located in the center of the Arabian Gulf and boasts huge reserves of natural gas, the largest single reservoir in the world. Over the past few years, Qatar, in collaboration with international oil and natural gas companies, has successfully launched two major Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) projects at Ras Laffan industrial city, the second of its kind in the country. The first shipment of LNG to Japan from Qatar Liquefied Natural Gas Company (Qatargas) was made in January 1997 from the new Ras Laffan LNG port on the eastern coast north of Doha. LNG exports from Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Company (Rasgas) will be launched before the end of 1999 to Korea. However, Qatar is not likely to earn profits from LNG exports for the next few years. Returns from this promising sector will have to be utilized for settling portions of extensive debts to Japan which has financed a major portion of the country's expensive LNG industry.

Meanwhile, the Qatari economy will continue to be heavily dependent upon revenues from oil exports of more than 600,000 barrels per day to the Far East and Europe. Daily oil production from Qatar's onshore and offshore fields may reach 900,000 bpd by the end of the year 2000. Production enhancement and exploration operations carried out with international partners have already shown some positive results. However, even this enhanced level of oil production will fall short of resolving the country's current financial difficulties and persisting budgetary deficits as long as oil prices continue to be low. Qatar will have to cope with some financial constraints until some revenues from LNG export enter its treasury.

The country's pragmatic monarchy, under Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, who took power in a bloodless coup d'etat in June 1995, is taking various measures to foster the establishment of democratic institutions and a broader based structure, as well as openness to global markets. The elections for the current board of directors of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Qatar Central Municipal Council in recent months are the genesis of an ambitious democratization process in the near future. In accordance with the Emir's earlier promise of an elected Advisory Council (Parliament), a committee was formed in mid-July to draw up a comprehensive and permanent constitution within three years. Now under serious consideration are modification of laws and regulations for foreign trade, foreign investments, local agent/sponsor and branching, which will facilitate private sector activity and enable American firms to cope with additional business prospects. There is a tradition of strong and friendly bilateral ties with the United States. The policy of the Emir and his government is geared towards maintaining stability and avoiding the extremism and volatility that have hurt business and society in neighboring countries.

Qatar remains a highly competitive market dominated by government as well as State-owned corporations with procurement programs which are based on standard tender procedures. The market is opening wider to U.S. exporters and an eclectic mix of U.S. goods and services, ranging from consumer products to competitively priced industrial inputs and oil/gas related technology and services. Until four years ago, Japanese and European firms had the lead among international suppliers of products to Qatar, including such key sectors as power generation, water desalination, telecommunications, motor vehicles, heavy machinery and petroleum equipment. However, the U.S. has been the largest supplier in three out of the last four years, with a market share of over 14 percent.

Qataris and their key expatriate managers/consultants hold U.S. products and services in high regard. American exporters and contractors should therefore be able to benefit from emerging opportunities in sectors such as natural gas, oil recovery, power generation and water desalination, medical/medicinal equipment/supplies, telecommunications and foodstuffs. The business outlook in Qatar has been clouded because of the dip in oil prices and its effect on Qatar's purchasing power. However, the long-term potential is still very great because of Qatar's vast resources of natural gas. More immediately, the recent rise in the price of oil in addition to improved prospects for the peace process bode well for the short term. There still are opportunities for U.S. firms now. Companies should emphasize the spirit of partnership with their Qatari counterparts at all times.

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Chapter II. Economic Trends and Outlook

Major Trends and Outlook:

It was during the boom period of the mid-1970's and early 1980's that Qatar, like the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in the neighborhood, made its maximum gains. Large infrastructural projects financed by huge inflows of petrodollars resulted in rapid economic growth, which led to the channeling of wealth into private businesses. Consequently, an increasing demand emerged for banks, westernized lifestyles, defense equipment and oil/gas technology, telecommunications and education.

With the slump in oil prices in the mid-1980's onwards, the slowdown in economic growth, the opening of the domestic market to foreign competition and the flight of deposits into nontraditional financial products, the handsome returns of the boom years came under pressure. In adjusting to these new conditions, Qatar started to diversify its economic resources. As of the early 1990's, the initial oil-based industries were given phase expansions, the oil producing fields witnessed new enhancement recovery operations and the long-overdue ambitious plans for entering into the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry was launched through heavy loans from Japan, which secured long-term supply of LNG through standard Selling Purchasing Agreements (SPA).

Periods of further fluctuations of revenues from oil exports (600,000 barrels per day on average) in the 1990's, including the worst one in early 1999, together with a chronic budgetary deficit worth more than Qatari Riyals (QR) 1 billion per year for the last 15 years, have prompted the government to resort to financial austerity policies. Some projects were cancelled or postponed. Sensitive to government spending, the private sector witnessed some unfavorable fluctuations, including the current one, which may take about two years to recover from. Until some dividends actually start pouring into the Treasury in 5-6 years from now, both public and private sectors will have to cope with financial difficulties. Overall foreign loans are already in excess of the country's GDP. Taking loans together with revenues from privatization of one State-owned corporation, the Qatar Public Telecommunications Corporation (Q-Tel), may provide a partial remedy to the country's growing expenditure commitments in the internal and external markets. Liquidity problems usually provide grounds for further slowdown.

Principal Growth Sectors:

Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 show input and growth rates of all sectors to Qatar's GDP during the period 1992-1996, according to latest available figures from official sources.

The Government of Qatar's economic advisors are of the opinion that 1998 GDP data may maintain levels close to those of 1997. Moreover, those advisors as well as bankers and private businesses see no growth during 1999, and expect further decline for at least three years beyond 2000. To a very high degree, further growth is dependent on international oil prices.

The Government of Qatar's economic advisors believe that economic performance will maintain slow but satisfactory progress throughout the first five years of the next century, when revenues from export of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) will start to feed the Government of Qatar's ambitious development plans. Combined revenues from both oil and LNG exports should place Qatar among the richest nations (per capita) of the world before the year 2010.

Qatar's entry into international LNG markets in December 1996 marked a significant turning point in the country's economic history. Financed heavily by Japanese banks, Qatar's LNG industry has reached maturity in record time. LNG shipments to Japan are already being made at the rate of six million metric tons per year. Orders for a similar amount to South Korea are already in place and actual shipments are scheduled to start in early 1999. Other orders are under consideration. As per agreement with the Japanese banks financing the LNG projects, revenues from LNG exports will be largely dedicated to debt service throughout the first eight to nine years of production. The greatest economic benefits will begin to flow to Qatar only after these debts are repaid. Until then, and in view of current low prices of oil in the international market, the Qatari economy will have to cope with acute financial constraints.

Table 2.1: Input and Growth Rates of All Sectors of Qatar's GDP (1997 and 1996)						
(Latest available data) (All values in millions of QR)						
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980						
Economic Sector	Value	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)	Value	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)
	1997			1996		
Oil Sector	12,750	38.10	-0.18	12,773	38.73	16.83
Other Sectors	20,714	61.90	2.53	20,203	61.27	8.10
Breakdown (Other Sectors):						
Agriculture and Fishery	292	0.87	0.69	290	0.88	-0.34
Industry	2,505	7.49	0.24	2,499	7.58	0.44
Electricity and Water	435	1.30	1.87	427	1.29	12.66
Construction	2,270	6.78	0.09	2,268	6.88	15.54
Trade/Hotel	2,557	7.64	0.51	2,544	7.71	9.84
Transportation	1,265	3.78	3.43	1,223	3.71	12.30
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	3,510	10.49	2.54	3,423	10.38	6.24
Other Services	7,880	23.55	4.66	7,529	22.83	8.47
Total	33,464	100.00	1.48	32,976	100.00	11.32

Table 2.2: Input and Growth Rates of All Sectors of Qatar's GDP (1994 and 1995)						
(Latest available data) (All values in millions of QR)						
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980						
Economic Sector	Value	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)	Value	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)
	1995			1994		
Oil Sector	10,933	36.9	27.4	8,583	32.0	1.0
Other Sectors	18,689	63.1	2.3	18,260	68.0	4.0
Breakdown (Other Sectors):						
Agriculture and Fishery	291	1.0	2.8	283	1.0	0.7
Industry	2,488	8.4	-15.6	2,949	11.0	2.1
Electricity and Water	379	1.3	-6.0	403	1.5	21.0
Construction	1,963	6.6	14.2	1,719	6.4	43.7
Trade/Hotel	2,316	7.8	15.3	2,008	7.5	9.9
Transportation	1,089	3.7	6.9	1,019	3.8	7.5
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	3,222	10.9	5.4	3,058	11.4	1.8
Other Services	6,941	23.4	1.8	6,821	25.4	-3.7
Total	29,622	100	10.4	26,843	100	3.0

Table 2.3: Input and Growth Rates of All Sectors of Qatar's GDP (1992 and 1993)						
(Latest available data) (All values in millions of QR)						
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980						
Economic Sector	Value	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)	Value	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)
	1993			1992		
Oil Sector	8,495	32.6	-14.8	9,969	35.8	22.3
Other Sectors	17,555	27.4	-1.7	17,863	64.2	5.7
Other Sectors Breakdown:						
Agriculture & Fishery	281	1.1	4.5	269	1.0	13.0
Industry	2,887	11.1	-10.3	3,218	11.6	-3.6
Electricity and Water	333	1.3	5.0	317	1.1	2.6
Construction	1,196	4.6	-0.3	1,199	4.3	16.5
Trade/Hotel	1,827	8.0	-0.8	1,842	6.6	10.0
Transportation	948	3.6	9.7	864	3.1	12.4
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	3,003	11.5	-5.6	3,180	11.4	12.2
Other Services	7,080	27.2	1.5	6,974	25.1	3.9
Total	26,050	100	-2.4	27,832	100	11.1

Agriculture: High value U.S. food products with strong market potential in Qatar include processed fruits, and vegetables, frozen chicken parts, cheeses, fresh apples and pears, breakfast cereals, frozen beef, seafood, almonds, packaged rice and other miscellaneous food products, particularly hot sauces, salad dressings, catsup, mayonnaise, vinegar, iodized salt and coffee whiteners. Also, growth in the local food processing industry is driving up demand for semi-processed products particularly beverage bases and a variety of food ingredients. Finally, demand for U.S. hardwood lumber, for interior decoration purposes, is increasing fast.

Government Role in the Economy:

The outlook for Qatar's economic performance will be linked to the relatively higher rate of oil production from both on and offshore fields, as well as oil prices. In Qatar, oil and gas is a Government issue. The Government of Qatar forecasts oil production of 850,000 barrels per day in the year 2000. Production enhancement programs have already succeeded in increasing oil production to over 600,000 barrels per day. However, this increased production, even if coupled with higher oil prices, which is not currently the case, will not alleviate the Government of Qatar's current financial difficulties and budgetary deficits in the near future. In Qatar, the government is the largest end-user of a wide range of imported products and services. Activity in the private sector continues to be extremely sensitive to government spending. The government's growing indebtedness has had a negative impact on the economy. The State budget for 1999-2000 is down by about 15 percent below last year's level, which caused some discrepancy in the budget provisions.

Balance of Payments Situation:

As indicated in Table 2.4 below (obtained from the Qatar Central Bank), the 1998 surplus in balance of trade declined to QR 1,307 million (USD 358 million) from QR 3,164 (USD 867 million) in 1997. This decline is a product of two factors, i.e., reduced rate of exports, and increased rate of imports. On the export side, the country's oil exports grew slightly higher in volume, but yielded less revenues due to the dip in oil prices which continue to fluctuate.

Net services and private transfers continued to record a deficit, worth QR 8,873 million (USD 2,431 million) in 1998, against QR 9,254 million (USD 2,535 million) in 1997. Consequently, the current accounts deficit increased to QR 7,566 million (USD 2,073 million) in 1998, from QR 6,090 million (USD 1,668 million) in 1997. Both components, the balance of trade and the balance of services and private transfers make up the first cornerstone in the balance of payments computations.

The second component, capital and private transfers, as represented in the state borrowings from foreign sources, as well as the official and private investments in foreign markets, recorded a surplus worth QR 4,878 million (USD 1,336 million), an increase of 13 percent over the 1997 level of QR 4,315 million (USD 1,582 million).

The above mentioned changes have impacted the country's balance of payments, with the deficit increasing from QR 1,775 million (USD 486 million) in 1997 to QR 2,688 million (USD 736 million) in 1998. The Government of Qatar (GOQ) officials attributed this growth in deficit to the increased level of indebtedness from foreign sources for the development of the country's liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry, as well as meeting other sovereign obligations. The same sources further stated that Qatar's balance of payments will continue to suffer sizeable deficits throughout the coming few years, when portions of the long-term debts are settled and consequently some dividends from LNG exports actually make it to the treasury.

Table 2.4: Qatar's Balance of Payments (1993 to 1997)							
(Latest available data) (All values in millions of QR)							
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980							
	Item	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993
(1)	Trade Balance	1,307	3,164	4,546	1,940	4,729	5,154
	Exports (fob)	13,416	14,057	13,952	12,948	10,851	11,280
	Imports (fob)	-12,109	-10,893	-9,406	-11,008	-6,122	-6,126
(2)	Service Transfers and Private transfers (Net)	-8,873	-9,254	-9,083	-9,801	-6,556	-7,553
(3)	Current Account (1) + (2)	-7,566	-6,090	-4,537	-7,861	-1,827	-2,399
(4)	Capital Transfers (Private/Official)	4,878	4,315	2,629	4,815	-138	2,377
(5)	Surplus/Deficit in Balance of Payment (3) + (4)	-2,688	-1,775	-1,908	-3,046	-1,965	-22
(6)	Change in Reserves (Increase/Decrease)	2,688	1,775	1,908	3,046	1,965	22

Source: Qatar Central Bank

Note: 1998 data is provisional.



Chapter III. Political Environment

Nature of Political Relationship with the U.S.:

Since he took over power in a bloodless coup in 1995, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar has continued to support a strong U.S. Qatari relationship based on shared interests in promoting regional peace and stability as well as trade ties. The first of its kind since the U.S. and Qatar agreed to exchange diplomatic relations in 1974, the Emir's official visit to the U.S. in June 1997 established grounds for a steady and constant development of relations in various fields between the two countries. This includes education, trade, defense as well as oil and natural gas technology and partnership. A strong supporter of a just and durable peace and economic development in the Middle East, Qatar publicly opposes terrorism and extremism of any kind. Its policy calls for resolving all political and border issues through peaceful negotiations and international arbitration. It was in this spirit that Qatar hosted the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) Conference in 1997 and will host the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) Summit in 2000. Future opportunities for further development of relations in various fields between the U.S. and Qatar exist.

Political System:

In a move towards democratization, the pragmatic Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani established a 32-member committee in mid-July, 1999, for drafting a permanent Constitution for this developing country.

The new Constitution will be tailored to call for establishing an elected Advisory Council (Parliament) to replace the current one which comprises 30 members appointed by the Emir. The current 30-year modified/provisional Constitution falls short of dealing with the aspirations of the Qatari people and provides little chance for them to play a role in the decision making process. It vests extensive powers in the Emir. He enjoys both executive and legislative powers and, as such, promulgates laws through consultations with the Council of Ministers (Cabinet) and Advisory Council. Laws are subject to the Emir's approval prior to taking effect.

Qatar has no political parties or political elections or labor unions and as such no opposition officially exists. Election of a Central Municipal Council was launched for the first time in March 1997. Although all successful candidates were men, women were given the right to nomination and election. Some women were appointed in leading government positions at the level of Undersecretary and Professor in the Ministry of Education and the State-owned Qatar University.

In his endeavor to decentralize powers vested in himself, the Emir has established a separate position of Prime Minister, currently occupied by his brother Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa Al-Thani. This position was traditionally invested in the Emir. He has also appointed Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad, one of his sons, as Heir Apparent, and Deputy Emir when the Emir is outside the country for any reason.

There is no doubt that the monarchical political system will go through further democratization reforms and more social liberalization. In the meanwhile, however, the government will continue to pay heed to the country's cultural and traditional values.



Chapter IV. Marketing U.S. Products and Services

Distribution and Sales Channels:

Note: According to well-informed official and private contacts, the GOQ is now in the process of introducing major modifications to the current laws and regulations which have a direct impact on the marketing process of foreign products and services in the Qatari market. According to some contacts, the old commercial laws will all be exchanged for more liberal ones. The modification will ease restrictions on local agent/sponsor clauses as well as foreign equity participation, foreign investments in certain sectors and branching. While we agree that the new provisions are likely to facilitate private sector activity and enable American firms to cope with additional business prospects, it is difficult for us to describe these provisions without obtaining further details. U.S. firms are advised that this chapter of the Country Commercial Guide dealing with marketing U.S. products and services is being discussed below in light of the current laws and regulations. There is no specific date as to when the new laws will be issued.

U.S. firms interested in selling their products and services in the Qatari market must adhere to provisions of Law No. 4 (1986), which deals with local agency arrangements, and Law No. 25 (1990), which deals with foreign equity participation. The two laws and related regulations outline the necessity of having a local agent or representative as a sales channel for distributing products and services in the local market. Officially, such a requirement is not applicable to foreign suppliers of capital goods and services to the Qatar Armed Forces and the police force.

There are numerous food importers, many of whom are also wholesalers, distributors, and retailers. A handful of large local companies tend to dominate sales. Fresh produce importers also handle table egg imports and distribution. Consumer cooperative stores account for over 40 percent of total food retail sales.

There is growing demand among processors and packers for bulk shipments of semi-processed food products for final processing and packaging, especially corn oil, tree nuts, dairy products, fruit juices, and snack foods. Imported U.S. beef products are mostly purchased by hotels, restaurants and catering companies.

Use of Agents/Distributors:

Finding a partner: The local agent or representative must be a Qatari national or a company with at least 51 percent Qatari ownership. All goods imported to Qatar for sale must be imported by a holder of an import license. These are issued only to Qatari citizens by the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce.

Because it is a very difficult and time-consuming process to change a local agent or representative, selection of agents must be given serious consideration. It should be done on the basis of personal visits to this market and by reviewing the nominated agent's potential. An effective agent in Qatar will have extensive contacts in both the public and private sectors, enabling him to collect valuable information on upcoming government tenders. A local agent should be able to introduce products and services of his foreign suppliers to key government officials.

In Qatar, the government is the largest end-user of a wide range of products and services. The government's procurement process is based on standard tender procedures. A foreign supplier wishing to participate in government tenders should go through a local representative who can be easily called upon for any kind of contact with foreign suppliers. In many cases, bid and performance bonds are required to be presented by the foreign suppliers and guaranteed by local agents.

It is common practice in Qatar and other Arabian Gulf countries to appoint an exclusive agent or representative as a sales channel. While applicable to selling products, this practice may involve some risk in the case of services. U.S. firms are advised to have local agents or representatives for their services on a project-to-project basis, since a local agent or representative may be very well-connected in some areas, but not in others. Although exclusive for a specific project, representation on a project-to-project basis provides legal space and opportunity for foreign suppliers to change agents as deemed necessary.

U.S. firms are strongly advised to avoid appointing one regional agent for a number of countries. They should deal directly through a Qatari citizen or firm as agent. Establishing a regional agent was the more acceptable procedure prior to Qatar's independence from Britain in 1971. However, today Qataris view an exclusive agency as a matter of prestige. They like to meet key officers of the foreign firm. They believe (often correctly) the amount of interest displayed by the foreign firm in the form of frequent visits can make the difference between winning or losing a major contract.

When finally approved by both parties, the Arabic text of agency or representation agreements should be registered with the Commercial Registration Department of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. The local agents usually follow up on the routine work required by the Ministry regulations. The Ministry also has responsibility for arbitrating between parties in disputes relating to an agency agreement. The local civil courts look into disputes which the Ministry cannot resolve.

Local agency laws prohibit the importation and sale of brand name food products by other than the principal agent. However, if a local agent increases his prices without cause or if he fails to stock certain items, such as spare parts, the Ministry is entitled to authorize importation of these products to a local merchant or company other than the appointed agent.

Franchising/Licensing:

This is another promising sales channel for U.S. goods and services in the Qatari market. U.S. fast food franchises are highly sought after by local companies. Most of the major U.S. fast food companies are already established in the market. A local sponsor is required to establish a business. Face-to-face contact with importers will significantly increase a company's prospects to do business.

Steps to Establishing an Office/Joint Venture:

The Government of Qatar has yet to promulgate a branching law allowing establishment of a wholly owned branch of a foreign firm in the Qatari market. As indicated below, the already existing branches of foreign firms were set up by a ministerial decree. Meanwhile, the local agent requirement applies to foreign firms wishing to establish a branch in Qatar for a parent company abroad, as well as to those foreign firms entering into a joint venture on a basis of up to 49 percent foreign equity (with no less than 51 percent local equity). The foreign firm, together with the local agent, should apply for official registration of the agency, the joint venture or the branch office, with the Commercial Registration Department of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. Fees are minimal; original copies of the related agreements between the foreign firms and their local partners are required. This process may take up to two weeks, unlike the procedure for registration of trademarks, which may require several months to complete.

Acquiring the business practice permit is more time consuming than registration of agency agreements. This permit is issued by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture. Copies of agency and commercial registration are required when applying for the business permit. Moreover, the Ministry often conducts a check on the location and residence permit of the foreign representative involved in the permit under consideration. Naturally, the local agent should be the local sponsor for the foreign representative's residence permit, which is issued by the Immigration/Passport Department of the Ministry of Interior.

The establishment of a majority or wholly owned foreign firm in Qatar is rare, and has generally been confined only to firms and specific development projects in the oil and gas sector. Such arrangements are made by the issuance of a decree by the Minister of Finance, Economy and Commerce, after a determination that the foreign firm brings technical expertise and/or financial resources not otherwise available in Qatar. A Qatari agent is still required for such arrangements. The following steps outline the procedure for establishing a majority or wholly-owned foreign firm.

A. The foreign parent company and/or foreign investors reaches an agreement or signs a contract with the appropriate Qatari Ministry or Department or the appropriate State-owned corporation. The contract should focus on the implementation by the foreign partners of a specific development project.

B. The foreign parties submit the agreement/ contract, together with a letter requesting an approval for establishing a company of their own in Qatar, to the Minister of Finance, Economy and Commerce.

The letter should clearly state the name of their Qatari service agent (a company or a person), as well as the name of the project.

C. The Minister of Finance, Economy and Commerce normally approves such a request and issues a Ministerial decree authorizing the foreign parties concerned to establish a firm in Qatar under their name and specifies the line of business of such a business concern.

D. Based on the above decree, the Qatari agent will register the new foreign company in the Commercial Registration Department of Finance, Economy and Commerce.

It should be noted that until mid-1995, Law No. 25 for the year 1990 stipulated that the above-mentioned decree should be issued by the Emir of Qatar. However, about mid-1995, this law was modified, and the right to issue the decree was given to the Minister of Finance, Economy and Commerce. The purpose of this modification was to expedite the establishment of foreign businesses.

Unless otherwise stipulated in the project agreement between the foreign parties and the appropriate Qatari entity, the new foreign firm will be liable to pay corporate income tax to the Government of Qatar. The Corporate Income Tax Law of Qatar stipulates that corporate income taxes range from 5 to 35 percent of the net income of foreign firms operating in Qatar. It is, therefore, essential that discussions on corporate income tax exemption be part of project contract negotiations. The Government does offer tax holidays on specific projects. If the contract shows no exemption clause, the Ministerial decree will stipulate that the new foreign company is subject to Qatari corporate income taxes. No personal income tax is levied in Qatar, either on Qataris or on expatriates.

As noted above, the requirement for a Qatari service agent applies even when a wholly- or majority-owned foreign firm is established. However, the local agent will not be responsible in any way for the shortfall in performance, if any, of the foreign company. Among other things, the local agent's role includes providing services in the public and private sector for the foreign firm, including preliminary efforts to secure a contract for the foreign parties.

Charges and honoraria for local service agents must be negotiated between the two parties from the very first day of their long-term or short-term relationship. The Commercial Agency Law of Qatar, as modified in 1986, makes it very difficult for foreign firms to change their agents or agency agreements. It is advantageous for both parties to reach an agency or representation agreement on a project to project basis.

Finally, foreign firms are strongly advised not to underestimate the role of local agents. In particular, the latter's personal contacts are extremely important in concluding an agreement.

Income Tax:

Personal income tax: Nonexistent in Qatar.

Corporate Income Tax: Law No. 11 for the year 1993 was issued with immediate effect on July 14, 1993, and represents Qatari corporate income tax policy. The law sets the exemption limit at QR 100,000 (USD 27,472). Progressive income tax rates rise from 5 percent to a maximum of 35 percent of net profits. Table 3.1 shows the corporate income tax structure.

Qatar's corporate income tax law is applicable to foreign firms operating in this country, as well as foreign equity participation in Qatari business concerns. Foreign equity in local business can only be up to 49 percent with Qatari equity no less than 51 percent. While it is not customary for foreign equity participation in a Qatari business concern to be in any way exempted from the corporate income tax provisions, wholly owned foreign firms operating in Qatar may receive tax holidays or other exemptions.

Table 3.1: Corporate Income Tax Structure In Qatar		
(All Values In Qatari Riyals)		
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980		
Amount – From	Amount- To	Rate
-	100,000	Exempt
100,001	500,000	10 Percent

Table 3.1: Corporate Income Tax Structure In Qatar		
(All Values In Qatari Riyals)		
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980		
Amount – From	Amount- To	Rate
500,001	1,000,000	15 percent
1,000,001	1,500,000	20 percent
1,500,001	2,500,000	25 percent
2,500,001	5,000,000	30 percent
5,000,001 and above	-	35 percent

In order to receive an exemption from paying corporate income tax of up to 35 percent of its net profits, a foreign firm must negotiate this subject with the concerned government department prior to signing a project implementation or service contract. If it turns out to be in the government interest, the department concerned will take the matter up with the country's higher authorities and endorse a request to this effect presented by the foreign party. In the end, tax exemptions can only be granted by an Emiri decree. The law requires that liable foreign firms should appoint an accredited auditing office to prepare the usual annual financial report which shows, among other things the firm's net profits for each tax year.

It should be noted, as far as Law No. 11 for the year 1993 is concerned, Qatari joint stock companies are not exempted from the income tax provisions. However, the government has been issuing decrees once every three years exempting Qatari joint stock companies from income tax. The latest exemption, which was issued in mid-1995 is likely to be continued. However, it is not known how much longer such exemptions will be allowed. Key government officials are majority share holders in the 13 joint stock companies operating in Qatar. Such firms include national banks, national insurance companies, navigation, cinemas and cement companies.

Selling Factors and Techniques:

American firms must stress quality, since U.S. industrial and food products tend to be higher priced than similar products from other origins. Qatari consumers, once convinced of the high quality of U.S. products, are willing to pay a premium for such products. Arabic labels are required. U.S. companies are required to print Arabic labels (rather than just apply Arabic stickers over original labels) and provide promotional and marketing assistance so as to have a competitive edge.

U.S. suppliers should stress the competitive price, U.S. origin, high quality, and, if applicable, new-to-market status of their products. Face-to-face contact with importers will significantly increase a company's prospects of doing business.

Advertising and Trade Promotion:

The business framework which U.S. firms are accustomed to has been developed to a good extent in Qatar. While trade statistical data is the responsibility of the government-appointed Central Statistical Organization (CSO), several private advertising firms are now equipped to handle promotional activities.

Most publications in Qatar, including three Arabic and two English dailies, as well as three weekly magazines, have a large readership. These include the following:

Arabic:

"Al-Sharq": P.O. Box 3488, Phone: (974) 661-354, Fax: (974) 662-094, E-mail: webmaster@al-sharq.com, Internet: <http://www.al-sharq.com>

"Al-Watan": P.O. Box 22345, Phone: (974) 354-466, Fax: (974) 350-930

"Al-Rayah": P.O. Box 533, Phone: (974) 466-566, Fax: (974) 350-476, E-mail: edit@raya.com, Internet: <http://www.raya.com>

English:

"Gulf Times": P.O. Box 533, Phone: (974) 466-621, Fax: (974) 418-811, Internet:
<http://www.gulf-times.com>
 "The Peninsula": P.O. Box 3488, Phone: (974) 663-945, Fax: (974) 663-965
 (All in Doha, Qatar)

Both television stations: Qatar Television (QTV) and Al-Jazira Satellite TV Station, along with the radio station Qatar Broadcasting Corporation (QBS), in Qatar are currently owned by the state, but the dissolution of the Ministry of Information and Culture in 1996 has led to the establishment of the State-owned Qatar Radio and TV Corporation. QBS, established in 1968, broadcasts on medium-wave, short-wave and FM frequencies. Most broadcasts on the medium-wave are in Arabic. The FM stereo station which transmits for about 18 hours daily is mainly used for English programs. There are no private radio stations. As of this year, QBS has started carrying advertisements. QTV, comprising Arabic and English channels, also broadcast pre-recorded commercials. QBS can be contacted at: Qatar Broadcasting Service, P.O. Box 3299, Doha, State of Qatar. Further information on advertising on QTV's Arabic and English channels can be obtained from the Advertising Department, Qatar Television, P.O. Box 1944, Doha, State of Qatar. Additional information on the Al-Jazira Satellite TV Station can be obtained from: Al-Jazira Satellite TV Station, P.O. Box 32123, Doha, Phone: (974) 890-890, Fax: (974) 885-333.

Pricing a Product:

The average importer markup on food products is about 10-15 percent. Retail food prices are generally 25-30 percent above import/wholesale prices.

Selling to the Government:

In Qatar, the government is the main end-user of a wide range of products and services. All government procurement contracts are let under provisions of bidding and tender regulations included in Law No. 8 of 1979. The government's standard procurement tender process is divided into two sections. The Central Tenders Committee (CTC) of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce handles procurement worth USD 12,000 and above. Procurement below this amount is usually processed by in-house tender committees in each Ministry. U.S. firms interested in selling products and services to the government must go through local agents. Exemptions, however, officially exist in the case of defense equipment and services to the Ministry of Defense.

Under the direction of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce, the CTC handles the bidding process and awarding of contracts. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture is the principal construction supervisor of the Qatari government. It supervises contracts for civil construction and highway projects. The Ministry of Energy and Industry and the Ministry of Electricity and Water supervise certain projects in their specialized fields.

As a general rule, the Government of Qatar does not award turnkey contracts, preferring to award separate contracts to consultants. The role of the consultant (usually a foreign firm) includes, among other things, the task of short-listing firms to be invited to bid for projects. The CTC normally invites pre-qualification documents from short-listed foreign and/or local contractors or merchants for larger projects. The government announces invitations to pre-qualify in local and/or foreign papers and occasionally through Qatari embassies abroad. Law No. 8 also provides for classification of contractors by a committee operating under the CTC. The classification process is based on the firm's financial strength, business reputation and experience. Although preference normally goes to the lowest bidder meeting all specifications, the CTC has waived this rule in the past without providing the reason.

Bid and performance bonds are required in the form of unconditional guarantees with a local bank. The standard bid bond is 5 percent and performance bond is 10 percent of the contract. However, the above rate can be larger for certain projects. Foreign firms are not required to have a local agent for the bid process. However, by the time a contract is ready to be signed, participating foreign firms do need to have satisfied the local agent requirement. U.S. firms are advised that a well connected local agent can be an asset, even during the bidding process.

The State Purchase Office (SPO), a division of the CTC, handles all local purchase orders (LPO's) for equipment and supplies required by various government ministries. The SPO handles bids worth hundreds of millions of dollars every year. The period for preparation of quotations is usually 30 days

and very often less than three weeks after the announcement of tenders. Under these circumstances, an already established local agency arrangement is crucial for successful bidding. The Special Projects Office (also known as the SPO, but not connected to the State Purchase Office) in the Office of the Emir used to handle private construction projects related to the residences of the Emir and immediate members of his family. However, this office was dissolved in July 1998.

Government contracts normally include arbitration clauses. Unless stated otherwise in the contract, the standard clauses stipulate that disputes emanating from government contracts will be subject to arbitration in Qatar. U.S. firms are advised to, whenever possible, reserve the right to appeal local arbitration decisions abroad.

Foreign and local contractors are usually paid 20 percent of the contract awarded to them against unconditional bank guarantees. Further payments are made according to a standard payment schedule based on the progress of the project. It should be noted that the payment schedule almost always authorizes the government to retain portions of payments due until after the completion and acceptance of the project. Foreign and local contractors have had mixed experience with delayed payments, which are made without interest.

Arabic is the official language in Qatar though English is widely used. Bids should be in Arabic unless the tender document specifically indicates that English is required. Specifications generally conform with British/European and, in recent years, American standards. This situation is gradually changing as more Qatari students go the United States for higher education and come back to replace retiring British advisors in the areas of power generation and water desalination, municipal planning and physical development plan preparation.

Protecting Your Product from IPR Infringement:

Apart from the World Trade Organization (WTO), Qatar is not a member of any international convention in which the United States participates on the subject of patents, trademarks or copyright protection. Qatar's Law No. 3 for the year 1978, known as "The Law of Trademarks and Commercial Indications" provides provisions for trademark registration and penalties for infringement. In practice, protection is afforded by advertising a cautionary notice in Qatar's daily newspapers.

Copyrights: On July 22, 1995, the Government of Qatar promulgated Law No. 25 for the year 1995 on Intellectual Property and Copyright Protection. A special department called "Censorship Bureau" was established under the Ministry of Information and Culture for enforcing this law, which is the first legislation of its kind in Qatar. The law took effect on October 22, 1996. But the abolishment of the Ministry of Information and Culture in October 1996 has impeded proper implementation of this law. The Censorship Bureau, however, has not been abolished. Efforts such as the voluntary destruction of more than 3,000 unauthorized videotapes by one of the largest video stores in the presence of a representative from the Censorship Bureau in March 1997, suggest the government is serious about enforcing this law. In late 1998, the Censorship Bureau became part of the Department of Commercial Affairs of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. It has yet to be activated on a larger scale.

Patent Law: In the early 1990's, Qatar decided to adopt a Patent Law which was drafted by the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. However, this law has not been enforced. The Industrial Affairs Department of the Ministry of Energy and Industry, we understand, has been tasked with conducting meetings to exchange views on how to implement the patent law. As is the case with trademarks, protection is afforded by advertising a cautionary notice in local dailies.

Need for a Local Attorney:

A list of local attorneys follows.

Note: The country code for Qatar is **974** for all telephone and fax numbers. There are no area codes within Qatar.

Law Office of Abdul Latif Hoseni
Contact: Abdul Latif Hoseni

Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 322-691
Fax: N/A
Specialization: General practice

Law Office of Abdul Rab Al-Malki
Contact: Abdul Rab Al-Malki
P.O. Box 1850
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 424-856
Fax: (974) 434-336
Specialization: Attorneys and legal consultants

Law Office of Abdulla Al-Khulaifi & Ali Abdulla Jaffar
Contact: Abdulla Al-Khulaifi & Ali Abdulla Jaffar
P.O. Box 22034
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 417-885
Fax: (974) 418-170
Specialization: General practice

Law Office of Abdullah Essa Al-Ansari
Contact: Abdullah Essa Al-Ansari
P.O. Box 23399
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 351-418; (974) 351-419; (974) 351-420
Fax: (974) 351-421
Specialization: Lawyers and legal consultants

Law Office of Ali bin Nasser Al-Naimi
Contact: Mr. Abouelhamd Hassan Areiba, Legal Consultant
P.O. Box 2457
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 432-959; (974) 432-747
Fax: (974) 432-595
Specialization: General practice

Law Office of Behzad Y. Behzad
Contact: Behzad Yousef Behzad
P.O. Box 869
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 352-333
Fax: (974) 352-888; (974) 433-635
Specialization: Commercial, Banking, Company, Insurance, Trademarks, Industrial, Civil

Law Office of Dr. Najeeb bin Mohamed Ahmed Al-Nuaimi
Contact: Dr. Najeeb Bin Mohamed Ahmed Al-Nuaimi, Advocate & Legal Consultant
P.O. Box 9952
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 311-124
Fax: (974) 310-314
Specialization: General practice

Law Office of Hassan A. Al-Khater
Contact: Hassan A. Al-Khater
P.O. Box 1737
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 437-770
Fax: (974) 437-772
Specialization: Full range of legal services. UK educated.

Law Office of Hassan Satti Al-Sayed
Contact: Hassan Satti Al-Sayed

P.O. Box 6780
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 444-749
Fax: (974) 444-750
Specialization: General practice

Law Office of Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiya
Contact: Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiya
P.O. Box 9228
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 364-447
Fax: (974) 364-449
Specialization: Specializes in litigation, civil law, commercial law, criminal law and marital law

Law Office of Majdalany and Partners
Contact: Gebran Majdalany
P.O. Box 4004
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 428-899
Fax: (974) 417-817
Specialization: Specializes in business law (commercial, banking, company law), civil law including building law, real estate, shipping, insurance

Law Office of Majed Nasser Al-Badr
Contact: Majed Nasser Al-Badr
P.O. Box 17197
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 449-596
Fax: (974) 370-814
Specialization: General practice

Law Office of Rashid Jassim Al-Buainin
Contact: Rashid Jassim Al-Buainin
P.O. Box 9393
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 477-651
Fax: (974) 477-427
Specialization: Attorneys and legal consultants

Law Office of Rouhani and Partners
Contact: Riad Rouhani
P.O. Box 8747
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 425-815
Fax: (974) 441-428
Specialization: Specializes in criminal, labor and civil law

Law Office of Sayel Daher
Contact: Sayel Mohammed Daher
P.O. Box 5684
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 415-080; 1
Fax: (974) 443-930
Specialization: General practice. Associated with Walker Martineau, Lawyers, London, UK

Qatar Law Office
Contact: Nizar Kabbani/ Mohsin Makki
P.O. Box 8717
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 420-017; (974) 431-015
Fax: (974) 432-060
Specialization: Commercial, civil, criminal, arbitration and Sharia law

Note: The non-Qatari lawyers above, namely: A. Majdalany and Partners B. Sayel Daher C. Nizar Kabbani will not be able to operate under their current names from the year 2000. A ministerial decree issued mid-1996 by the Minister of Justice has restricted law office ownership to Qatari lawyers only and gave non-Qatari law offices a grace period of four years to deal with law cases on hand. Beyond this date, non-Qatari lawyers may still be able to practice law under the sponsorship of a wholly Qatari-owned law office.



Chapter V. Leading Sectors for U.S. Exports and Investment

Note: Although provisional foreign trade figures are available for the 1998, Qatar's State-owned Central Statistical Organization (CSO) has yet to issue the details and finalized figures. The CSO does not usually publish statistical data on import/export of services. In preparing for this chapter of Qatar's 2000 Country Commercial Guide, we have used data as compiled, categorized and published by CSO. Although slightly different from what is required by the CCG format, the following tables represent the latest available data on imports of tangible goods to Qatar from worldwide sources with emphasis on the U.S. role.

The CSO has yet to shift to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) system in compiling and producing annual foreign trade statistics and trade exchange bulletins. Normally one or two years behind, the CSO computations to date are still based on the Standard International Tariff Code (S.I.T.C.). The S.I.T.C. is divided into ten main categories with single digit codes from 0 to 9, each of which is in turn is sub-divided into two-digit codes, beginning with the digit for that main category. Each of the latter is also broken up into six-digit codes, beginning with the two digits for that sub-sector.

Best Prospects for Non-Agricultural Goods and Services:

Representing between 10 and 15 percent of Qatar's overall imports, goods of U.S. origin imported into Qatar ranged from USD 45 million in 1975 to USD 175 million in 1982, USD 230 million in 1992, USD 387 million in 1995, USD 319 in 1996, USD 470 million in 1997 and USD 475 million in 1998. Services of U.S. origin in Qatar were estimated at USD 200 million in 1990-91, USD 100 million in 1992 and USD 1 billion per year from 1994 through 1998, concentrated in the oil and natural gas operations.

The U.S. has occupied in recent years the position of leading supplier of goods and services to Qatar, which was a Japanese monopoly for a period of about 50 years. The U.S. share of the market has consequently increased to slightly over 14 percent of total imports of goods and about 85 percent of services. The U.S. Embassy in Doha attaches the highest priority to maintaining and expanding U.S. share of the import market.

The following tables show leading foreign trade partners of Qatar and leading categories/sectors of U.S. exports to the Qatari market in recent years. All values are in millions of U.S. dollars and represent latest available data.

Table 5.1: Imports From All Countries Into Qatar (1994 to 1998)					
(All values in millions of USD)					
Country	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
USA	475	470	319	387	204
Japan	420	293	267	380	258
UK	382	312	340	346	198
United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.)	276	165	128	140	134
Italy	276	173	310	361	83
Germany	198	221	217	374	128
France	195	273	237	253	76
Saudi Arabia	187	127	172	151	95
Netherlands	67	48	81	115	58
India	65	61	60	65	63
All other countries	2,966	3,010	2,528	3,052	1,729
Total	3,348	3,322	2,868	3,398	1,927

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar

Country	Percent of Total					Rank				
	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	98	97	96	95	94
USA	14.2	14.1	11.1	11.4	10.6	1	1	2	1	2
Japan	12.5	8.8	9.3	11.2	13.4	2	3	4	2	1
UK	11.4	9.4	11.9	10.2	10.3	3	2	1	5	3
U.A.E.	8.2	5.0	4.5	4.1	7.0	4	6	8	8	4
Italy	8.2	5.2	10.8	10.6	4.3	5	6	3	4	7
Germany	5.9	6.7	7.6	11.0	6.6	6	5	6	3	5
France	5.8	8.2	8.3	7.4	3.9	7	4	5	6	8
Saudi Arabia	5.6	3.8	6.0	4.4	4.9	8	7	7	7	6
Netherlands	2.0	1.4	2.8	3.4	3.0	9	10	9	9	10
India	1.9	1.8	2.1	1.9	3.3	10	11	10	12	9
Others	88.6	90.6	88.1	89.8	89.7					
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00					

S.I.T.C. R-3 Category	Category Heading	1997	1996	1995	1994
0	Food and live animals	296.3	269.3	272.7	254.9
1	Beverages and tobacco	26.3	28.3	30.4	25.6
2	Crude material, inedible, except fuels	82.2	70.5	74.7	66.0
3	Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	20.2	13.5	15.0	12.4
4	Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes	12.5	13.4	14.5	10.2
5	Chemicals and related products n.e.s.	179.5	191.1	171.4	134.5
6	Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	752.0	745.8	900.7	419.0
7	Machinery and transport equipment	1,682.0	1,293.4	1,641.1	765.1
8	Miscellaneous manufactured articles	267.2	242.1	267.8	239.4
9	Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the S.I.T.C.	3.6	0.9	9.8	0.3
Total		3,321.8	2,868.3	3,398.0	1,927.4

Note: 1998 breakdown not available.

S.I.T.C. R-3 Category	Category Heading	U.S.	Total	U.S.
		(millions of USD)		Share (%)
7	Machinery and transport equipment	342.4	1,682	20.4
6	Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	67.3	752	8.9
8	Miscellaneous manufactured articles	22.2	267	8.3
5	Chemicals and related products n.e.s.	20.2	180	11.2
0	Food and live animals	10.0	296	3.4
1	Beverages and tobacco	6.1	26	23.2
2	Crude material, inedible, except fuels	1.7	82	2.0
3	Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	0.4	20	1.9
9	Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the S.I.T.C.	0.3	4	7.7
4	Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes	0.1	12	0.5
Total		470.5	3,322	14.2

Note: 1998 breakdown not available.

S.I.T.C. R-3 Sectors	Sector Heading	U.S.	Total	U.S.
		(millions of USD)	(millions of USD)	Share (%)
74	General industrial machinery and equipment, n.e.s., and machinery parts, n.e.s.	105	469	22.47
77	Electrical machinery apparatus and appliances, n.e.s., and parts thereof	15	416	3.62
78	Road vehicles (including air cushion vehicles)	45	372	12.02
67	Iron and steel	37	269	13.81
69	Manufactures of metal n.e.s.	15	180	8.14
71	Power generating machinery and equipment	88	165	53.53
72	Machinery specialized for particular industries	52	125	41.37
65	Textile yarn, fabrics, made up articles n.e.s. and related products	7	99	7.35
89	Miscellaneous manufactured articles, n.e.s.	5	96	5.14
66	Non-metallic minerals manufactures n.e.s.	3	88	3.77

S.I.T.C. R-3 Sub-Sector	Sub-Sector Heading	U.S.	Total	U.S.	Rank *
		(millions of USD)	(millions of USD)	Share (%)	
781210	Motor vehicles for the transport of persons of saloon or station kind	27.5	249.2	11.0	3
679100	Tubes, pipes and hollow profiles, seamless, of iron or steel	30.4	162.9	18.7	3
772600	Boards, panels, consoles, and other bases for control of electricity and its distribution	0.7	153.4	0.5	11
723900	Parts n.e.s. of the machinery of headings 723000 and 744300	40.0	79.6	50.2	1
747000	Taps, cocks, valves and similar appliances for pipes, boiler shells, tanks and the like	7.5	79.6	9.4	4
741740	Heat exchange units	60.2	75.6	79.6	1
691100	Structures excluding prefabricated buildings of heading 811 and parts	8.6	74.3	11.5	4
714890	Other gas turbines	47.3	65.9	71.8	1
771100	Transformers, electrical	2.9	64.1	4.5	4
679500	Tube or pipe fittings (e.g. couplings, elbows, sleeves) of iron or steel	3.1	54.4	5.7	4
Total		469.2	3,312.7	14.2	1

* Rank among all countries exporting the specified sub-sector of goods to Qatar in 1997

Table 5.7: U.S. Share of Exports To Qatar, 1997: Top Ten Sub-Sectors Where U.S. Was Leading Exporter (Rank No. 1)				
S.I.T.C. R-3 Sub-Sector	Sub-Sector Heading	U.S.	Total	U.S. Share (%)
		(millions of USD)		
741740	Heat exchange units	60.2	75.6	79.6
714890	Other gas turbines	47.3	65.9	71.8
723900	Parts n.e.s. of the machinery of headings 723000 and 744300	40.0	79.6	50.2
714990	Parts for the gas turbines of heading 71489	30.7	50.1	61.2
792900	Parts, n.e.s. (not including tires, engines and electrical parts) of goods of group 792	13.6	19.7	69.2
764900	Parts and accessories suitable for use solely or principally with apparatus of division 76	11.2	24.0	46.8
516990	Other organic compounds	4.9	12.9	38.3
759000	Parts and accessories for use with machines of groups 751 and 752	4.9	18.4	26.4
716500	Generating sets	4.8	11.4	41.9
723330	Tamping machines and road rollers	3.0	4.1	72.3

Table 5.8: U.S. Exports To Qatar, 1997: S.I.T.C. Sub-Sectors For Which The U.S. Was the Only Exporter		
S.I.T.C. R-3 Sub-Sector	Sub-Sector Heading	U.S.
		(millions of USD)
745950	Automatic goods vending machines	0.029
725100	Machinery for making pulp of fibrous or finishing paper or paperboard	0.007
421300	Groundnut (peanut) oil and its fractions	0.003
741340	Other induction or dielectric heating equipment	0.003
667200	Diamonds (other than sorted industrial diamonds), whether or not worked, not mounted	0.002
743620	Pumps for filtering or purifying beverages other than water	0.002
515800	Sulfonamides	0.0003

Services in the oil and natural gas and other sectors: As indicated above, the Government of Qatar does not issue statistical data on import/export of services. U.S. services in Qatar's oil sector (production and enhancement of recovery) as well as development of the country's upstream/downstream operations for the LNG industry are estimated at USD 1 billion at present, and are expected to grow twice as much throughout the next few years. Taken together with U.S. investments in the natural gas industry, total U.S. involvement in this sector is estimated at USD 6 billion in 1998 and is likely to increase to USD 11 billion by 2010. U.S. firms specialized in oil/natural gas services and related technology should keep in close touch with their local agents, the U.S. Embassy or the State-owned Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC). Among others, the U.S. firms involved in Qatar's oil/natural gas services and investments include: Mobil Oil, Occidental Petroleum, Pennzoil, Air Products and Chemicals, Baroid, Chevron, Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO), and Phillips Petroleum. The latter signed a heads of agreement with QGPC in May 1997 to build a new petrochemical complex in Umm Said industrial area, with an estimated project value of USD 1 billion.

Best Prospects for Agricultural Products:

Beverage bases, condiments, snack foods, frozen beef, chicken parts, processed fruits and vegetables, fruit juices, breakfast cereals and hardwood lumber.



Chapter VI. Trade Regulations and Standards

In Qatar, long-promised reforms in some economic/commercial fields, including trade regulations and international standards as well as foreign investments may surface in the near future. Because we have not seen those new laws and regulations, and do not intend to draw conclusions from media assumptions, the input under this chapter on trade regulations and standards will be based on existing regulations.

Trade Barriers:

Internally, Qatar maintains a variety of trade barriers which affect foreign investors. Import of religiously or politically sensitive items may be banned by the Government of Qatar. Prior to closing down the Arab Boycott of Israel Office in Doha in early 1995, the Government of Qatar deleted unilaterally some giant foreign firms, including some U.S. corporations, from the blacklist. However, Qatar has lifted the secondary and tertiary aspects of the boycott and an Israeli Trade Representation Office is now resident in Doha.

Tariff Rates:

Tariffs are relatively low (4 percent) on a very wide range of products, including all food products. Qatar levies a 4 percent ad valorem import duty on all food products. Basic food products such as wheat, flour, rice, feed grains and powdered milk are exempted from customs duty. Duty on alcoholic beverages and tobacco products is 100 percent. The Government of Qatar still maintains a high tariff level of 20 percent on steel imports in order to protect the State-owned Qatar Steel Company.

Import License Requirements:

All importers are required by law to have an import license for almost all products. Such import licenses are issued only to Qatari nationals. Even in the case of joint ventures between foreign and Qatari partners, agency/dealership agreements issued by foreign suppliers can be registered only in the name of the Qatari partner in the Commercial Registration Department of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. Foreign investors entering into a joint venture with Qatari partners are allowed a maximum of 49 percent interest in the business.

Taken together, the above represents a formidable array of privileges and preferences, which disadvantage a foreign investor in the Qatari market. Despite stated fines and penalties, the practice of a Qatari illegally lending his name to a foreign-owned/operated business has been common, but on a reduced scale in recent years.

All imported beef and poultry products require a health certificate from the country of origin and a halal slaughter certificate issued by an approved Islamic center in the country of origin.

Special Import Requirements:

Current laws and regulations of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture and the Ministry of Public Health require labeling and marking requirements to be honored, especially where import of foodstuffs is concerned. Qatar enforces shelf life standards for about 75 food products. Production and expiry dates must be printed on the original label or container by the manufacturer. Products must arrive at the destination within half the shelf-life duration. Suppliers should work closely with their local importers to ensure compliance with local shelf-life requirements. Shelf life validity of all foodstuffs should not be less than six months, as of date of entry of the products into Qatar. All foodstuffs are examined at the State-owned and State-regulated Central Laboratories before they reach consumers. Import and distribution of alcoholic liquor is strictly controlled, through an arrangement between the Customs Department and the British Embassy in Doha. Alcoholic drinks are not allowed to be imported into Qatar by any other means. Additionally, in accordance with Islamic laws and traditions, pork and pork derivatives are not allowed to be brought into the country. Qatar has yet to comply with the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement of the WTO.

All imported beef and poultry products require a health certificate from the country of origin and a halal slaughter certificate issued by an approved Islamic center in the country of origin. As is the case with other products, importers of foodstuffs should have an import license, which is issued only to Qatari nationals by the government. All shipping documents must be legalized by a Qatar Embassy or consulate in the country of origin.

Import/Export Documentation:

In Qatar, the letter of credit (L/C) is the most common instrument for controlling exports and imports. When an L.C. is opened, the supplier is required to provide a certificate of origin, and a certificate from the captain of the ship or from the shipping agency stating that the ship is allowed to enter Arab ports. Both documents should be notarized by an Arab Embassy or consulate or an Arab Chamber of Commerce in the exporting country. In order to clear goods from Customs zones at ports or land boundaries in Qatar, importers must submit a variety of documents, including a bill of lading, certificate of origin, pro forma invoice and import license. In Qatar, only authorized local agents are allowed to import specific goods produced by the foreign firms they represent in the local market. However, this requirement may be waived if the local agent fails to provide the necessary spare parts and backup services for the product in Qatar.

Labeling Requirements:

Food labels must include product and brand names, production and expiry dates, country of origin, name and address of the manufacturer, net weight in metric units, and a list of the ingredients in descending order of importance. All fats and oils used as ingredients must be specifically identified on the label. Labels must be in Arabic only or in Arabic/English. Arabic stickers are accepted.

Prohibited Imports:

Pork products. Importing and distribution of alcoholic beverages is highly restricted.

For additional information on the market for food and agricultural products in Qatar, interested parties should contact the Agricultural Trade Office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture at the American Consulate General in Dubai (address and phone numbers in Appendix E).

Warranty and Non-Warranty Repairs:

A letter of credit (L/C) is the most common means of facilitating Qatar's import/export operations. An L/C initiated in Qatar is usually endorsed with transshipment clauses. Most of the goods imported into Qatar from the U.S. and elsewhere come via the nearby ports of Dubai and Sharjah, both in the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.). Transshipment clauses service the purpose of advancing those goods from the U.A.E. to Qatar by land (by truck) and/or sea (by barge). It is customary in Qatar for importers to build their L/C's computations on c&f basis, and not c.i.f. While c&f includes cost and freight, expenses, Qatari merchants prefer to have insurance coverage, provided by local and international insurance companies. Insurance normally covers damages in transit to the goods covered under the L/C.

Standards:

Qatar and other GCC member states have established standards recently in collaboration with the Saudi Arabian Standards Authority (SASA) for certain products. These are termed "GCC Standards" for imports into the six member countries. GCC specifications on motor vehicles were introduced earlier, and have been incorporated at the manufacturing level in producing countries.

For products not yet covered with SASA, Qatar continues to acknowledge international standards.

Free Trade Zones and Warehouses / Temporary Goods Entry Requirements:

Not available. A small area exists in the Doha Port warehouses for re-export purposes. The charges are: A. First 21 days free of charge. B. QR 10 per ton per day for the next 10 days. C. QR 2 per ton per day for a period beyond that (according to weight or volume, whichever attracts a higher charge).

Membership in Free Trade Arrangements:

As a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Qatar is a signatory of the Free Trade Agreement which provides duty free access to all goods produced in the GCC States provided that the goods content requirements (at least 40 percent value added within GCC factories which are at least 50 percent owned by GCC nationals). The GCC member states have yet to integrate matters such as external tariffs, standardization of investment and industrial rules and facilitation of inter-gulf travel.

Internationally, Qatar has been a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and previously in the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT) as observer. Qatar is a strong supporter of regional integration and has ties with several Arab League member states. Several bilateral agreements on easing trade and investment restrictions were reached with those Arab countries in the Gulf area and North Africa. None of these currently meet the modern definition of free trade arrangements and some may be activated in light of Qatar's WTO membership.

Customs Contact Information:

Customs Department
Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce
P.O. Box 81, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 414-333
Fax: (974) 414-959
Contact: Sheikh Abdullah Bin Jassim Bin Fahd Al-Thani, Director
Mr. Miqbil Al-Hitmi, Assistant Director
Mr. Hijji Al-Malki, Office Director



Chapter VII. Investment Climate

Note: This report consists of several sub-sections, which overlap in some cases. For the sake of clarity and continuity, some information has been repeated.

A1. Openness to Foreign Investment:

The Government of Qatar recognizes the importance of investment for economic growth. Since the takeover of power in June 1995 by Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, a major goal has been to attract foreign and local investment to stimulate economic growth.

The challenge which Qatar faces is the development of its huge natural gas reserves in the offshore North Gas field, the largest single non-associated natural gas reservoir in the world. Because it was and still is beyond its own capability to develop a liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry, Qatar opened this sector to international investors and buyers. Qatar's LNG industry has attracted foreign investments worth more than USD 8 billion in recent years. This LNG industry looms over all other projects and will continue to be the most attractive sector for foreign investors as well as end-users of clean energy.

Qatar has yet to introduce further changes to its current laws and regulations governing foreign investments. Meanwhile, Emiri decrees have been issued to attract foreign investment in certain areas where existing laws are not flexible enough or circumstances are otherwise not conducive to outside investors. It is now a government objective to ease those laws and regulations in preparation for adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) standards. New investment laws are expected to be promulgated by the end of 1999 or early 2000. This chapter reviews the current laws and regulations pertaining to foreign investments.

A2. Right to Private Ownership and Establishment:

The establishment of a variety of private corporate structures in Qatar is controlled by Law No. 11 for the year 1981 as modified. This law is known as the commercial companies law. Joint ventures involving foreign partners almost always take the form of limited liability partnership. Law No. 25 for the year 1990, which controls foreign investment in Qatar's market, makes it very clear that foreign investors are not allowed to enter into partnership in a joint stock company with Qatari partners. Foreign investors may own up to 49 percent, and the Qatari partner no less than 51 percent, of a business concern. Foreign partners in ventures organized as limited liability partnerships must pay the full amount of their contribution to authorized capital in cash or in kind, prior to the start of operations. Usually, such firms are required to set aside 10 percent of profits each year in a statutory reserve, until it equals 50 percent of the venture's authorized capital.

Under common practice, foreigners, excluding GCC nationals, are not allowed to own property or invest in privatized public services. However, in early 1999, the Emir of Qatar allowed privatization for the first time in this country, with the partial privatization (45 percent) of the State-owned Qatar public telecommunication corporation (Q-Tel). Non-Qataris were allowed to invest in the privatized portion of this relatively large and lucrative concern. By power of Emiri decrees, foreign industrial firms have been allowed to own up to 25 percent in existing steel, fertilizers and petrochemical industries. Their contribution took the form of technology transfer and/or marketing expertise. Many observers believe that only Qatari nationals will be allowed to own portions of the shares of those industries (with Government of Qatar's share 75 to 80 percent) in case of privatization. The Government of Qatar is now looking at this step as a possible means of reinforcing private sector investment in the Qatari market.

A3. Protection of Property Rights:

Qatar is not yet a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), nor does it belong to the Paris Convention for Protection of Intellectual Property. Within Qatar, therefore, owners of trade marks and copyrights and holders of patents are dependent on Qatari laws and regulations for protection.

Trademarks: The Trademark Law No. 3 for the year 1978 broadly defines a trademark as any commercial mark which distinguishes a product. This law allows internationally accepted norms. It allows registration of collective trademarks, against fees of about USD 70 per registration per class of goods.

The Trademarks Law, as promulgated in 1978, allows those affected and the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce to initiate action against trademark violators. Moreover, the law permits the Ministry to penalize those who describe products deceptively with respect to their nature, type, kind, essential properties, origin, and other related aspects such as weight and amount. Enforcement of this law has been slightly more strict in recent years, but still falls short of what is required. There are continuing problems with imports of counterfeit products, including auto spare parts, household items, and clothing accessories.

Patent Law: In the early 1990's, Qatar decided to adopt a Patent Law which was drafted by the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. However, this law has not been enforced. The Industrial Affairs Department of the Ministry of Energy and Industry, we understand, has been tasked with conducting meetings to exchange views on how to implement the patent law.

Copyrights: On July 22, 1995, the Government of Qatar promulgated Law No. 25 for the year 1995 on Intellectual Property and Copyright Protection. A special department called "Censorship Bureau" was established under the Ministry of Information and Culture for enforcing this law, which is the first legislation of its kind in Qatar. The law took effect on October 22, 1996. But the abolishment of the Ministry of Information and Culture in October 1996 has impeded proper implementation of this law. The Censorship Bureau, however, has not been abolished. Efforts such as the voluntary destruction of more than 3,000 unauthorized videotapes by one of the largest video stores in the presence of a representative from the Censorship Bureau in March 1997, suggest the government is serious about enforcing this law. In late 1998, the Censorship Bureau became part of the Department of Commercial Affairs of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. It has yet to be activated on a larger scale.

A4. Adequacy of Laws and Regulations Covering Commercial Transactions:

Under the current Foreign Investment Code (Law No. 25 for the year 1990), foreign investors are accorded certain privileges different from those accorded to Qatari and/or Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nationals. Law No. 25 allows, under certain circumstances, full ownership by foreign investors in some sectors such as energy, agriculture, industry, mining and tourism. Earlier, the law stipulated that such hundred percent foreign ownership has to be approved by an Emiri decree, but in 1996 the law was modified to require only a decree issued by the Minister of Finance, Economy and Commerce. The ministerial decree may also authorize further privileges such as an exemption from corporate income tax. The government is reportedly drafting and reviewing a new commercial law for introduction in the near future. The new law is expected to simplify procedures for establishing new businesses in Qatar, and may also repeal the requirement for majority Qatari ownership in most business ventures.

According to Law No. 4 for the year 1986 which organizes commercial agency operations, all importers are required to have an import license for almost all products. Such import licenses are only issued to the local agent of the imported products. Local agents should be Qatari nationals or Qatari firms. Even in the case of joint ventures between foreign and Qatari partners, agency/dealership agreements issued by foreign suppliers can be registered only in the name of the Qatari partner in the commercial registration department of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. At present, foreign investors entering into a joint venture are allowed to have only up to 49 percent of the business, with the Qatari partner/s holding at least 51 percent (Law No. 25 for the year 1990).

Still in the genesis, privatization of certain government owned corporations, such as the Qatar Public Telecommunications Corporation (Q-Tel) (45 percent), was successfully launched in March 1999. Qataris and expatriates were allowed to invest in Q-Tel shares. Other potential areas for privatization include electricity and water, radio and television and health services. There is no indication as to what level, if any, of foreign participation would be allowed in such ventures.

Until the new investment law is in place, the current privileges and preferences can still put a foreign investor at a severe disadvantage in the Qatari market. Despite stated fines and penalties, the practice of

a Qatari illegally lending his name to a business, foreign owned and operated, exists, but on a reduced scale.

A5. Foreign Trade Zones:

Not applicable.

A6. Major Taxation Issues Affecting U.S. Business:

The Government of Qatar encourages foreign investment, particularly in joint ventures with Qatari partners. Wholly foreign-owned firms are permitted to operate in Qatar, by the power of a ministerial (Minister of Finance, Economy and Commerce) decree, provided they have a local agent or a sponsor. However, there is a clear local hierarchy of privileges and preferences that favor Qatari firms and joint ventures with Qatari participation. Foreign-owned firms and the foreign-owned portions of joint ventures are subject to corporate income tax, ranging from 5 percent to 35 percent of net profits. Qatari and GCC nationals and business concerns are exempted from the income tax provisions. Qatar has yet to establish a personal income tax system.

A7. Performance Requirements/Incentives:

Foreign investors are not allowed to expand their investments beyond limits set forth in the law. Performance requirements for foreign investment in Qatar, including a counter-trade offset program, do not exist. However, an Emiri decree can allow the expansion of a foreign investment in Qatar. Transfer of technology, management and marketing, as was the case in establishing steel, fertilizers and petrochemical industries in the 1970s, were taken as part of the foreign equity (20 or 25 percent). This is still an accepted practice in Qatar. Unless otherwise stated in binding contracts, foreign equity cannot be diluted over time. The Government of Qatar has indicated its intent to ease requirements for foreign investment in the long run. It is currently looking at the possibility of privatizing some of its services. Privatization may lead to the promulgation of laws and regulations allowing a more active role in local investment to offset sizable Qatari investment in foreign countries. In the not so distant future, the increasing number of Qatari graduates from local and foreign universities may find it difficult to find jobs in the public sector. Therefore, the Council of Ministers decided in June 1997 that 20 percent of certain State-owned corporations should be in Qatari hands. The investment law does not set performance requirements. However, tax holidays, access roads and land rentals are subject to negotiations. In performing its responsibility to screen investment proposals, the Government, through its State-owned corporations, e.g., Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC), may indicate preferences for locations and other matters, including capital cost of investment. Qatar has no offset programs. Disclosure of proprietary information is not required, but financial and employment data is required.

A8. Transparency of the Regulatory System:

Qatar recently became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Earlier it participated in GATT as an observer. It is a member of the GCC and as such, participates in the GCC's free trade arrangements, which provide duty-free access to all goods produced in the GCC states, provided that the goods meet the GCC's basic local content requirements (at least 40 percent value-added within the GCC in plants which are at least 51 percent owned by GCC nationals). The GCC states have yet to conclude regional agreements on matters such as external tariffs, standardization of investment and industrial rules and regulations, and facilitation of intra-GCC travel.

Qatar has been engaged through the GCC in trade and investment negotiations with the United States, the European Community and Japan. Several aspects of the negotiations are yet to materialize. In addition to the GCC Economic Agreement (1983), Qatar has signed economic/commercial cooperation agreements with Egypt and Tunisia in recent years. Such agreements, however, cannot be termed as foreign investment regulation agreements. While some slight progress has been made in implementing the GCC economic agreement, there has been no real headway on any of the others.

Internally, Qatar maintains a variety of trade barriers which can affect foreign investors. Import of

are relatively low (4 percent on a very wide range of products), the Government of Qatar raised the tariff on cigarettes to 100 percent (as of July 1999); the government still maintains a high tariff level of 20 percent on steel imports (protection of the State-owned Qatar Steel Company).

The government's procurement regulations strongly favor Qatari and GCC nationals. According to an Emiri decree issued in 1987, Government of Qatar products are given priority in Government of Qatar procurement programs. The Central Tender Committee (CTC) of the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce is usually not committed to awarding supplies and service contracts to the lowest bidder from among a shortlisted group of bidders. In Qatar, the government is a major buyer and end-user of a wide range of products and services. GCC products receive up to 10 percent price preference over non-GCC products in all Government of Qatar contracts. Unless exempted by Emiri decree on a case by case basis, foreign contractors are required to import their own goods and supplies only through Qatari agents.

A9. Corruption:

Law No. 14 for the year 1971 stipulates that a government official who is convicted of corruption may receive up to seven years' imprisonment. There are no public records indicating how and when this law has been enforced. Reportedly, there were some cases in the mid-1980's when some government employees were fired due to unannounced acts of corruption. There was no court review of these cases.

According to the above law, corruption should be investigated by the office of the Attorney General and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), both falling under the Police Force of the Ministry of Interior. Final judgments are made by the criminal court which falls under the Ministry of Justice.

As such, a bribe to an official or a foreign official in Qatar is viewed as a crime. Official records for corruption cases which could have constituted an obstacle for foreign investment are not available. While normal punishment for giving/taking a bribe is imprisonment of up to seven years, the minimum is one year's imprisonment and/or a fine worth QR 1,000 (USD 275). This criminal Law No. 14 for the year 1971 has not been modified.

Of course, U.S. investors are also subject to the provisions of the U.S. foreign corrupt practices act.

A10. Labor:

The majority of Qatar's labor force consists of expatriate workers. With a total estimated population of 500,000 and Qataris constituting no more than one fourth of this number, the role of expatriates in different sectors of the economy is very important. The Ministry of Interior and the Labor Department of the Ministry of Civil Service regulate recruitment of expatriate labor. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs was dissolved by an Emiri decree issued July 16, 1995. The largest groups of foreign workers now come from India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. Restrictions on some Arab nationalities are linked to their position on certain issues adopted by the Qataris.

Internally, Qatar's plan to develop its own manpower resources at all levels has continued to receive attention at all government levels. However, the country is still far from being self-sufficient in this regard. The Ministry of Interior must approve all transfers of sponsorship of an expatriate from one Qatari national or firm to another. By law, an expatriate is only entitled to two sponsorship transfers throughout his/her stay in the country, provided he/she is below 60 years of age. Official fee for each transfer is about USD 275. Approval of old and new sponsors is a basic requirement. Leading private firms pay certain percentages of net annual profits to all employees as annual bonus.

In early 1999, the Ministry of Interior decided to impose a fee of QR 1,000 (USD 275) for each year of residency given to expatriate workers and employees, an increase of QR 950 (USD 261) over the previously prevailing fee of QR 50 (USD 14). Under the new rules, wives and children pay QR 500 (USD 137) and QR 300 (USD 82) respectively. Despite efforts and recommendations made by the country's Advisory Council to reduce the fees, the government has decided to implement them. Private and public sector employers have promised to shoulder this expense in order to avoid exodus of low-salaried personnel.

It is common practice in Qatar for expatriate workers and staff to be given accommodation along with salaries, and of course benefits and return tickets to the home country once or twice a year. There is no

minimum wage regulation. While salaries and wages are negotiable, end of service benefits are subject to three different laws. The most attractive package is that of the State-owned Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC), then the civil service, and finally, the labor law, which applies mainly to unskilled workers.

A11. Efficiency of Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment:

In Qatar, there are no restrictions or incentives with regard to the export of capital and outward direct investment. The Qatari riyal was pegged to the U.S. dollar at the rate of USD 1.00 equals QR 3.64 in June 1980 and remains unchanged. The riyal has a floating rate against all other currencies.

Qatar Central Bank, which was known as Qatar Monetary Agency (QMA) until 1993, adheres to conservative policies aimed at maintaining steady economic growth and leading to a sounder and more rational banking sector.

Currently, there are 14 banks with a total of 39 branches operating in Qatar, including two Islamic banks which were licensed in recent years. These include six Qatari-owned, two Arab and six foreign banks. A list comprising all banks and number of branches, as well as money exchange and insurance companies, is provided in the following table (Table 7.1). Branching is open only to Qatari banks, while closed to all others on the list. However, the government has eased this restriction during the last year, on a case by case basis.

The latest available data placed Qatar's banking sector assets at about QR 34 billion (USD 9.3 billion) at year end 1997. This represents an increase of about QR 2 billion (USD 549 million) above the 1995 level. Qatar's imports of various kinds of goods were estimated at about QR 13 billion (USD 3.6 billion) in 1997. Almost all import transactions are controlled by standard letters of credit (l/c's) processed by local banks and their correspondent banks in the exporting countries. The banking sector has always been consumer oriented. It was only in mid-1996 that three leading Qatari banks (Qatar National Bank, Doha Bank and Qatar Commercial Bank) took the initiative of providing a syndicated

Table 7.1: The Banking and Financial System of Qatar			
	Bank/Company	Year Est.	Head Office and Branches
A.	Banking System		
A.1	The Central Bank of Qatar (Formerly Qatar Monetary Agency)	1973	

A.2	Commercial Banks:		
A.2.1	National:		
	Al-Ahli Bank of Qatar	1984	3
	Doha Bank Ltd.	1979	9
	Qatar Industrial Development Bank	1996	1
	Qatar International Islamic Bank	1990	4
	Qatar Islamic Bank	1983	7
	Qatar National Bank	1965	18
	The Commercial Bank of Qatar	1976	7
A.2.2	Arab:		
	Mashreq Bank Psc (Formerly Bank of Oman)	1971	1
	The Arab Bank Ltd.	1958	2
A.2.3	Foreign:		
	ANZ Grindlays Bank Ltd.	1956	1
	Bank Saderat Iran	1970	1
	Banque Paribas	1973	1
	Standard Chartered Bank	1950	1
	The British Bank of the Middle East (Now known as HSBC)	1954	3
	United Bank	1970	1
A.3	Money Exchange Companies:		
	Al-Fardan Exchange and Finance Co.	1970	
	Al-Mana Exchange	1979	
	Al-Shaibi Finance and Exchange Co.	1979	
	City Exchange	1978	
	Eastern Exchange and Finance Organization	1979	
	Group Investment and Financial Est.		
	Gulf Finance and Exchange Co.	1977	
	Habib Qatar Int'l Finance and Investment Ltd.	1978	
	Mohamed Haji Nazar Money Exchange	1969	
	Trust Exchange Co.	1976	
B.	Non-Banking System		
	Insurance Companies:		
B.1	National:		
	Al-Khaleej Insurance Co.	1978	
	Qatar Insurance Co.	1964	
	Qatar General Insurance and Re-Insurance Co.	1978	
	Qatar Islamic Insurance Co.	1992	
B.2	Foreign:		
	American Life Insurance Co.		
	Arab Commercial Enterprises (Libano-Suisse)	1966	
	Arab Commercial Enterprises (Lloyds Agents)	1966	
	Arabia Insurance Co.	1966	
	Atlas Assurance Co.	1966	
	National Insurance Co. of Egypt	1969	
	Overseas Financial Services International		

loan worth QR 200 million (USD 54.9 million) to the State-owned Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO) expansion project. The majority of banks operating in Qatar are said to have subscribed to the government bond issue worth USD 1 billion in June 1999.

Credit facilities are provided to local and foreign investors within the framework of standard international banking procedures. However, the Central Bank guidelines call on banks operating in Qatar to give priority to Qataris and to public development projects in their financing operations. The Central Bank also discourages banks operating in Qatar from financing foreign stock market operations. Moreover, the Central Bank prohibits banks from lending an amount greater than seven percent of a bank's capital base to any single customer. A customer in this case can be an individual, a company, or a group of companies under common ownership and local capital.

among banks and other business concerns which results in fewer shares of some corporations actually trading freely in the market. This position continues to hold as Qatar's stock exchange market, known as Qatar Securities Market, was officially inaugurated on May 26, 1997. Currently, only Qataris are allowed to trade shares in this new stock exchange in which shares of 18 Qatari-owned share partnership companies are traded, but regulations may soon allow foreign investors to participate in Qatari mutual funds. Further gradual opening of this market to foreign investors is anticipated.

The trade and building/construction sectors receive a disproportionate share of the bank credit operations. These two sectors, in fact, have proven to be the most lucrative, especially since there is little investment in other productive sectors. The oil and natural gas operations are wholly owned and operated by the government and there is no significant agricultural sector investment.

While gradually moving towards investment in the local stock market, banks operating in Qatar invest in foreign stock exchange markets to absorb a portion of their excessive liquidity. The Qatari-owned banks occupy a leading position in Qatar's new stock market. Some banks and/or local brokers have yet to issue guidelines concerning the managerial and economic portfolios of the Qatari firms on the stock market.

A12. Conversion and Transfer Policies:

Qatar's official currency, the Qatari riyal (QR) is a floating currency. Due to little demand on the Qatari riyal outside Qatar, the Government of Qatar has pegged its exchange rate to the U.S. dollar but maintains a floating rate against all other currencies. The current rate is QR 1.00 for USD 0.27 or USD 1:00 for QR 3.64, as set by the Government of Qatar in June 1980 and unchanged since then.

In Qatar, there is neither a delay in remitting investment returns nor restrictions on transfer of funds associated with an investment. Similarly, there are no limitations on the inflow or outflow of funds for remittances of profits, debt services, capital, capital gains and other returns. However, local as well as foreign contractors may confront a delay of over three months in receiving their due amount without interest. Normally, such a delay is attributed to bureaucratic red tape. It is unlikely that Qatar will impose conversion or transfer restrictions in the future. However, in case of commercial disputes, a court decision may block certain remittances. Foreign exchange is available at all times through banks and branches, and exchange companies.

Bankruptcy and mortgage: In the complete absence of specialized laws and regulations to control commercial bankruptcy and mortgage procedures, the civil law of Qatar is, in fact, the only reference to govern such contingencies. Consequently, commercial bankruptcy in Qatar is viewed as a civil liability, whereby the person and/or firm involved will be officially held responsible for settlement of all debts emanating from bankruptcy. Similarly, there are no special laws or regulations for controlling mortgage operations. Although it is now common practice in Qatar to provide guarantees for various kinds of loans, mortgage liabilities are also controlled by civil law. The absence of specialized bankruptcy and mortgage laws does not seem to have had a significant impact on investment, foreign or local.

A13. Expropriation and Compensation:

There have been no cases of expropriation or sequestration involving foreign investment in the State of Qatar, since the mid-1970's nationalization of Shell and Dukhan Services (the latter was a combination of six international oil companies operating Qatar's onshore operations in Dukhan on the west coast of the Qatari peninsula). The foreign interests were compensated promptly and fairly. Senior Government of Qatar officials have referred to that act as "negotiation", not "nationalization".

A14. Dispute Settlement:

Qatar is not a member of the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) and is not a signatory to the New York Convention of 1958 on the same subject. Qatar accepts binding international arbitration of investment disputes between the Government of Qatar and foreign investors. However, Qatari courts do not enforce judgments of other courts on disputes emanating from investment agreement made under the jurisdiction of other nations. Qatar and the U.S. have no

clearly stipulated in contracts. Effective Qatari laws - Civil and Sharia (Islamic law) - have provided sufficient means for enforcing property and contractual laws. However, this can be a long and bureaucratic process.

A15. Political Violence:

Located in the heart of the Gulf region, Qatar has been politically stable. A strict internal security system has ensured, despite a wide diversity of expatriate residents, a low crime rate. Expatriate communities are screened before taking up work and residence in Qatar. Follow-up on law violations is strict. Deportation is a common practice here for persons who cause or may cause disturbances of any kind.

There are no political parties, labor unions or trade associations. There is no known organized domestic political opposition. These facts combine to limit the possibility of dissent. In Qatar, family and tribal ties are strong. On almost all national occasions, heads and leading members of all tribes renew their loyalty to the Head of State, other leading members of the ruling family and to the Government. It should be noted that the bloodless coup that installed Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani enjoyed broad support within the Al-Thani family and entailed almost no disruption to key domestic or foreign policies.

The recent elections for the current board of directors of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Qatar Central Municipal Council (with both men and women participating in the latter) are the genesis of an ambitious democratization process in the near future. In accordance with the Emir's earlier promise of an elected Advisory Council (Parliament), a committee was formed in mid-July to draw up a comprehensive and permanent Constitution within three years.

The U.S. government considers the potential for terrorist acts in the Gulf region, Qatar included, as medium. No specific threats are currently known of in Qatar. Potential investors and U.S. residents are encouraged to stay in close contact with the Embassy for up-to-date threat and stability information.

A16. Bilateral Investment Agreements: None.

A17. OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs:

None. Due to concerns about labor practices in Qatar, OPIC suspended its operations in Qatar in 1995.

A18. Capital Outflow Policy:

No restrictions.

A19. Major Foreign Investors:

The following is a list of foreign equity participation investors, U.S. firms included, in some major State-owned industrial/petroleum related industries:

Qatar Steel Company (QASCO): Equity share capital: QR 200 million (USD 55 million). Shareholders: Government of Qatar 70 percent, Kobe Steel (Japan) 20 percent, Tokyo Boeki (Japan) 20 percent. Year established: 1974. Commencement of commercial production: 1978. Current value of foreign equity: Not available. In June 1997, Government of Qatar bought the Japanese share of QASCO, making it a wholly State-owned corporation. The selling/purchasing agreement was reached amicably by the two parties.

Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO): Equity share capital: QR 360 million (USD 99 million). Shareholders: Government of Qatar 80 percent, Cdf Chimie Atochem (France) 10 percent, and Enichem (Italy) 10 percent. Year established: 1975. Commencement of commercial production: 1981. Current value of foreign equity: Not available.

Qatar Fertilizer Company (QAFCO): Equity share capital: QR 100 million (USD 27.5 million). Shareholders: Government of Qatar 70 percent, Norsk Hydro (Norway) 25 percent, Davy McKee Ltd. (U.K.) 3 percent, Hambros Bank Ltd. (U.K.), 2 percent. Year established: 1969. Commencement of commercial production: 1974. Current value of foreign equity: Not available.

Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas): Equity share capital: QR 500 million (USD 137 million). Shareholders are: QGPC 65 percent, CFP/Total (France) 10 percent, Marubeni Corporation (Japan) and Mitsui Company Ltd. (Japan) 7.5 percent each and Mobil Oil (USA) 10 percent. Year established: 1984. Qatargas objectives: Produce and export up to 10 million metric tons per annum (mmtpa) per year of LNG from Qatar's North Gas field. Commencement of commercial production: December 1996. In May 1992, Qatargas signed a Sales and Purchase Agreement (SPA) with the Japanese firm Chubu Electric Power Company, for the sale of 4 mmtpa of LNG per year for a period of 25 years commencing 1997. Another SPA was reached at a later stage for the sale of an additional amount of 2 mmtpa to Japan.

Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (Rasgas): Equity share capital: QR 7.28 billion (USD 2 billion); QGPC 70 percent, U.S. firm Mobil Oil 30 percent; this company was established as per Emiri decree 48 for the year 1993 dated June 29, 1993. Objectives: To produce natural gas from the North Gas field for the production of an estimated amount of 10 mmtpa of LNG. End-users of LNG: Worldwide. Upstream and downstream operations are already in progress. Commencement of Commercial production: 1999.

The U.S. firm Phillips Corporation signed a heads of agreement with the State-owned Qatar General Petroleum Corporation in May 1997 for establishing a new petrochemical complex at Umm Said Industrial Area. The project value was estimated at USD 750 million. Further, during the Middle East North Africa Economic Conference (MENA) held in Doha mid-November 1997, an agreement was reached establishing a joint project owned by QGPC 51 percent and Phillips 49 percent. We understand that the project's initial cost has already risen to USD 1 billion, even prior to signing of an official Engineering Procurement Contracts (EPC) with leading international engineering firms. This project's EPC contract was offered recently through a letter of intent to a consortium of U.S./French firms.

A20. Contact Information for Investment-Related Inquiries:

A. Contacts in local banks as follows:

Central Bank of Qatar
H.E. Abdullah Bin Khalid Al-Attiyah, Governor
P.O. Box 1234, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)456-456
Fax: (974)415-587

Al-Ahli Bank of Qatar
Mr. Izzat Mohammed Al-Rashid, General Manager
P. O. Box 2309, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)326-611
Fax: (974)444-652

Arab Bank Ltd.
Mr. Ghassan Ahmed Bundakji, Senior Manager
P. O. Box 172, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)437-979
Fax: (974)410-774

Bank Saderat Iran
Mr. Mohammed Zamani, Manager
P. O. Box 2256, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)414-646
Fax: (974)430-121

Banque Paribas
Mr. Christian De La Touche, General Manager

P. O. Box 2636, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)433-844/7
Fax: (974)410-861

British Bank of the Middle East (now known as HSBC)
Mr. Chris Meares, Chief Executive Officer
P. O. Box 57, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)423-124/422-646
Fax: (974)416-353; 436-794 (CEO)

Commercial Bank of Qatar Ltd.
Mr. T. P. Nunan, General Manager
P. O. Box 3232, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)490-222
Fax: (974)443-807; 320-716 (Gm)

Doha Bank Ltd.
Mr. Mohammad Mustafa Jamjoum, General Manager
P. O. Box 3818, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)456-709; 456-710 (Gm)
Fax: (974)416-631; 310-416 (Gm)

Grindlays Bank Plc
Mr. John Fleming Murray, General Manager
P. O. Box 2001, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)473-700
Fax: (974)473-710

Mashreq Bank Psc
Mr. Assad Abdo Koshaiish, General Manager
P. O. Box 173, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)413-213/7
Fax: (974)413-880

Qatar Industrial Development Bank
Mr. Maqbool Habib Khalfan, General Manager
P. O. Box 22789, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)421-600
Fax: (974)350-433

Qatar International Islamic Bank
Mr. Abdulbasit Al-Sheibi, Acting General Manager
P. O. Box 664, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)332-600
Fax: (974)444-101

Qatar Islamic Bank
Mr. Marwan Awad, General Manager
P. O. Box 559, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)438-000/439-498
Fax: (974)412-700

Qatar National Bank
Mr. John Finigan, General Manager
P. O. Box 1002, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)407-407
Fax: (974)413-753

Standard Chartered Bank Plc
Mr. Nick Ellison, General Manager
P. O. Box 29, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)414-251
Fax: (974)413-730

United Bank Ltd.
Mr. Mohammed Abdul Raouf, General Manager
P. O. Box 242, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974)438-666
Fax: (974)424-600

B. Stock Exchange:

Doha Securities Market
Dr. Hussain Abdullah, Director
Dr. Ghanim Al-Hammadi, Manager of Brokers And Circulation Department
P.O. Box 22114
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 325-737
Fax: (974) 326-470

C. Economic Commercial Section:

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Contact: Ambassador Elizabeth Mckune
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Chapter VIII. Trade and Project Financing

The Banking and Financial System of Qatar:

The Qatar Central Bank (QCB) supervises all banks and money exchange companies in Qatar, with no exceptions by law or treaty. Established as Qatar Monetary Agency (QMA) in 1973, the QCB was inaugurated by Law No. 14 for the year 1993 to manage the functions previously handled by QMA. The objective of the Government of Qatar (GOQ) in setting up the QCB was to provide a larger scope of functions and authority than the former QMA and to make it independent of the then Ministry of Finance and Petroleum, which has witnessed major functional changes over the years and is now known as the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. In fact, QCB was created at a time when the economy of Qatar had reached some degree of maturity enabling the banking sector to reflect the country's macro-economic development with a considerable degree of sensitivity. Although no new foreign banks were established in Qatar over the past several years, the consolidated balance sheet of the commercial banks witnessed sizeable growth during this period, to reach Qatari Riyals (QR) 24.8 billion (USD 6.8 billion), QR 25.4 billion (USD 7.0 billion), QR 26.3 billion (USD 7.2 billion), QR 27.8 billion (USD 7.6 billion), QR 30.1 billion (USD 8.3 billion) and QR 38.7 billion (USD 10.6 billion) in the years 1992 through 1997 respectively.

In Qatar, there is no deposit insurance scheme whatsoever. However, when the Al-Mashreq Bank (Lebanese) collapsed in 1988, the GOQ took upon itself the responsibility to refund all depositors in a phased manner. Moreover, in 1989, when Iraq occupied Kuwait, the GOQ assured all banks of its support in case of sizeable outflow of deposits to foreign markets. The GOQ, in fact, makes it its concern to ensure that the banking sector continues to receive depositors' confidence despite the fact that no deposit insurance exists.

In addition to its normal responsibilities which include issuance/redemption of the country's currency, control of monetary policy and monitoring of the banking system, the QCB requires all banks to meet the standards of the Bank of International Settlement (BIS) (a council of worldwide Central Bank governors). Noticeably, most banks in Doha have maintained a comfortable capital adequacy ratio above the 8 percent level required by the BIS. This is a ratio between total equity plus reserves and total risk weighed assets, i.e., loans and investments of a bank not including loans to the GOQ.

The QCB also ensures that all banks operating in Qatar have their annual financial statements comply with international standards and that the auditing process be carried out by internally recognized auditors. In fact, the QCB requires that auditors be changed every three or four years.

In Qatar, the government is usually the end-user of the banking sector credit facilities. Banking sector credit facilities to the GOQ ranged from 41.7 percent of total credit operations in 1993 to 52 percent in 1996. The GOQ, in view of the current low income from exports of crude oil, is expected to continue to be the leading borrower in the local market. Other borrowers are: merchants: 25 to 30 percent, housing sector: 3 to 5 percent, industry: 1 to 1.5 percent and individuals: 14 to 16 percent. In August 1998, the Qatar Central Bank decreed that banks operating in Qatar are not allowed to provide loans more than 20 percent of their equity (capital plus reserves) to a single customer (the government excluded). The QCB also discourages local banks from financing stock market operations.

Also controlled by the QCB, the Qatari Riyal has been officially fixed to the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) since 1979 at the rate of QR 4,7619 each unit of SDR, with a margin of plus or minus 7.25 percent. However, the Qatari Riyal was actually fixed to the U.S. Dollar at USD 1.00 = QR 3.64, since June 1980, and has remained unchanged to date. As for foreign exchange and money transfer, Qatar has no restrictions. However, some restrictions exist in case of sudden transfer of relatively huge amounts, as well as in cases where money laundering calls for official intervention.

Total assets of all banks operating in Qatar was estimated at about QR 38.7 billion (USD 10.6 billion) at the end of 1997. Qatar's imports of various kinds of goods were estimated at about QR 13 billion (USD 3.6 billion) in 1997. Almost all import transactions are controlled by standard letters of credit (l/c's) processed by local banks and corresponding banks in the exporting countries. Almost all local merchants in Qatar make use of the overdraft facilities provided by banks to process their import operations. Most banks in Qatar provide short term credit facilities of up to 75 percent of l/c values.

The current interest rates charged by the banking system on general credit facilities are in line with interest rates prevailing in the international markets. In addition to the usual insurance, foreign firms

operating in Qatar are required to provide guarantees signed by their Qatari agents/sponsors to be able to have access to credit facilities from the local banks.

In the absence of Governmental finance programs for exports, banks in Qatar continue to be the main source of finance. In recent years, Qatar has witnessed the establishment of two Islamic banks. Based on profit sharing with customers, financing provided by Qatar Islamic Bank and Qatar International Islamic Bank covers products and projects in Qatar and other Islamic countries.

In the insurance field, there are 11 companies operating in Qatar, seven of which are foreign owned. Qatar Insurance Company has the lion's share of the market and manages the Government's insurance business. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) Agreement was approved in March 1989. However, because of concerns about labor practices, OPIC suspended its operations in 1995. Only one U.S. firm, involved in the Phase I development of the North Gas field project, bought the OPIC insurance for risk of convertibility and war. The U.S. Export-Import Bank participated in the finance package for the Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Company. Other U.S. firms are encouraged to bring their financing matters to the Exim Bank.

U.S. firms interested in seeking finance for products or projects in Qatar may also wish to check, through their local agents, with leading banks in Qatar, including Qatar National Bank, Commercial Bank of Qatar, Doha Bank, and Al-Ahli Bank.

The development of Qatar's North Gas Field looms over all projects in the country. Qatar's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) industry is, in fact, a product of Japanese financing programs. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas) and Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas (Rasgas) were recently awarded finance packages from various private Japanese banks and the Japan Development Bank worth well above USD 6 billion.

Tables 8.1 through 8.10 below show various aspects of banking operations of the Qatar Central Bank and commercial banks in Qatar, for the years 1994 through 1997 and January-September 1998.

Table 8.1: Financial Statement of the Qatar Central Bank, 1994 –1997 and January-September 1998					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	1998 (Jan-Sep)	1997	1996	1995	1994
Gold	58.6	57.0	151.4	151.4	151.4
Foreign government securities	2,414.0	1845.3	1,469.8	1,530.5	1,288.3
Balances with foreign banks	745.0	784.1	600.2	739.2	837.3
Balances with Local Banks	90.9	343.4	211.9	205.2	260.0
Interest Receivable	-	-	27.0	31.2	25.0
IMF Reserve Position	288.8	288.8	288.8	288.8	185.4
IMF Share A/C	-	-	157.0	162.3	-
SDR Dept. Deposit at IMF A/C	-	-	117.9	114.8	-
Unclassified assets	381.9	767.0	614.5	488.4	71.4

Table 8.2: Major Indicators for Banking Sector						
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals, unless otherwise indicated)						
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980						
Particulars	1997	1998			Change	
	September	July	August	September	Value	%
The Banking System:						
Money Supply (M1)	3,970.5	4,532.7	4,236.5	4,274.2	303.7	7.6
Quasi Money (M2-M1)	16,978.8	18,561.4	18,531.4	18,819.7	1,840.9	10.8
Money Supply (M2)	20,949.3	23,094.1	22,767.9	23,093.9	2,144.6	10.2
Foreign Assets (net)	7,032.8	3,295.7	2,786.9	2,453.6	-4,579.2	-65.1
Domestic Credit (net)	20,142.6	24,431.1	24,705.5	25,475.7	5,333.1	26.5
Domestic Assets (net)	13,916.5	19,798.4	19,981.0	20,640.3	6,723.8	48.3
Qatar Central Bank:						
Money in Circulation	1,610.9	1,760.3	1,675.4	1,680.7	69.8	4.3
Foreign Assets	2,977.8	3,265.4	3,181.1	3,217.6	239.8	8.1
Ownership Rights	709.2	1,062.5	1,062.5	1,062.5	353.3	49.8
Commercial Banks:						
Total Deposits	23,437.1	24,886.9	24,744.0	24,723.6	1,286.5	5.5
Private Sector Deposits	19,557.4	21,567.5	21,318.9	21,638.4	2,081.0	10.6
Private Deposits in Foreign Currencies	5,293.8	5,660.7	5,702.1	6,050.7	756.9	14.3
Total Domestic Credit	24,023.1	27,751.3	28,131.4	28,561.7	4,538.6	18.9
Private Sector Credit	11,889.4	13,096.0	13,669.7	14,239.0	2,349.6	19.8
Foreign Assets (net)	4,058.5	33.5	-391.2	-760.9	-4,819.4	-118.7
Own Resources	6,721.3	7,251.7	7,242.1	7,245.3	524.0	7.8
Ownership Rights	4,233.2	4,736.7	4,736.6	4,760.0	526.8	12.4

Table 8.3: Commercial Bank Liabilities					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	1998 (Jan-Sep)	1997	1996	1995	1994
Foreign Currency Liabilities:					
Deposits	7,480.6	8,538.0	7,565.8	6,859.3	6,127.4
Bank Deposits	5,851.8	4,047.8	3,347.9	138.9	132.7
Interbank Borrowings	1,149.7	724.0	561.7	6,406.8	5,008.3
Liabilities in QR:					
Deposits	17,242.9	16,103.9	14,482.5	13,026.1	12,844.5
Bank Deposits	226.6	371.1	204.2	64.1	53.5
Due to QCB	59.2	139.7	60.1	69.0	72.8
Interbank Borrowings	11.5	7.8	42.1	212.8	67.1
Margins	129.6	104.1	80.0	86.7	72.4
Capital Accounts	4,736.7	4,254.5	3,783.9	3,536.4	3,236.3
Provisions	2,439.5	2,496.0	2,442.6	2,423.3	2,226.8
Other Liabilities	1,949.2	1,672.3	1,314.7	1,425.5	1,481.3
Total Liabilities	41,277.3	38,459.2	33,885.5	34,248.9	31,323.1

Table 8.4: Commercial Bank Assets					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
	January- September 1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
Reserves:					
Cash in QR	225.0	199.7	164.3	154.4	145.4
Due from QCB	732.3	718.9	687.8	584.9	534.4
Assets in Foreign Currencies:					
Cash in QR	16.5	14.3	9.8	8.3	6.6
Balances with Banks in Qatar	486.9	206.8	216.4	153.3	133.3
Balance with Banks Abroad	1,727.5	4,460.8	4,245.7	6,253.1	5,068.1
Balances with Head Office or Branches Abroad	1,896.3	2,841.7	1,890.1	2,653.8	1,768.1
Investments Abroad	303.4	324.9	273.5	358.9	361.5
Assets in QR:					
Balances with Banks Abroad	1.6	4.1	1.5	7.3	2.9
Balances with Head Office or Branches Abroad	90.2	24.8	40.6	63.5	73.7
Balances with Banks in Qatar	223.3	246.7	131.5	226.4	76.7
Overdrafts	12,572.7	9,500.6	8,835.9	7,819.2	7,002.6
Bills Discounted	236.6	280.1	279.2	405.8	472.2
Loans & Advances	16,986.9	15,431.7	13,576.4	12,838.3	13,188.5
Domestic Investments	3,882.6	2,392.3	1,583.8	1,531.1	1,515.9
Fixed Assets	260.6	252.7	208.1	228.9	250.7
Other Assets	1,634.9	1,559.1	902.7	961.6	721.9
Total Assets	41,277.3	38,459.2	33,885.5	34,248.9	31,323.1*

Note: The totals marked with * in the Total Assets entries above, as given in the official statistics, are different from those calculated by this Commercial Section.

Table 8.5: Uses of Funds By Commercial Banks (1993-1997)					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals, unless otherwise indicated)					
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993
Total Assets	38,459.2	33,885.5	34,248.9	31,323.1	30,399.4
Domestic Credit	25,212.4	21,268.5	21,063.3	20,663.3	18,724.4
Foreign Assets	9,707.6	10,522.6	11,021.2	8,792.2	9,805.2
Cash & Balance with QCB	918.6	852.1	747.7	686.4	830.4
Balance with Qatari Banks	246.7	131.5	226.4	241.7	212.1
Fixed Assets	252.7	208.1	228.9	250.7	224.9
Other Assets	2,121.2	902.7	961.4	688.8	602.4
Credit to Total Assets (%)		70.5	68.8	69.6	73.7
Foreign Assets to Total Assets (%)		16.5	17.3	17.5	12.8
Cash Assets to Total Assets (%)		2.8	2.7	2.6	3.3
Total Deposits	25,013	22,048.3	19,885.4	18,971.9	18,870.6
Cash Assets To Total Deposits (%)	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.6	4.4

Table 8.6: Distribution of Domestic Credit Facilities of Commercial Banks By Economic Purposes (1993-1997 and Jan-Sep 1998)					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	1998 (Jan-Sep)	1997	1996	1995	1994
Public Sector	14,655.3	11,409.3	11,062.0	8,925.9	8,806.6
Merchandise	4,296.0	4,407.6	4,146.5	4,292.5	4,388.7
Industry	459.2	378.4	300.5	310.2	205.3
Agriculture	14.8	16.7	14.3	30.4	90.9
Housing & Construction	841.7	315.1	665.2	549.6	324.6
Land	237.3	154.3	108.7	119.7	122.2
Transportation	359.7	270.8	259.9	265.3	282.6
Personal	6,592.2	5,806.2	3,336.8	3,814.4	334.9
Professionals	75.2	79.2	94.7	107.6	93.8
Others	1,030.3	1,059.3	1,279.7	731.5	656.5
Total	29,796.2	25,212.4	23,529.7	21,063.3	20,663.3

Table 8.7: Distribution of Domestic Credit Facilities of Commercial Banks By Economic Purposes (1993-1997 and January-September 1998)					
(Percentage)					
Particulars	1998 (Jan-Sep)	1997	1996	1995	1994
Public Sector	49.2	45.3	47.0	42.4	42.6
Merchandise	14.4	17.5	17.6	20.4	21.2
Industry	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.0
Agriculture	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4
Housing & Construction	2.8	1.2	2.8	2.6	1.6
Land	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6
Transportation	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.4
Personal	22.1	23.0	14.2	18.1	1.6
Professionals	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5
Others	3.5	4.2	5.4	3.5	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 8.8: Deposits of Commercial Banks and Ratio of Bank Credit To Deposits (1993-1997)						
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals, unless otherwise indicated)						
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980						
Particulars	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992
Total Deposits	25737.0	22610.0	20098.2	19039.0	18976.8	18740.8
Bank Deposits & Borrowings	724.0	561.7	212.8	67.1	106.2	115.5
Foreign Currency Deposits	8538.0	7565.8	6859.3	6127.4	6561.9	6589.9
Local Currency Deposits	16475.0	14482.5	13026.1	12844.5	12308.7	12035.4
Domestic Credit	25212.4	21268.5	21063.3	20663.3	18724.4	18112.9
Credit to Total Deposits (%)	98.0	94.1	104.8	108.5	98.7	96.6
Credit to Qatari Riyal Deposits (%)	153.0	146.9	161.7	160.9	152.1	150.5

Table 8.9: Total Assets, Deposits, Loans and Advances, Shareholders' Equity and Profit of All Banks In Qatar, As On December 31, 1997 (latest available data)					
(All values in thousands of Qatari Riyals)					
USD 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Bank	Total Assets	Deposits	Loans and Advances	Share Equity	Profit
Qatar National Bank	18,297,734	9,507,048	12,814,613	2,899,359	378,958
Doha Bank Limited	4,122,100	3,451,111	2,739,791	336,827	49,580
Commercial Bank of Qatar	3,631,265	2,595,411	1,869,643	429,100	67,174
Qatar Islamic Bank	3,375,673	2,792,591	2,583,333	225,498	32,068
Al Ahli Bank of Qatar	2,226,585	1,703,470	1,289,766	192,982	31,714
The British Bank of the Middle East (now known as HSBC)	1,490,448	1,279,827	976,349	127,101	33,082
Qatar International Islamic Bank	1,311,934	1,095,195	1,098,554	103,434	16,255
Arab Bank PLC	1,210,642	1,047,147	697,456	55,847	12,264
Banque Paribas	896,936	434,345	463,217	67,519	10,674
ANZ Grindlays Bank	816,333	672,911	298,929	75,424	22,001
Standard Chartered Bank	556,725	380,286	275,711	42,475	6,261
Mashreq Bank PSC (formerly Bank of Oman)	369,850	291,885	271,642	57,381	13,929
United Bank Limited	256,263	224,980	65,180	25,595	2,019
Bank Saderat Iran	140,106	85,562	34,748	21,094	4,884
Total	38,702,594	25,561,769	25,478,932	4,659,636	680,863

Table 8.10: Total Assets, Deposits, Loans and Advances, Shareholders' Equity and Profit of All Banks In Qatar, As On December 31, 1997 (latest available data)			
(Percentage)			
Bank	Total Assets	Deposits	Loans and Advances
Qatar National Bank	47.28	37.19	50.29
Doha Bank Limited	10.65	13.50	10.75
Commercial Bank of Qatar	9.38	10.15	7.34
Qatar Islamic Bank	8.72	10.92	10.14
Al Ahli Bank of Qatar	5.75	6.66	5.06
The British Bank of the Middle East	3.85	5.01	3.83
Qatar International Islamic Bank	3.39	4.28	4.31
Arab Bank PLC	3.13	4.10	2.74
Banque Paribas	2.32	1.70	1.82
ANZ Grindlays Bank	2.11	2.63	1.17
Standard Chartered Bank	1.44	1.49	1.08
Mashreq Bank PSC (formerly Bank of Oman)	0.96	1.14	1.07
United Bank Limited	0.66	0.88	0.26
Bank Saderat Iran	0.36	0.33	0.14
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Described in Table 8.11 (following table) is the basic structure of Qatar's banking and financial system. It is comprised of the banking and non-banking financial firms operating in Qatar, both local and foreign. The year of establishment and the number of branches for each firm is also included below.

Table 8.11: The Banking and Financial System of Qatar			
	Bank/Company	Year Est.	Head Office and Branches
A.	Banking System		
A.1	The Central Bank of Qatar (Formerly Qatar Monetary Agency)	1973	
A.2	Commercial Banks:		
A.2.1	National:		
	Al-Ahli Bank of Qatar	1984	3
	Doha Bank Ltd.	1979	9
	Qatar Industrial Development Bank	1996	1
	Qatar International Islamic Bank	1990	4
	Qatar Islamic Bank	1983	7
	Qatar National Bank	1965	18
	The Commercial Bank of Qatar	1976	7
A.2.2	Arab:		
	Mashreq Bank Psc (Formerly Bank of Oman)	1971	1
	The Arab Bank Ltd.	1958	2
A.2.3	Foreign:		
	Anz Grindlays Bank Ltd.	1956	1
	Bank Saderat Iran	1970	1
	Banque Paribas	1973	1
	Standard Chartered Bank	1950	1
	The British Bank of the Middle East (Now HSBC)	1954	3
	United Bank	1970	1
A.3	Money Exchange Companies:		
	Al-Fardan Exchange and Finance Co.	1970	
	Al-Mana Exchange	1979	
	Al-Shaibi Finance and Exchange Co.	1979	
	City Exchange	1978	
	Eastern Exchange and Finance Organization	1979	
	Group Investment and Financial Est.		
	Gulf Finance and Exchange Co.	1977	
	Habib Qatar Int'l Finance and Investment Ltd.	1978	
	Mohamed Haji Nazar Money Exchange	1969	
	Trust Exchange Co.	1976	
B.	Non-Banking System		
	Insurance Companies:		
B.1	National:		
	Al-Khaleej Insurance Co.	1978	
	Qatar Insurance Co.	1964	
	Qatar General Insurance and Re-Insurance Co.	1978	
	Qatar Islamic Insurance Co	1992	
B.2	Foreign:		
	American Life Insurance Co		
	Arab Commercial Enterprises (Libano-Suisse)	1966	
	Arab Commercial Enterprises (Lloyds Agents)	1966	
	Arabia Insurance Co.	1966	
	Atlas Assurance Co.	1966	
	National Insurance Co. of Egypt	1969	
	Overseas Financial Services International		



Chapter IX. Business Travel

Travel to Qatar is no longer restricted to business purposes – winter tourism has become an attraction in recent years. Arabic is the official language of Qatar, but English is widely spoken and is generally acceptable in private and public sectors. U.S. business representatives will find it very useful to bring promotional material and brochures in English and/or Arabic when traveling to Qatar.

Entry Visa Requirements:

All travelers to Qatar should have passports valid for the next six months at least, and should hold valid entry visas. Qatari visas may be obtained through the Qatari Embassy in Washington, DC, the Qatari Consulate in Houston, Texas, and the Qatari Mission to the United Nations in New York. Four passport-sized photographs, a visa application and a letter from the sponsor in Qatar should be submitted for this purpose. However, a sponsorship letter is not always a basic requirement. This procedure will usually take four working days or more. The U.S. and the Qatari Governments have a reciprocal arrangement by which Qatar issues U.S. businessmen a multiple-entry visa for 10 years. U.S. businessmen are advised to obtain this visa prior to traveling to Qatar from the Qatari Embassy in Washington, or one of the other two Government of Qatar offices stated above. Moreover, the Qatari embassies in other countries are also authorized to provide this service. This type of entry visa does not entitle visitors and/or businessmen to work in Qatar, unless it is exchanged for a residence permit.

During the last few years, the Government of Qatar has eased restrictions on entry visas issued upon arrival at Doha International Airport. This procedure enables business representatives to have a seven-day visa if the local sponsor submits a special request to the Immigration Department three days ahead of the visitor's arrival at the airport. While no photographs are required, visitors should provide the local sponsor/agent, well in advance of the proposed visit, with passport details, religion, date/time of arrival, as well as name and flight number of the carrier airline. If approved, the entry visa is issued upon arrival against a fee of USD 30.00. This fee may be waived if the visitor is sponsored by an official Government department.

Work Week:

The Government of Qatar's official working hours are 7:00 AM to 12:30 PM, Saturday through Thursday. Banking hours are 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM, while private sector hours are generally 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM and 3:00 PM to 6:30 PM, Saturday through Thursday. Friday is a day of rest for all sectors, including all embassies. The U.S. Embassy hours are 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM, Saturday through Wednesday.

Holidays:

Officially, Qatar uses the Gregorian calendar year for all purposes. The Hijra (Islamic) calendar is also widely used. Religious holidays vary from year to year. Eid Al-Fitr (four days) marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan and Eid Al-Adha marks the conclusion of the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca. The only fixed holiday is: Independence Day - September 3.

The months from October through April are generally considered the best period for foreign business representatives to visit Qatar. The summer months are very hot and humid. Decision makers in both public and private sectors can be expected to be absent from the country during some part of the period June to September.

The U.S. Embassy closes for all Qatari and American Holidays.

Transportation:

Road Transportation: Qatar has developed a good highway system which connects all the main points of the peninsula. Qatar's only foreign road connection is with Saudi Arabia. There are over 1000 miles of roads, most of which are hard-surfaced. Qatar is now connected with Europe via the Trans-Arabia Highway in Saudi Arabia and with the United Arab Emirates and Oman via a hard surfaced route, also through Saudi Arabia. A very large portion of Qatar's imports are now brought in overland by trucks with increasing amounts coming from container facilities at the ports of Dubai and Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.).

Port Facilities: Qatar is currently serviced by two ports capable of handling cargo. General cargo usually enters through the eleven berths at the Doha port. Having already completed dredging operations to widen and deepen the port's main channel, the Government is constructing a new container service facility at the Doha port. Dredging operations to establish an adjacent smaller port facility for Qatar Flour Mill Company to handle wheat imports to the country have been completed already.

Bulk shipments are handled at the nine-berth Umm Said port, 30 miles south of Doha. General cargo is usually unloaded at Umm Said and brought by barge or trucks to Doha by the Qatar National Navigation and Transportation Company.

The Ras Laffan port facility (USD 1 billion), about 50 miles north of Doha on Qatar's East coast is meant for exporting Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to world markets. Actual shipments of LNG from this port started from December 1996. The port also is used for exports of sulfur and gas condensates, and has the ability to receive general cargo for use in LNG development projects.

Air Transport: In addition to the recently established Qatar Airways, Gulf Air is the country's national carrier. Doha International Airport is served by 20 international passenger airlines, including Gulf Air. The only one of its kind in Qatar, the airport is capable of handling large amounts of air freight.

To cope with the increasing passenger and freight traffic (25 percent increase in 1995/96) the Government plans to construct a new large airport facility on the area adjacent to the premises of the present one. The construction contract (USD 120 million), is due to be awarded by the end of 1998.

Laptop Computers and Software: Allowed entry for personal use.

Exhibition Materials: Allowed entry. If sold during or shortly after the exhibition, such materials are generally subject to 4 percent customs duty.

Communications:

Qatar enjoys excellent local and international telecommunications facilities. A second earth satellite station was completed in 1988 and mobile telephone services (using the GSM system) were inaugurated in February 1994. Automatic telephone and fax dialing is available to more than 150 countries worldwide. The cost of international phone calls and fax from Doha to the United States are 25 percent higher than prevailing rates in the United States. Internal calls, however, are free of charge if conducted through regular telephones. There are charges for all calls made through mobile phones.

Housing:

Doha is the capital of the State of Qatar. It is simultaneously the country's commercial, marketing and banking center. More than 80 percent of Qatar's population lives in Doha and its suburbs. To meet the growing demand for houses, the Government and the private sector have resorted to establishing housing complexes of various traditional and western designs.

It has been a common practice in Qatar for employers in both the Government and the private sector to provide furnished accommodation for their expatriate employees. Alternatively, some employers provide housing allowances.

Contrary to the 1970s and the early 1980s when a small apartment fetched a rent of USD 5000 a month, houses are now available at about half or less of this rate. This depends, of course, upon locality, type of house and facilities. At the most recent housing complexes, three-bedroom villas are available at a monthly rent of USD 2200, and four-bedroom villas at USD 2,700. Qatari landlords usually require a one year lease with advance payment of six months' rent, although exceptions exist. However, such arrangements, as well as the above rates, do not apply to larger single villas and palaces built for the use of higher management, bankers and leading businessmen. Electricity, water and gardens represent additional costs. In recent years, the lease contract in some cases has included a provision for the Qatari landlord to meet the cost of basic maintenance. House rents have witnessed a sharp increase (30 percent) in 1996-98, due to strong demand from foreign oil/gas companies. In general, housing cost/rent in Qatar may be about 50 percent above U.S. levels.

Health:

All residents of Qatar have enjoyed free State-provided medical care ranging from outpatient clinics to hospitalization. However, due to declining oil production and revenues in the late 1980's and early 1990's, the Government has instituted an austerity program in recent years. According to recently issued regulations, expatriates have to pay fees for certain medical reports and for birth registration. While medicines are mostly dispersed free of charge for Qatari patients, the expatriate communities have to pay a nominal charge for all medicines.

A visitor to Qatar holding no residence permit has to pay for all medical services required throughout his/her visit to the country. Recently, a new form of payment has evolved: prior to undergoing surgery, a resident expatriate patient is required to donate blood. Import of all blood groups to Qatar has been suspended after discovery of some infected shipments of blood.

Apart from a few private clinics, medical care is provided by the State through the Ministry of Public Health. The nation's hospital needs were largely met in 1982, when the 660-bed Hamad General Hospital was inaugurated. Operating under Hamad General Hospital is the 300-bed Maternity Hospital, the only one of its kind in this country. The Government owns and operates two other hospitals. One, the Rumaillah Hospital, is meant to handle geriatric and disability cases and the other provides basic treatment for psychological diseases.

In recent years, Qatar has eased restrictions on private medical institutions. In addition to the State-owned and State-operated 20 health care centers, the Government has licensed about 20 private clinics including some advanced dental centers.

Future plans include charging all expatriates in Qatar for all medical services. A private children's hospital is already licensed and more private clinics are under consideration. In addition, visiting medical and surgical consultants from various countries provide treatment on difficult cases to supplement local medical services. It should be noted that health insurance is not a common practice in Qatar.

Food:

Makbous (rice with roast sheep) is the most common food in the Gulf area. Qatar is no exception. Mutton figures prominently in the fare of most Qataris. Fish is also widely available and popular. Dishes prepared with grouper ("hammour") and sea bass are common. Chicken and beef are given second and third on their list of meats.

In recent years, Qataris have been giving up their age-old tradition of hosting ceremonial dinners at home. Instead, they have started hosting large, elaborate parties at one of the four five-star hotels in Doha which have international standards.

A wide variety of foodstuffs is imported to the country throughout the year in order to cater to the tastes of the large expatriate community drawn from several different countries. Several supermarkets in Doha have a wide range of foodstuffs readily available at all times. In general, foodstuffs and other basic commodities are 50 percent above prevailing prices in the U.S.

U.S. business representatives visiting Qatar should not turn down an invitation to lunch or dinner at home, extended by their trade partners. Reciprocity is expected when the host visits the United States.

Alcoholic drinks are served only to visitors residing at the major hotels. Only holders of a special permit from the British Embassy may serve alcoholic drinks at home. In accordance with Islamic laws and regulations, pork and pork derivatives are not allowed to be brought into the country.

U.S. business travelers are encouraged to obtain a copy of the “Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts: Guide for Business Representatives” available for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402; Phone: (202) 512-1800; Fax: (202) 512-2250. Business travelers to Qatar seeking appointments with U.S. Embassy Doha officials should contact the Commercial Section in advance. The Commercial Section can be reached by telephone at (974) 884-101 or (974) 884-165, or by fax at (974) 884-298 or (974) 884-163, or e-mail at: bfif97@qatar.net.qa



Chapter X. Economic and Trade Statistics

Appendix A: Country Data:

Population: 522,000 (1997 census).

Population Growth Rate: 3.8 percent per year.

Religion(s): Mainly Islam. Minority Christian, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist expatriate communities.

Government System: Monarchy.

Language(s): Mainly Arabic. English widely spoken.

Work Week: Saturday-Thursday.

Appendix B: Domestic Economy:

GDP: USD 9.2 billion (1997); USD 9.3 billion (1998, estimated); USD 9.4 billion (1999, estimated)

GDP Growth Rate: 1.5 percent (1996-97), 1.1 percent (1997-98, estimated), 0.5 percent (1998-99, estimated).

GDP per capita: USD 17,562 (1997); USD 17,875 (1998, estimated); USD 17,964 (1999, estimated)

Government spending as a percent of GDP: 40.4 percent (1996-97), 44.4 percent (1997-98, estimated), 48.9 percent (1998-99, estimated).

Inflation (Consumer Price Index, base year 1988 = 100): 2.8 percent (1997); 5.00 (1998, estimated); 7.00 (1999, estimated)

Unemployment: Not applicable.

Foreign Exchange Reserves: Foreign currency: USD 677 million, gold reserves: USD 41.5 million.

Exchange rate for USD 1.00= QR 3.64 (as set by the Government of Qatar in 1980 and unchanged since then).

Foreign Debt: Not officially available. Estimated at USD 11 billion.

Debt Service Ratio (Ratio of principal and interest on foreign debt to foreign income): Not available.

U.S. Economic Military/economic assistance: Not applicable.

Appendix C: Trade:

Qatar's Imports:

From all countries: USD 3,322 million (1997); USD 3,348 million (1998); USD 2,678 million (1999, estimated).

From USA: USD 470 million (1997); USD 475 million (1998); USD 380 million (estimated).

Qatar's Exports:

To all countries: USD 3,791 million (1997); USD 3,500 million (1998, estimated); USD 3,231 million (1999, estimated).

To USA: USD 62 million (1997); USD 57 million (1998, estimated); USD 53 million (1998, estimated).

Appendix D: Investment Statistics:

U.S. investment is currently estimated at around USD 6 billion. Other information not available. For further information, please see Chapter VII: Investment Climate, of this report.



Chapter XI. U.S. and Country Contacts

Appendix E: U.S. and Country Contacts:

Note: The country code for Qatar is 974 for all telephone and fax numbers. There are no area codes within Qatar.

U.S. Embassy trade related contacts:

Embassy of the United States of America

Ambassador: Elizabeth McKune
Deputy Chief of Mission: Matthew Tueller
Economic Commercial Officer: Darrin Hink
Economic Commercial Advisor: Jiryis H. Khoury
Commercial Clerk: Sima Carri
P.O. Box 2399
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (Comm): (974) 884-165 or (Embassy): (974) 884-101
Fax: (Comm): (974) 884-163 or (Embassy): (974) 884-298
E-mail: bfif97@qatar.net.qa

Agricultural Trade Office

Ron Verdonk, Regional Director
P.O. Box 9343
Dubai, U.A.E.
Phone: (971-4) 314-063
Fax: (971-4) 314-998
E-mail: atodubai@emirates.net.ae
(Covers: Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and U.A.E.)

Amcham and/or Bilateral Business Councils:

U.S. Qatar Business Council

Gordon S. Brown, President
5335 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 440
Washington, DC 20015-2034
U.S.A.
Phone: (202) 895-1712
Fax: (202) 244-8257
E-mail: qatarbiz@erols.com

National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce

1100 New York Ave., N.W., East Tower, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
U.S.A.
Phone: (202) 289-5920
Fax: (202) 289-5938
Internet: <http://www.nusacc.org>
Affiliate Office:
U.S. Arab Chamber of Commerce (Pacific), Inc.
P.O. Box 422218
San Francisco, CA 94141-2218
U.S.A.
Phone: (415) 398-9200
Fax: (415) 398-7111

American Business Council

c/o Mr. Dan Siekkinen, President
P.O. Box 8388, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 436-600
Fax: (974) 436-061

Country Trade or Industry Associations in Key Sectors:

Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry:

H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Mohammed Al-Thani, President
Mr. Saleh Mubarak Al-Khuleifi, Vice President
P.O. Box 402, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 621-491
Fax: (974) 621-131

Management:

Dr. Majid Al-Malki, Director-General
Mr. Nasser Al-Fayhanni, Office Director
Mr. Nasser Al-Dulaimi, Public Relations Manager [Phone: (974) 423-677]

Country Government Offices Relating to Key Sectors and/or Significant Trade Related Activities:

Office of H.H. the Emir:

H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar
H.E. Abdullah Al-Attiyah, Head of the Emiri Diwan and Office Director
H.H. Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Heir Apparent
P.O. Box 923, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 423-939; (974) 416-664; (974) 462-262
Fax: (974) 437-660

Economic Studies Department:

Dr. Nasser Abdulghani
Mr. Bashir Yousef Al-Kahlout, Economic Researcher
Phone: (974) 462-320
Phone: (974) 412-942; (974) 416-964; (974) 427-370

Legal Affairs Department:

Mr. Adel Ahmed Al-Sharbini, Legal Advisor
Phone: (974) 462-328; (974) 412-849
Fax: (974) 462-172

Emiri Protocol Department:

Sheikh Mohammed bin Fahd bin Mohammed Al-Thani, Director
Mr. Ibrahim Ahmed Al-Malki, Assistant Director
Mr. Abdul Aziz Mohammed Khaled Al-Rabban, Assistant Director
Phone: (974) 422-322; (974) 415-299; (974) 361-639
Fax: (974) 437-660

Ministry of Electricity and Water:

Office of the Minister:
H.E. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Minister
Mr. Mohammed Al-Muttawa, Office Director
Phone: (974) 410-613; (974) 423-251
Fax: (974) 440-048
P.O. Box 41, Doha, State of Qatar

Programs and Projects Department:

Mr. Jassim Al-Kuwari, Director
Phone: (974) 443-222; (974) 432-237

Consumer Affairs Department:
Phone: (974) 326-622; (974) 351-182
Fax: (974) 326-748
Mr. Mohammed Yousuf Al-Kawari, Director

Electricity Networks Department:
Mr. Mohammed Al-Khouri, Director
Phone: (974) 326-622; (974) 419-825
Fax: (974) 326-075

Water Networks Department:
Mr. Ali Al-Muhannadi, Director
Phone: (974) 494-444; (974) 494-265
Fax: (974) 327-230

Ministry of Energy and Industry:

Office of the Minister:
H.E. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Minister
Mr. Hassan bin Ali Al-Saad, Office Director
Mr. Sabri Kazim, Technical Advisor [Phone: (974) 491-381, Fax: (974) 836-994]
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 491-491; (974) 491-444
Fax: (974) 836-999

Department of Industrial Affairs:
Mr. Saleh Ali Al-Mannai, Director
P.O. Box 2599, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 832-121/2/3/4
Fax: (974) 832-024

Qatar General Petroleum Corporation:

Chairman and Managing Director: The Minister of Energy and Industry (above)
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 491-491
Fax: (974) 836-999

Public Relations Department:
Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Malki, Director
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 491-391
Fax: (974) 831-484

Marketing Department:
Mr. Jassim Naame, Director, Crude Oil/Natural Gas
Sheikh Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Thani, Manager, Refined Products
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 491-348

Exploration and Development of New Ventures Department:
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 491-288; (974) 833-091
Fax: (974) 831-850
Mr. Nasser K. Jaidah, Director
Mr. Rashid Ahmed Al-Sulaiti, Manager, Exploration and Joint Ventures [Phone: (974) 831-286]
Mr. Ismail Nasralla, Manager, Downstream Joint Ventures [Phone: (974) 491-448]

Corporate Planning Department:
Mr. Issa Al-Ghanim, Director
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 491-390
Fax: (974) 831-257

Operations Department:

Mr. Saied Al-Mohannadi, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 402-400
Fax: (974) 402-900

Legal Affairs and Contracts Department:

Mr. Mohammed Nasser Al-Fuhaid, Acting Director
Dr. Hassan Omar, Advisor
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 308-266
Fax: (974) 478-175

Information and Computer Services Department:

Mr. Abdullah Talib, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 402-240
Fax: (974) 413-629

Production Department:

A. Offshore Production:

Mr. Eid Al-Mohannadi, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 402-655
Fax: (974) 402-752

B. Onshore Production:

Mr. Ali Salem Al-Marri, Director
P.O. Box 71, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 716-339
Fax: (974) 711-790

Materials Department:

Mr. Ghanim Al-Kubaisi, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 332-222
Fax: (974) 422-498

Technical Department:

Dr. Mohammed Al-Saada, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 402-697
Fax: (974) 402-897

Umm Said Operation Department:

Mr. Ahmed Al-Najjar, Director
P.O. Box 50070, Umm Said, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 774-300
Fax: (974) 770-433

Gas Processing and Distribution Department:

Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Sowaidi, Director
P.O. Box 50070, Umm Said, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 774-237
Fax: (974) 770-420

Ministry of Communications and Transport:

Minister's Office:

H.E. Sheikh Ahmed bin Nasser Al-Thani, Minister
Mr. Tariq Al-Sulaiti, Office Director
P.O. Box 22228, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 835-353; (974) 835-522
Fax: (974) 885-101

Office of the Undersecretary:
Mr. Salem Butti Al-Noaimy, Undersecretary
Phone: (974) 835-500
Fax: (974) 835-888

Department of Post:
Mr. Abdulrahman Jaber Al-Muftah, Director
P.O. Box 713, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 835-555
Fax: (974) 837-777

Department of Ports:
Mr. Ghulam Abdullah Genkeer, Director
Phone: (974) 414-763
Fax: (974) 413-563

Department of Civil Aviation:
Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Noaimi, Director
P.O. Box 3000, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 426-262
Fax: (974) 429-070

Qatar Public Telecommunications Corporation (Q-Tel):

Ambassador Mohammed I. Al-Emadi, General Manager
P.O. Box 217, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 400-333
Fax: (974) 830-008

Public Relations Department:
Mr. Abdulwahid Fakhroo, Director
Phone: (974) 400-678
Fax: (974) 414-514

Commercial and Marketing Department:
Mr. Hamad Al-Attiyah, Director
Phone: (974) 400-456
Fax: (974) 426-000

Procurement Department:
Mr. Ibrahim Al-Obaidly, Director
Phone: (974) 400-363
Fax: (974) 440-111

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture:

P.O. Box 2727, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 336-336
Fax: (974) 414-868; (974) 437-630

Minister's Office:
H.E. Ali Al-Khater, Minister
Mr. Jaber Al-Shahwani, Office Director [Phone: (974) 413-580]

Mr. Mohammed Fahad Al-Faihani, Assistant Undersecretary for Agricultural Affairs [Phone: (974) 336-336]
Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Buainain, Assistant Undersecretary for Municipal Affairs [Phone: (974) 414-352]
Mr. Ahmed Al-Dosari, Assistant Undersecretary for Town Planning [Phone: (974) 336-336]
Mr. Issa Abdullah Al-Kubaisi, Assistant Undersecretary for Engineering Affairs [Phone: (974) 336-336]

Civil Engineering Department:

Sheikh Ali bin Nasser Al-Thani, Director
Mr. Nasser Al-Nasr, Office Director
P.O. Box 22188, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 337-337
Fax: (974) 439-104

Building Engineering Department:

Mr. Abdulla BuHumid, Director
P.O. Box 22306, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 427-140
Fax: (974) 418-620; (974) 430-475

Mechanical Equipment Department:

Mr. Hassan Sultan Al-Kawari, Director
Mr. Atif Al-Batal [Phone: (974) 444-633; (974) 444-634]
P.O. Box 39, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 328-241
Fax: (974) 365-937

Environmental Affairs Department:

Mr. Khalid Al-Ghanim, Director
P.O. Box 7634, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 320-825
Fax: (974) 415-246

Agricultural Development Department:

Mr. Ahmed Jaber Sarour, Director
P.O. Box 1966
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 492-666
Fax: (974) 322-002

Dr. Majid R. Al-Kuwary, Asst. Director for Animal Health Affairs

P.O. Box 1966
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 653-083
Fax: (974) 663-163

Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce:

P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 461-444
Fax: (974) 413-617

Minister's Office:

H.E. Yousuf Kamal, Minister
Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Dashti, Office Director
Phone: (974) 413-366; (974) 414-914

Department of Economic Affairs:

Mr. Ali Al-Khalaf, Director
Mr. Saud Al-Jufairi, Assistant [Phone: (974) 413-566, Fax: (974) 413-682]
P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 416-234
Fax: (974) 415-731

Department of Commercial Affairs:

Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi, Director
Mr. Abdulrazzak Al-Kawari, Office Manager
P.O. Box 22355, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 432-103
Fax: (974) 431-412

Commercial Registration:

Mr. Mohammed Al-Saadi, Manager
Phone: (974) 430-772

Commercial Agencies:

Mr. Abdullah Sultan Al-Asiri, Manager
Phone: (974) 416-884

Trademarks:

Mr. Ahmed Al-Jufairi, Manager
Phone: (974) 434-281

Intellectual Property Rights Department:

P.O. Box 5147, Doha, State of Qatar
Mr. Abdullah Qayid, Director
Tel: (974) 434-323
Fax: (974) 431-412

Exhibitions Department:

Mr. Ali Ibrahim, Director
Mr. Yousuf Al-Zaini, Head of International Affairs
P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 834-450
Fax: (974) 834-480

Central Tenders Committee:

Mr. Khalifa Al-Hitmi, Director
P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 413-089

Standards, Measurements & Consumer Protection:

H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Saud Al-Thani, Director
P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 408-500
Fax: (974) 478-849

Customs Department:

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Jassim Bin Fahd Al-Thani, Director
Mr. Miqbil Al-Hitmi, Assistant Director
Mr. Hijji Al-Malki, Office Director
P.O. Box 81, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 414-333
Fax: (974) 414-959

Ministry of Public Health:

P.O. Box 42, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 440-146; (974) 414-777
Fax: (974) 429-786

Office of the Minister:

Dr. Hajar Ahmed Hajar [Also Chairman of Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC)]
Mr. Hitmi Mubarak Al-Hitmi, Office Manager
Phone: (974) 355-370
Fax: (974) 350-012

Dr. Khalifa Al-Jaber, Assistant Undersecretary/Technical

Phone: (974) 417-022
Fax: (974) 442-722

Pharmaceuticals and Medicines Control Department:

Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Hail, Director
Dr. Aisha Al-Malki, Drug Registration [Phone: (974) 493-187]
P.O. Box 1919, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 447-828

Fax: (974) 425-399

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC):

Hamad General Hospital (HGH):

H.E. Dr. Hajar A. Hajar, Chairman

Dr. Mohammed Al-Abbadi, Medical Director

P.O. Box 3050, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 392-222

Fax: (974) 443-099

Public Relations Department:

Mr. Salem Al-Mohannadi, Director

Phone: (974) 392-012

Fax: (974) 392-263

Materials Management Department:

Mr. Mahmoud Al-Mahmoud, Director

Phone: (974) 392-262

Fax: (974) 423-399

Central Laboratories

Mr. Jassim Jaidah, Director

Ministry of Public Health

P.O. Box 9374

Phone: (974) 417-676

Fax: (974) 353-769

(Inspection and analysis of imported food products)

Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Al-Mulla

Deputy Director of Preventive Health

Ministry of Public Health

P.O. Box 9374, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 325-005

Fax: (974) 433-019

Dr. Ahmed Abdul Karim Al-Mulla

Deputy Director of Preventive Medicine

Ministry of Public Health

P.O. Box 9374

Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 325-005

Fax: (974) 429-786

Ministry of Interior:

P.O. Box 2433, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 330-000

Fax: (974) 443-750

Logistics Department:

Captain Omair Mohammed Al-Ramzani, Director

P.O. Box 4020, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 426-633

Fax: (974) 449-228

Ministry of Defense:

Qatar Armed Forces

Procurement Department, General Headquarters

Brigadier Mohammed Khalil, Director

P.O. Box 37

Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 404-270; (974) 436-920

Fax: (974) 433-464

Country Commercial Banks:

Central Bank of Qatar
H.E. Abdullah Bin Khalid Al-Attiyah, Governor
P.O. Box 1234, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 456-456
Fax: (974) 415-587

Al-Ahli Bank of Qatar
Mr. Izzat Mohammed Al-Rashid, General Manager
P. O. Box 2309, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 326-611
Fax: (974) 444-652

Mashreq Bank PSC
Mr. Assad Abdo Koshaish, General Manager
P. O. Box 173, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 413-213/7
Fax: (974) 413-880

Arab Bank Ltd.
Mr. Ghassan Ahmed Bundakji, Senior Manager
P. O. Box 172, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 437-979
Fax: (974) 410-774

Bank Saderat Iran
Mr. Mohammed Zamani, Manager
P. O. Box 2256, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 414-646
Fax: (974) 430-121

Banque Paribas
Mr. Christian de la Touche, General Manager
P. O. Box 2636, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 433-844/7
Fax: (974) 410-861

British Bank of The Middle East (Now known as HSBC)
Mr. Chris Meares, Chief Executive Officer
P. O. Box 57, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 423-124; (974) 422-646
Fax: (974) 416-353; (974) 436-794 (CEO)

Commercial Bank of Qatar Ltd.
Mr. T. P. Nunan, General Manager
P. O. Box 3232, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 490-222
Fax: (974) 443-807; (974) 320-716 (GM)

Doha Bank Ltd.
Mr. Mohammad Mustafa Jamjoum, General Manager
P. O. Box 3818, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 456-709; (974) 456-710 (GM)
Fax: (974) 416-631; (974) 310-416 (GM)

Grindlays Bank Plc
Mr. John Fleming Murray, General Manager
P. O. Box 2001, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 473-700
Fax: (974) 473-710

Qatar Industrial Development Bank
Mr. Maqbool Habib Khalfan, General Manager
P. O. Box 22789, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 421-600
Fax: (974) 350-433

Qatar International Islamic Bank
Mr. Abdulbasit Al-Sheibi, Acting General Manager
P. O. Box 664, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 332-600
Fax: (974) 444-101

Qatar Islamic Bank
Mr. Marwan Awad, General Manager
P. O. Box 559, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 438-000; (974) 439-498
Fax: (974) 412-700

Qatar National Bank
Mr. John Finigan, General Manager
P. O. Box 1002, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 407-407
Fax: (974) 413-753

Standard Chartered Bank Plc
Mr. Nick Ellison, General Manager
P. O. Box 29, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 414-251
Fax: (974) 413-739

United Bank Ltd.
Mr. Mohammed Abdul Raouf, General Manager
P. O. Box 242, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 438-666
Fax: (974) 424-600

Multilateral Development Bank Offices in Country: Not available

TPCC Trade Information Center in Washington:

Phone: 1-800-USA-TRAD(E)
Fax: (202) 482-4473.

U.S. Department of State Office of Business Affairs:

Phone (202) 746-1625
Fax: (202) 647-3953

U.S. Department of Commerce Country Desk Officer:

(For market access and regulatory problems only)

Qatar Desk Officer: Cherie Loustaunau
Office of the Near East, Room 2039
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th St. & Constitution Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20230
Phone: (202) 482-1860
Fax: (202) 482-0878

Country Desk Officer: State Department:

NEA/ARP, Room 4224
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520-6258
Phone: (202) 647-6572
Fax: (202) 736-4459

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Trade Assistance and Promotion Office:

Trade Assistance and Promotion Office (TAPO)
Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Ag Box 1052
Washington, D.C. 20250-1052
Phone: (202) 720-7420
Fax: (202) 690-4374

The FAS Home Page address on the Internet is: <http://www.fas.USDA.gov>

Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC):

Phone: (202) 336-8799

Leading Qatari Firms:

Al-Bassem Group
Mr. Issa Kopti, General Manager
P.O. Box 17877, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 441-040
Fax: (974) 441-588

Al-Fardan Group
Mr. Hussain Al-Fardan, Managing Director
P.O. Box 63, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 408-408
Fax: (974) 351-885

Al-Jabor Group Holdings
H.E. Sheikh Jabor bin Mohammed Al-Thani, Managing Director
P.O. Box 295, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 328-500
Fax: (974) 445-543; (974) 449-411

Ali bin Ali Group
Mr. Adel Ali bin Ali, Chairman; Nabil Ali bin Ali, Managing Director
P.O. Box 3331, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 421-915; (974) 426-201
Fax: (974) 433-778

Almana Group
Mr. Omar Hamad Almana, Managing Director; Mr. Saud Almana, General Manager
P.O. Box 491, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 621-222
Fax: (974) 622-420

Al-Muftah Group
Mr. Abdulrahman Muftah, Chairman; Mr. Abdulrahman Muftah Al-Muftah, Managing Director; Mr. P.A. Abu Bakker, General Manager; Mr. Said Gul, Head of Projects Development
P.O. Box 875, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 446-868

Al-Mukhtar Trading & Contracting Co.

Mr. Abdulrahman Abdullah Abdulghani, General Manager [Phone: 621-000; Fax: (974) 621-830]

P.O. Box 5536, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 478-454

Fax: (974) 478-226

Arabian Construction Engineering Co. (ACEC)

H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim Al-Thani, Chairman; Mr. Ghalib Shoush'a, Managing Director

P.O. Box 1277, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 417-521; (974) 417-522

Fax: (974) 430-112

Faisal bin Jassim Group

Sheikh Faisal bin Jassim Al-Thani, Chairman; Mr. Ibrahim Naameh, General Manager

P.O. Box 3288, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 440-244

Fax: (974) 447-189

GEMCO (Gulf Electrical Materials Co.)

Mr. Ahmed Saleh Al-Obaidley, Owner

P.O. Box 157, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 329-480; (974) 321-753

Fax: (974) 321-752

Ghanim Al-Thani Holdings

Sheikh Ghanim bin Ali Al-Thani, Owner

P.O. Box 5319, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 428-201

Fax: (974) 445-248

Hamad bin Khalid (HBK)

Mr. Amal Azzi, General Manager

P.O. Box 1362, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 433-644

Fax: (974) 438-729

Hassan Ali Bin Ali Establishment (HABA)

Mr. Hassan Ali Bin Ali, Chairman

P.O. Box 3331, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 418-181

Fax: (974) 423-484

International Project Development Company

Mr. Ahmed Hussain Khalaf, Managing Director

P.O. Box 19613, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 363-840

Fax: (974) 361-925

Jaidah Motors & Trading Co.

Mr. Jassim Jaidah, Chairman

P.O. Box 150, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 426-161

Fax: (974) 414-100; (974) 415-400

KABAS

Mr. Mahmoud Abu Errub, Managing Director

P.O. Box 1760, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 683-203

Fax: (974) 684-033

Kassem Darwish Fakhroo & Sons (KDS)

P.O. Box 350, Doha, State of Qatar

Mr. Hassan Darwish, Managing Director
Phone: (974) 423-463
Fax: (974) 426-378

Mannai Corporation
Mr. Ahmed Mannai, Managing Director
P.O. Box 76, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 412-555; (974) 412-800
Fax: (974) 411-982

Nabina Trading Establishment
Mr. Ibrahim Nabina, General Manager
P.O. Box 130, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 652-345
Fax: (974) 652-386

Nasir bin Abdullah and Sons Trading Co.
Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser Al-Thani, General Manager
P.O. Box 329, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 417-575
Fax: (974) 440-203

Nasser bin Khalid (NBK) Group
Sheikh Nawaf bin Nasser bin Khalid Al-Thani, Chairman
P.O. Box 82, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 443-838
Fax: (974) 425-181; (974) 328-412

Salam Group
Mr. Issa Abu Issa, Chairman; Mr. Hussam Abu Issa, General Manager
P.O. Box 121, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 832-050
Fax: (974) 832-180

Teyseer Trading & Contracting Co.
Mr. Abdulrahman Mannai, General Manager
P.O. Box 1555, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (974) 622-226
Fax: (974) 622-225



Chapter XII: Market Research and Trade Events

Appendix F: Market Research: List of Agricultural Reports:

Agricultural Export Opportunities Update Reports
 American Food Directory in the GCC-5
 Annual Marketing Plan
 GCC-5 Dry Pulses Market Brief
 GCC-5 Food Industry Report
 GCC-5 Food Retail Sector Report
 GCC-5 Ice Cream Production
 Guide for Doing Business in the Gulf
 Hotels and Restaurants Sector in the Gulf Region
 Qatar Food Import Regulations and Standards
 Update of U.S. Agricultural Exports to the GCC-5

Note: Agricultural Reports are available from the Reports Office, USDA/FAS, Ag Box 1052, Washington, D.C. 20250-1052 and from the FAS Home Page on the Internet at the following URL:
<http://www.fas.USDa.gov>

Appendix G: Trade Event Schedule:

Qatar is not known as a regional or international center for trade events. However, a limited number of exhibitions are held each year at the State-owned Qatar International Exhibition Center. Scheduled events for each year are usually announced at the beginning of that year.

The latest available list of trade events for the year 1999 is provided on the following page.

For further information on trade events in Qatar, contact:
 Mr. Abdullah Ibrahim Mohammed, Director, Fairs and Exhibitions Department, Ministry of Finance,
 Economy and Commerce, P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar
 Phone: (974) 834-450 Fax: (974) 834-480
 E-mail: qiec@qatar.net.qa Internet: <http://www.qiec.com>

Agricultural Trade Event Schedule:

Event: MEFEX 2000 (Regional)
 Sector: FOD
 Date: February 26-29, 2000
 Location: Manama, Bahrain
 USG involvement in recruiting/promoting: No.

Event: The FMI 2000 Supermarket Industry Convention and Educational Exposition/NASDA U.S.
 Food Export Showcase
 Sector: FOD
 Date: May 7-10, 2000
 Location: Chicago, IL
 USG involvement in recruiting/promoting: Yes.

Event: The NRA 2000 Restaurant, Hotel, Motel Show
 Sector: FOD
 Date: May 20-24, 2000
 Location: Chicago, IL
 USG involvement in recruiting/promoting: No.

Event: Gulf Food 2001 Food & Equipment Exhibition (Regional)
 Sector: FOD
 Date: February 25-28, 2001
 Location: Dubai, U.A.E.
 USG involvement in recruiting/promoting: Yes.

Note: All major U.S. food and agricultural exhibitions are listed on the FAS home page on the Internet at the following URL: <http://www.fas.usda.gov>

Table 12.1: Trade Exhibitions Scheduled To Be Held In Qatar, 1999-2000			
<i>Name of Exhibition</i>	<i>Date of Exhibition</i>	<i>Organizers</i>	<i>Tel, Fax, E-mail and/or Internet Address</i>
School & Educational Accessories	September 4-10, 1999	Al-Marri & Public Relations, P.O. Box 3618, Doha, Qatar	Phone: (974) 447-740 Fax: (974) 441-146 jaber@qatar.net.qa
ISO 9000	September 16-19, 1999	World Trade Center Qatar, P.O. Box 6, Doha, State of Qatar	Phone: (974) 354-141 Fax: (974) 423-048 wtcdoha@qatar.net.qa
Tunisian Products Exhibition	October 4-8, 1999	Omnia Exhibition and Conference Organization Co.	Phone: (974) 438-240 Fax: (974) 433-695
Money & Investment Exhibition (Q-Money)	October 16-19, 1999	Arabian Media Center, P.O. Box 22922, Doha, Qatar	Phone: (974) 369-955 Fax: (974) 449-920 amc22922@qatar.net.qa
Lebanese Economy Exhibition	October 28-November 2, 1999	Corniche Advertising	Phone: (974) 440-224 Fax: (974) 418-886
Sports Products & Gifts Fair	November 7-11, 1999	Al-Noor Public Relations, P.O. Box 4408, Doha, Qatar	Phone: (974) 442-655 Fax: (974) 434-499 mnoor@qatar.net.qa
Real Estate Investment Exhibition	November 25-28, 1999	World Trade Center Qatar, P.O. Box 6, Doha, State of Qatar	Phone: (974) 354-141 Fax: (974) 423-048 wtcdoha@qatar.net.qa
Qatar International Toys Fair	November 30-December 3, 1999	World Trade Center Qatar, P.O. Box 6, Doha, State of Qatar	Phone: (974) 354-141 Fax: (974) 423-048 wtcdoha@qatar.net.qa

Source: Fairs and Exhibitions Department, Ministry of Finance.

Note: None of the above (Table 12.1) is supported or certified by any U.S. party.



Addendum: List of Major Public Sector Projects

Note: This section is provided as a voluntary extension to the Country Commercial Guide, intended to serve as a quick reference on current major projects in the public sector in Qatar. For further details on these projects, interested parties may contact the following:

Embassy of the United States of America

Ambassador: Elizabeth McKune
 Deputy Chief of Mission: Matthew Tueller
 Economic Commercial Officer: Darrin Hink
 Economic Commercial Advisor: Jiryis H. Khoury
 Commercial Clerk: Sima Carri
 P.O. Box 2399
 Doha, State of Qatar
 Phone: (Comm): (974) 884-165 or (Embassy): (974) 884-101
 Fax: (Comm): (974) 884-163 or (Embassy): (974) 884-298
 E-mail: bfif97@qatar.net.qa

I. Projects in engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) stage :

1. Ras Abu Fontas 'B' Power & Desalination Plant (Ministry of Electricity and Water)
2. Qatar Fertilizer Company (QAFCO) III & IV Ammonia & Urea Projects
3. Qatar National Cement Company (QNCC) Plant II
4. Qatar Steel Company (QASCO) Rolling Mill Expansion
5. Qatar Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (Qatargas)
6. Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (Rasgas)
7. Qatar Steel Company (QASCO) New EAF No. 3
8. Qatar Fuel Additives Company (QAFAC) Methanol/MTBE Project
9. Doha International Airport

II. Projects in the early stages of pre-qualification, tender and bid evaluation:

1. Ras Abu Fontas 'C' Power & Desalination Plant (Ministry of Electricity and Water)
2. Qatar Clean Energy Company (QACENCO)
3. Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Company (QIMCO): Melamine Plant
4. Qatar Hot Briquetted Iron Company (QABICO): HBI Plant
5. National Oil Distribution Co. Expansion (NODCO)
6. Qatar Vinyl Co. (QVC)
7. Qatar Salt Company
8. Q-CHEM Ethylene/Polyethylene Complex (Phillips)
9. Qatar Primary Route Project
10. Doha Port: Container Cranes
11. NGL-4 Project

III. Projects in the proposal & study stage:

1. Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC)/Exxon Gas Conversion Plant
2. Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC)-Phillips-SASOL GTL Plant
3. Norsk Hydro-QGPC Aluminum Smelter
4. Qatar Steel Company (QASCO) Expansion Plans
 - 4.1 Pelletizing Plant
 - 4.2 Flat Rolled Products
5. Qatar-Iran Water Pipeline
6. Enron Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Project
7. Condensate Refinery – Mobil/Total/ Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC)
8. Enhanced Gas Utilization Project – NGL-5

