

OE Threat Assessment: Jordan



[TRADOC G-2 Intelligence Support Activity \(TRISA\)](#)

Complex Operational Environment and Threat Integration Directorate (CTID)





Introduction

Perhaps the most significant historical event to affect Jordan in the past quarter-century is the 1994 peace treaty the late King Hussein signed with Israel, formally recognizing that country's right to exist as a sovereign state. The occasion also went far toward healing a rift with the United States, which dated from to the First Gulf War in 1990, when Jordan supported Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Supporting Iraq in that conflict incidentally alienated Sunni Jordan from Shiite Iran, another major power in the region. Three years later, when Jordan made peace with Israel, the rift with Iran became permanent. Since that time, Jordan has been a stalwart regional ally of the Western powers, especially the United States. 2009 marked the sixtieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Shockwaves from the Arab Spring reached Jordan early in 2011. As a result, the current hereditary monarch, King Abdullah II, faces a number of domestic challenges. Foremost among them are lingering tensions related to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, a demand for greater democratization, if not elimination, of the Hashemite monarchy, and economic hardships caused by the interruption of fuel resources formerly furnished by Egypt.

Although no known terrorist organizations operate in Jordan, the country's greatest threat is that Islamic extremists may attempt to hijack legitimate popular demands for political, social, and economic reforms. The outbreak in November 2012 of violent protests against a recent government decision to lift price constraints on fuel confirms that some citizens are willing to risk imprisonment for violating a long-standing taboo against publicly criticizing the monarch. The Islamic Action Front (IAF), a Jordanian offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, now spearheads popular protests, and is vowing to boycott national parliamentary elections scheduled for January 2013. Although King Abdullah remains a popular monarch, a successful election boycott could have dire implications for the stability of his government.

Political

Jordan, officially called the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, is a constitutional monarchy that has witnessed extreme stress and change since the Arab Spring of 2011. The country obtained its independence from Britain on 25 May 1946, and its constitution, amended many times, became effective in January 1952. Jordan's legal system is a mix of civil law and Sharia law, presided over by King Abdullah II, the hereditary head of state and eldest son of the late King Hussein, who died in February 1999. King Abdullah is also the stepson of American-born Queen Noor, who is the queen dowager, but not technically the queen mother. Jordan's current queen is Queen Rania, who married King Abdullah in 1993, while his father was still head of state.



The country has three branches of government, all answerable to the king, who appoints the prime minister and all members of the cabinet. The prime minister presides over a bicameral parliament comprised of a sixty-seat Senate, or House of Notables, whose members are appointed by the king, and a 120-member elected lower house, the Chamber of Deputies. A new electoral law enacted in May 2010 provides for an additional ten seats to the lower house, six of which are exclusively reserved for women. The supreme court, or Court of Cassation, operates with constitutional authority, and struggles to maintain a separation of powers from the other branches of government.

Jordan has been a staunch ally of the United States since the period following the First Gulf War of 1991. It sometimes acts as a regional counterweight to Iranian influence in the Middle East. January 2011 ushered in a period of intense and unrelenting stress for the monarchy. Weekly protests by thousands of Jordanian citizens followed in the wake of popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, eventually forcing King Abdullah to appoint a succession of new governments. Jordan has had four new cabinets since February 2011, including the most recent one led by Abdullah Ensour, who became prime minister in October 2012.

In June King Abdullah went on nationwide television to announce constitutional changes designed to give parliament greater authority, and make the electoral process more democratic. Although many Jordanians welcomed these measures as a step in the right direction, opposition groups regarded the rate of change as far too slow.

By the summer of 2011, the Islamic Action Front (IAF)—the local political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood—emerged as the largest opposition party in Jordan. The IAF is currently stoking popular displeasure over a recent government decision to lift subsidies that formerly shielded citizens from increases in fuel and public transportation costs.

In November 2012 an IAF spokesman called for a Jordanian version of the 2011 Arab Spring, and advocated a nationwide boycott of parliamentary elections scheduled for January 2013. Although it is still too soon to predict how well the IAF message will resonate with voters, a successful election boycott could seriously undermine government authority and create chaotic conditions throughout the country.

Military

Jordan maintains a three-branch military: army, navy, and air force. Though small in size, Jordan's armed forces are regarded as among the best trained, best led, and most highly motivated in the Middle East. The king of Jordan holds the rank of field marshal, and is the supreme commander of the country's armed forces. The minister of defense (MOD), next in the chain of command, is directly responsible to the king. The three branches of the military fall



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under the purview of the MOD. The Jordanian armed forces number 104,000 active-duty personnel and 65,000 reservists. Reservists have a call-up obligation until age 40. The reserve force consists of 60,000 army and 5,000 joint forces.

Army

The Royal Jordanian Land Force numbers about 90,000 active duty personnel, with a headquarters located in Amman. Subordinate headquarters for Jordan's five military districts are located in Irbid, Al Balga, Al Asimah, Al Karak, and Maan. The Jordanian army uses mainly Western equipment, to include the M60A1/A3 main Battle Tank (MBT) and just under 1,400 M113 Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs). Jordan's two mechanized infantry divisions are deployed along its border with Israel. Two armored divisions are located further back of the border under the protection of air and artillery defense systems. In May 2009 Jordan initiated a modernization program for its army that envisioned an upgrade of its APC fleet and an unspecified number of Al Hussein battle tanks. In September 2009 Jordan ordered 12 HIMARS 227-mm multiple rocket launch systems from the US, scheduled for delivery in 2012. Royal Jordanian Land Force units include:

- 4 Armored Brigades
- 5 Mechanized Infantry Brigades
- 4 Artillery Brigades
- 4 Air Defense Brigades
- 1 Royal Guard Brigade
- 2 Special Forces Battalions
- 1 Airborne Battalion
- 1 Airborne Artillery Battalion
- 1 Counter-terrorism Battalion

Air Force

Approximately 13,500 active duty personnel man the Royal Jordanian Air Force, which operates out of a half-dozen airfields located in Amman, Mafraq, Al Safwi, Al Jafr, Al Azraq, and King Abdullah II Air Base (near Amman). The air force uses primarily American air frames, supplemented by other Western aircraft and equipment manufactured in France. Jordanian pilots average about 180 flying hours annually. In April 2011, Jordan furnished at least two fighters in support of the no-fly zone imposed on Libya. Flights originated from undisclosed locations in Europe. Units include:

- 2 Fighter Squadrons
- 5 Fighter/Ground Attack Squadrons
- 1 Transport Squadron
- 1 Royal Flight Squadron
- 2 Helicopter Attack Squadrons
- 3 Helicopter Transport Squadrons
- 1 Air Defense Brigades, including:
- 14 Surface-to-air Missile Batteries (14 I-HAWK)
- 3 Surface-to-air Missile Batteries (PAC-2 Patriot)
- 1 Basic Flight Training Squadron
- 1 Jet Training Squadron
- 1 Helicopter Training Squadron

Navy

Originally established in 1951 as the Royal Coast Guard, in 1952 the Jordanian navy was renamed the Royal Naval Force. Its mission is to patrol and defend Jordan's coastal waters, and to conduct search-and rescue and law-enforcement operations on an as-needed basis. The Royal Naval Force operates with 480 active duty personnel, including combat swimmers and headquarters staff. The Jordanian naval headquarters is located at Aqaba. Another base on the Dead Sea supports deployments restricted to FAYSAL-class vessels.

ARMY (As of January 2012, US origin unless otherwise noted)									
Armored Equipment in Service				Artillery Systems in Service			AT/SAM Weapons in Service		
M60A1/A3 A3TTS Main Battle Tank (MBT)	268	155mm M59/M1, towed	18	BGM-71A TOW Anti-Tank Guided Missile	330				
M47/M-48A5 Patton MBT	23	203mm M110A1/M110A2 self-propelled	100	M47 Dragon	310				
Khalid MBT (UK, Chieftain)	350	203mm M115 towed	4	112mm APILAS anti-tank (France)	2,300				
Tariq (UK, Centurion)	292	155mm M114 towed	38	94mm LAW-80 anti-tank	2,500				
Scorpion light (1 w/TOW; 18 w/76-mm) (UK)	80	155mm M109A1/M109A2 self-propelled	110	Javelin	30				
Al-Hussein (UK, Challenger 1)	288	155mm M44 self-propelled	29	M901	20				
M60 Phoenix upgrade (Jordan)	88	105mm M102 towed	36	9M133 Kornet/AT-14 (Russia)	2,000				
AIFV Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) (Netherlands)	50	105mm MOBAT SP (Netherlands)	18	73mm RPG-26	UNK				
M113A1/A2 APC	1,391	105mm M52 SP	4	MIM-23 Improved Hawk (launchers)	14				
BMP-2 Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) (Russia)	31			FIM-43 Redeye	270				
Ratel-20 IFV (South Africa)	259			SA-72B2 Grail (Russian Strela-2)	50				
YPR-765 IFV (US, transferred from Belgium)	13			SA-8 Gecko (Russian 9k33 Osa)	60				
Spartan APC (UK)	40			SA-13 Gopher (Russian 9k35 Strela-10)	92				
				SA-14 Gremlin (Russian 9K34 Strela-3)	300				
				SA-16 Gimlet (Russian 9K310 Igla 1)	240				
				SA-18 Grouse (Russian 9K38 Igla 2)	750				
AIR FORCE (As of January 2012, US origin unless otherwise noted)									
Fixed Wing Aircraft in Service			Rotary Wing Aircraft in Service			Missiles in Service			
Fighter/Attack (F/A) F-16 AM/BM Fighting Falcon	20	AH-1F Cobra attack	21	Air-to-Air (ATA) Sparrow	AIM-7	UNK			



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Transport L-1011 TriStar 500 (Royal Flight) (Civilian Registration)	1	UH-1H Iroquois Utility/Air Assault	36	ATA Sidewinder	AIM-9J/AIM-94	UNK
C-130H Hercules	4	UH-60A Black Hawk Transport	5	ATA R530 (France)		UNK
C-212-100 Aviocar (Spain)	2	UH-60L Black Hawk	8	ATA R550 Magic (France)		UNK
G-1159 Gulfstream IV	2	AS 332M1 Super Puma Transport (France)	10	Air-to-Surface (ATS) AGM-65D Maverick		UNK
Airtech CN-235 (leased from Turkey)	2	H-500D (Training)	8	SAM I-Hawk MIM-23B		24
Airbus A340 (international)	1	Eurocopter Bo-105	3	SAM PAC-2		40
TB-20 (VIP) (France)	2	Eurocopter 635 SAR/Utility (International)	13			
CL-604 Challenger (Canada)	2	BK-117 (Germany, Japan)	5			
Il-76 (Russia)	2					
Cessna-208 Caravan	5					
I1-76MF Candid (Russia)	2					
NAVY (As of January 2012, US origin unless otherwise noted)						
Vessels						
ABDULLAH (Dauntless-class) patrol craft	4					
AL HUSSEIN-class fast attack (UK Vosper Thornycroft 31-m design)	3					
FAYSAL-class inshore patrol (US Bertram 12-m design)	4					
FAISAL-class patrol (US Sea Ark Commander 8-m design)	4					
AL HASHIM-class (Rotork, Type 412) patrol (UK)	2					
Ex-German Bremse-class Inshore Patrol (UK Rotork Seatruck 13-m design)	3					
Ex-US 65-ft Air/Sea Rescue Boat	1					
Ex-US 40-ft Mk4 Personnel Launches	2					

American Forces in Jordan

Although the US maintains relatively few “boots on the ground” in Jordan, it has been providing that nation with logistical and training support for some time. In 2008, the two countries signed their most recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which extended military assistance



through the coming five-year period, subject to the availability of funds. In May 2012, US forces participated in Operation EAGER LION, a joint readiness exercise that included Jordan and a number of other Coalition nations. Roughly one hundred American military personnel remained in-country after the conclusion of the exercise, billeted at a Jordanian military base north of Amman. Recently the Jordanian-American partnership has focused on meeting the needs of roughly 180,000 refugees flowing into the country from neighboring Syria. During an October 2012 NATO conference in Belgium, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta confirmed the existence of a small US military presence in Jordan. The nature and scope of its mission may depend largely on the near-term behavior of the Syrian regime.

Government Paramilitary Forces

Paramilitary forces consist of the police force, the border police, and desert patrol. A civil militia, the People's Army, includes all men between the ages of 16 and 65, plus all women between the ages of 16 and 45 who have completed a prescribed period of basic military training. The civil militia contains an estimated 35,000 personnel, a number that can be expanded to 200,000 to meet contingencies. Militia units are generally equipped with light infantry weapons.

Jordanian Military Functions

Mission Command

The Jordanian military has the capacity to conduct joint operations, although it lacks some high technology resources deployed by neighboring Israel. To improve this function, Jordan's armed forces are implementing a new command and control (C2) system which is expected to facilitate better interoperability between branches of the armed services and also between Jordanian and Coalition Forces.

Maneuver

The bulk of the Jordanian army is mechanized infantry and armor "heavy," in order to maximize maneuver capabilities in desert terrain. The army's organizational structure also includes a counter-terrorism battalion, an airborne battalion, and two special forces battalions, which indicates a growing capacity to conduct unconventional operations in urban terrain.

Information Warfare

The Jordanian government operates a television network and radio station (Jordan Radio and Television), giving it the ability to shape public opinion. By no means, however, does the government enjoy a monopoly on the country's media, although state security agencies monitor material broadcasted over the airwaves by privately owned stations.



RISTA

Jordan possesses a total of about 10,000 special operations troops, divided among a ranger, airborne, special operations units, and a 500-man counter-terrorism battalion. These, coupled with enhanced rotary wing assets, give the military the capacity to conduct reconnaissance operations at various depths on the battlefield.

Fire Support

Jordan's Royal Arab Army possesses 189 tubes of 155-mm howitzers and 58 105mm howitzers, enough to provide sufficient fire support to its fifteen maneuver brigades. Although technological limitations continue to render these weapons vulnerable to counter-battery fire, recent initiatives to improve command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) are beginning to offset this limitation.

Protection

The Jordanian military possesses adequate equipment for providing force protection to its personnel. Maneuver units typically fight from tanks or other armored/tracked vehicles. In May 2009 the Jordanian government awarded BAE Systems a US \$43 million contract to upgrade 300 M113A1 armored personnel carriers. This initiative, under the supervision of the US Army's TACOM Life Cycle Management Command, bodes well for improving the survivability of Jordanian soldiers on future battlefields. However, soft-skinned logistical support vehicles that remain in the Jordanian army's table of organization remain vulnerable to aerial attack.

Logistics

Jordan's Royal Arab Army possesses sophisticated logistics capabilities that include an inventory of 49 (British) Chieftain Armored Recovery Vehicles, 40 M578 Light Recovery Vehicles, and hundreds of armored bulldozers, armored engineering vehicles, earth movers, and bridging vehicles. Jordan has recently concentrated its logistical resources in the northern part of the country, where with US assistance, tons of food, water, and sanitation facilities have been deployed in support of refugees fleeing the ongoing crisis in Syria.

Threat Actors in the OE

Non-State Paramilitary Forces

Insurgent Forces

- Al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers, an offshoot of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), perpetrated several attacks in Jordan in the years immediately following the destruction



of the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001. Very little has been heard from the organization since Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's death in early June 2006. Since then, Jordanian security forces, in cooperation with US counterpart agencies, have effectively crippled the Al-Qaeda threat in Jordan.

- The Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), also variously known as the Fatah Revolutionary Council, the Arab Revolutionary Brigades, and the Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims, has been on the US list of terrorist organizations for more than 20 years. In Arabic, Abu Nidal means "father of the struggle," an alias used by its leader, Sabri al-Banna, who was born in British-occupied Palestine during the 1930s. No major attack in Jordan has been attributed to ANO since 2008, six years after al-Banna's reported death in Iraq.
- The Black September Organization (BSO) was formed in 1971 as a clandestine wing of the ANO. Its original objective was to avenge the expulsion of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from Jordan in September of 1970. Later, some elements of this organization plotted to assassinate King Abdullah II's father, King Hussein. Though now inactive inside Jordan, many BSO members joined the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

Guerrilla Forces

There are currently no guerrilla forces known to be operating in Jordan.

Criminal Organizations

Although critics of the monarchy allege that endemic corruption pervades the current regime, Jordan is ranked thirteenth in the world and third in the Middle East in preventing organized crime. In that context, it is considered one of the safest countries in the world.

Private Security Organizations

Private security organizations in Jordan primarily provide protection to VIPs and high-profile corporate executives. However, to date their role as threat actors or militants has been negligible.

Non-Military Armed Combatants

Several Western nations, including the United States, furnish trainers and advisors to Jordanian military and security forces. Although some of these personnel carry arms, they may pose less of a threat to public safety in their own right than the potentially hostile reaction their presence may provoke among anti-Western sectors of the public.



Force Protection Issues

The Western military presence in Jordan is sufficiently small and out of the public eye that few if any incidents have recently occurred that have jeopardized the safety of US or other Western personnel. Although the Jordanians are a liberal, well-educated, and generally law-abiding people, members of any force deployed to that country need to be extremely sensitive to the prevalent Islamic culture. Personnel should be mindful of rampant economic strife and growing dissatisfaction with the monarchy, continuing resentment over conditions in Palestine, and the recent tragedy at the American consulate in Benghazi, Libya. Any US Soldier serving in Jordan should know that seemingly minor events involving individual actors can potentially blossom into major international crises with strategic consequences.

Economic

Jordan's economy is among the weakest in the Middle East, primarily because a lack of natural resources has led to a heavy dependence on outside aid. The country's budget deficit is nearly ten percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and is likely to remain at high levels indefinitely. King Abdullah has consistently pursued policies that privatize former state-owned companies and attract foreign investment. That said, his government has little choice but to rely on outside help to curb Jordan's fiscal deficit and public debt.

Until 2011, cheap energy supplied by Egypt and other Gulf states helped keep popular discontent in check by artificially depressing fuel prices. However, events that followed in the wake of the Arab Spring jeopardized a formerly dependable gas supply from Egypt. Since then, pipelines delivering Egyptian gas have been sabotaged many times. Then in November 2012, as part of an overall plan to reduce the Jordanian budget deficit and secure a two billion dollar loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the government formally announced a decision to lift fuel subsidies.

Public outrage in response to immediate increases in the prices of gasoline, heating fuel, and public transportation soon spilled into the streets on an unprecedented scale. A nationwide round of protests, rioting, and clashes with police may prove sufficient to undermine the government's authority, despite King Abdullah's continued popularity with more traditional elements of Jordan's society. A loose coalition of roughly forty political parties, professional associations, and other discontented elements have banded together under a National Front for Reform (NFR), rallying behind broad grass-roots demand to "Save the homeland from rising prices." It is difficult to foretell what effect the NFR movement will have on national parliamentary elections scheduled for 23 January 2013.



Social

With 40% of its residents born outside its borders, Jordan has one of the highest percentages of immigrants in the world. An influx of Palestinians since the midpoint of the twentieth century makes demographics the most significant aspect of Jordanian society. Refugees fleeing the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967, and now their children, caused demographic shifts that have now made Jordanian citizens of Palestinian origin a majority of the country's population and the most significant threat to its stability. Roughly 15% of the population lives below the poverty line. Unemployment, officially placed at around 12% by government sources, is actually said to run as high as 30% in some quarters. Although a majority of Jordanians favor a secular state, religion and tradition play an important role in Jordanian society. 98% of Jordan's 6,500,000 citizens are of Arabic heritage, and over 90% are Sunni Muslim. Arabic is the country's official language, with English widely understood among the upper and middle classes. At a time when population growth has outstripped economic growth, half of Jordan's population is under 25 and suffering the effects of widespread unemployment. Because over two-thirds of Jordanians in this age group classify themselves as liberal, they frequently exhibit a high degree of frustration with what they regard as a painfully slow pace of social and political change. Meanwhile, there is a widening gap between rich and poor in Jordan, with most of the king's support grounded in rural areas with customs that have little in common with teeming city environments where most of the country's youth reside.

Information

Jordanian authorities selectively exert considerable influence over the media, despite constitutional guarantees of free speech and freedom of the press. Accordingly journalists and editors have cultivated a tradition of self-censorship, avoiding such taboos as overt criticism of the monarchy. This tradition is showing signs of stress in the wake of the government's recent decision to lift price constraints on fuel. During recent protests, some demonstrators risked imprisonment under Jordanian law by demanding an end to monarchical rule. In the past, government authorities have used this law to enforce crackdowns on militants.

Jordan Radio and Television (JRTV), Jordan's state-run television station, operates four channels including an entertainment channel, a sports channel, and a channel dedicated exclusively to monitoring parliamentary sessions. Although JRTV does what it can to prejudice the public mind in favor of views held by government authorities, many Jordanians rely on Al Jazeera, which polls indicate as the most trusted news channel in the country. International satellite channels are also widely available throughout Jordan.



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JRTV is also the country's premier radio broadcasting station. It broadcasts a variety of programs in Arabic, English, and French. Another state-run station, radio Fann, broadcasts mainly to members of the Jordanian armed forces. Private corporations have increased their market share of the radio venue, playing Western and Arabic pop music that caters to the tastes of the young, well-educated Jordanian elite. Major stations include Sony, Mood FM, Play FM, and Beat FM.

Shortly after assuming the throne in 1999, King Abdullah II announced an intention to transform Jordan into the high-tech capital of the Middle East on a par comparable with America's Silicon Valley. In January 2012 venture capitalist Rachid Sefraoui included Amman in a list of the top ten best cities in the world for start-up projects related to Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Cisco, Dell, Hewlett Packard, Intel, Microsoft, Oracle, and Samsung number among the Information Technology companies that have established a corporate foothold in Jordan.

King Abdullah also infused ICT curricula into all levels of Jordan's educational system. Schools are typically equipped with computers and internet connections, and universities produce roughly 15,000 ICT graduates each academic year. The government concurrently energized efforts to connect rural areas to the internet. In the past few years Jordan has employed roughly 35,000 people in the ICT sector of the economy, incidentally achieving a 50% internet penetration rate. The fact that there are now less than 500,000 land lines in Jordan reflects a corresponding increase in mobile cell phone usage. There are now more than 6,250,000 cell phones in Jordan, and approximately 3.163 million Internet users.

Intelligence Services in the OE

The primary intelligence-gathering agency in the Jordanian OE is the Dairat al-Mukhabarat al-Ammah, or General Intelligence Directorate (GID). As part of the Jordanian armed forces, it is highly regarded in the Middle East, and considered one of the most professional intelligence services in the world. The GID director is appointed by royal decree upon recommendation by the Council of Ministers. Duties of the GID entail carrying out operations directed in writing by Jordan's prime minister.

The agency is well known for its extensive operations throughout Jordan and the Middle East, specifically including a demonstrated record for cooperating with American, British, and Israeli counterparts. The GID's support of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other US agencies predates the al Qaeda terrorist attack of 11 September 2001. Its accomplishments in the war on terror include major contributions to suppressing the al Qaeda insurgency in Iraq as well as efforts to eliminate "high value" terrorist targets such as Abu Musab al Zarqawi. The GID runs AI



Jafr prison in Jordan's southern desert that houses some of the biggest catches from the war on terror.

Infrastructure

About 80% of Jordanians live in urban areas with modern infrastructure. The country has made significant strides in providing basic services to its citizens. In 1950, only 10% of the population had access to potable water and sanitation facilities. Today 99% of Jordanians enjoy these services. The same applies to electricity, which is also available to 99% of the population, compared with less than 10% in 1955. The World Bank recently ranked Jordan as the top health care services provider in the Middle East, and among the top five in the world.

Jordan currently has just under 5,000 miles of paved highways and a number of secondary roads with a gravel surface. A project is underway to incrementally phase-in a broad program of road improvements between now and 2030, with emphasis on upgrading existing routes and reducing weaknesses in the transport system. Jordan is serviced by two rail companies, the Aqaba Railway Corporation (ARC), and Hejaz Jordan Railway (HJR). A new electric rail system is currently under construction, designed to link all of Jordan's major towns and cities, and potentially provide international service to Iraq and Israel.

Although Jordan's rivers are rarely used for transport, the country shares the lucrative Dead Sea shipping port of Aqaba with Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. A new port improvement project envisions three additional terminals to ferry passengers, facilitate grain import and export, and provide roll-on, roll-off capability for selected cargos. Foremost among Jordan's 18 usable airfields is the Queen Alia International Airport, the country's largest commercial air facility. The main civil air carrier in Jordan is Royal Jordanian Airlines, a company that has gone full circle since its inception in 1963 from private ownership, to government operation, and most recently to a revitalized privatization program.

Physical Environment

Jordan is located on the Northwestern portion of the Arabian Peninsula, and is bounded by Saudi Arabia and Iraq on the South and East, Israel to the West, and Syria to the North. The Jordan River Valley on the West separates Jordan from Palestine and Israel. Much of the country is covered by flat desert terrain. A traveler moving eastward from the Mediterranean Sea encounters increasingly drier conditions advancing inland.

Most of the country receives less than 24 inches of rainfall annually. September through March are the coldest months, with temperatures averaging just under 40° Fahrenheit (F). The long summers peak during August, with temperatures averaging around 90° F. Between June and September Jordan is vulnerable to violent windstorms that carry huge clouds of dust. These



winds often reach gale force during daytime hours, then moderate somewhat after sundown. The storms sometimes last nine or ten days, then abate for a day or so before regenerating.

Time

From a Western perspective, Jordanians may appear to have a nonchalant or relaxed attitude about time. In reality, they simultaneously have a foot in two different cultures. On the one hand, consistent with Western habits of thought, they can precisely monitor the minutes and seconds ticking by on a watch. On the other, they remain linked to a pre-modern conception of time grounded in an Arabic culture that follows the lunar calendar that drives an Islamic regimen of daily prayers.

The Jordanian work week typically runs from 40 to 50 hours, depending on the individual business. The work day starts between 00830 and 0900 and terminates between 1700 and 1800. Companies observe Islamic holidays and routinely schedule five-day work weeks with Friday, a Muslim day of rest, considered part of the weekend. The second consecutive day off is either Thursday or Saturday. School weeks normally run from Saturday through Wednesday.

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