U.S. Department of State
FY 2001 Country Commercial Guide: Qatar

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CHAPTER 1. 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.

Located in the center of the Arabian Gulf, Qatar's relatively small peninsula shares its only land border with Saudi Arabia in the south. It has maritime boundaries with Bahrain, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Qatar 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 first shipment of LNG to Japan from Qatar Liquefied Natural Gas Company (Qatargas) was made in January 1997 from the 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 2000 to Korea. Qatar is not likely to earn profits from LNG exports for the next few years, because returns from this promising sector will have to be utilized to settle portions of extensive debts to Japan which has financed a major portion of Qatar's expensive LNG industry.

The Qatari economy will, therefore, continue to be heavily dependent upon revenues from oil exports of more than 650,000 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 2004. 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 Qatar's current financial difficulties emanating from large sovereign state debts in recent years and persistent budgetary deficits. Qatar will have to cope with some financial constraints until some revenues from LNG exports enter its treasury. The private sector will continue to cope with the impact of these constraints.

Qatar's pragmatic Islamic monarchy, under Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, who took power in June 1995, is taking various measures to foster the establishment of democratic institutions and a broader based political structure, as well as openness to global markets. The elections in recent years for the current Board of Directors of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Qatar Central Municipal Council

are the genesis of an ambitious democratization process. In accordance with the Emir's earlier promise of an elected Advisory Council (Parliament), a committee was formed in July 1999 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 provide U.S. firms 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 Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations.

Qatar has 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. In three out of the last five years, however, the U.S. has been the largest supplier, with a market share of over 12 percent.

Qatari and many expatriate communities 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 during 1998-1999. The current rise in Qatar's oil production quota and higher prices have bolstered the business morale. Because of Qatar's vast resources of natural gas, Qatar's long-term development potential is great. More immediately, the currently prevailing price of oil in addition to improved prospects for the peace process bode well for the short term.

Country Commercial Guides are available for U.S. exporters from the National Trade Data Bank's CD-ROM or via the Internet. Please contact STAT-USA at 1-800-stat-usa for more information. Country Commercial Guides can be accessed via the World Wide Web at http://www.stat-usa.gov; http://www.state.gov/ and http://www.mac.doc.gov. They can also be ordered in hard copy or on diskette from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) at 1-800-553-NTIS. U.S. exporters seeking general export information/assistance and country-specific information should contact the U.S. Department of Commerce, Trade Information Center, by telephone at 1-800-USA-TRAD(E) or by fax at (202) 482-4473.

CHAPTER 2. ECONOMIC TRENDS AND OUTLOOK

Major Trends and Outlook:

Like the economies of other GCC countries, the Qatari economy is sensitive to public spending which, in turn, is sensitive to fluctuations in international oil prices and OPEC mandated production quotas. Qatar's current production and export of crude from onshore and offshore fields conform with Qatar's OPEC quota which was raised to about 650,000 bpd in June 2000. Qatar expects oil production and export levels to rise to about 900,000 bpd by the year 2004 as the outcome of several production sharing agreements with international oil companies looks promising.

Despite fluctuations in oil prices and demand throughout the last three decades, Qatar has maximized its gains, with large industrial and infrastructure projects financed by huge inflows of petrodollars. These resulted in rapid economic growth, enabling a

Westernized style of living, education for all, and acquisition of oil and gas equipment, defense equipment, and a modern telecommunications system.

Until dividends from the export of over 6 million tpa (tons per annum) of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) per year (expected to rise to 10 million tpa in 2002-2003) actually start coming into the treasury by 2005, the Qatari economy will continue to be affected by oil prices in the international market. Moreover, the economy will have to address a relatively large sovereign debt currently estimated at over US$ 10 billion. Over the last few months, the Government of Qatar (GOQ) has paid off a large portion of its local debts, utilizing the high oil revenues earned during the latter part of 1999 and early 2000.

Tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 show input and growth rates of all sectors to Qatar's GDP during the period 1992-1999, according to the latest available figures from official sources.

Principal Growth Sectors:

The 1999 GDP was valued at QR 41.5 billion (US$ 11.3 billion), marking an increase of 9 percent over the 1998 GDP of QR 38.1 billion (US$ 10.5 billion), mainly due to the rise in oil prices in the second half of the year. The oil sector input rose to 40 percent from 37 percent the previous year, while the other sectors' input decreased to 59.8 percent from 63.61 percent. The GOQ's economic advisors believe that economic performance will maintain slow but satisfactory progress over the next five years. Qataris continue to enjoy a very high per capita income, estimated in 1999 at US$ 21,841 and in 1998 at US$ 20,038.

Qatar's entry into international LNG markets in December 1996 marked a significant turning point in Qatar'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 in place and actual shipments are in progress. Other orders are under consideration.

As per agreement with Japanese banks that have financed Qatar's LNG projects, revenues from LNG exports will be largely dedicated to debt servicing throughout the first eight to nine years of production. Qatar will derive benefits only after these debts are repaid over the next five years or so, after which revenues from the export of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) will start feeding the GOQ'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.

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 rapidly increasing.

Table 2.1: Input and Growth Rates of All Sectors of Qatar's GDP (1998 and 1999)						
(Latest available data)						
US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980						
Economic Sector	**Value (QR Million)**	**Share (%)**	**Change From Previous Year (%)**	**Value (QR Million)**	**Share (%)**	**Change From Previous Year (%)**
	1998			**1999 (provisional)**		
Oil Sector	14,025	36.84	-19.33	16,680	40.19	18.93
Other Sectors	24,049	63.16	1.31	24,049	59.81	3.21
Breakdown (Other Sectors):						
Agriculture and Fishing	299	0.79	3.10	300	0.72	0.33
Manufacturing Industries	3,425	9.00	0.23	3,660	8.82	6.86
Electricity and Water	520	1.37	7.88	550	1.33	5.77
Building and Construction	2,880	7.56	0.24	3,300	7.95	14.58
Trade, Restaurants and Hotels	2,785	7.31	0.83	2,800	6.75	0.54
Transportation and Communications	1,535	4.03	5.79	1,600	3.86	4.23
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Services	3,990	10.48	0.53	4,600	11.08	15.29
Other Services	8,615	22.63	1.42	8,010	19.30	-7.02
Total	**38,074**	**100.00**	**-7.42**	**41,500**	**100.00**	**9.00**

Source: Qatar Central Bank

Table 2.2: Input and Growth Rates of All Sectors of Qatar's GDP (1996 and 1997)
(Latest available data)
US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980

Economic Sector	Value (QR Million)	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)	Value (QR Million)	Share (%)	Change From Previous Year (%)
	1996			1997		
Oil Sector	12,773	38.73	16.83	17,386	42.28	36.12
Other Sectors	20,203	61.27	8.1	23,738	57.72	17.5
Breakdown (Other Sectors):						
Agriculture and Fishing	290	0.88	-0.34	290	0.71	0
Manufacturing Industries	2,499	7.58	0.44	3,417	8.31	36.73
Electricity and Water	427	1.29	12.66	482	1.17	12.88
Building and Construction	2,268	6.88	15.54	2,873	6.99	26.68
Trade, Restaurants and Hotels	2,544	7.71	9.84	2,762	6.72	8.57
Transportation and Communications	1,223	3.71	12.3	1,451	3.53	18.64
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Services	3,423	10.38	6.24	3,969	9.65	15.95
Other Services	7,529	22.83	8.47	8,494	20.65	12.82
Total	32,976	100	11.32	41,124	100	24.71

Source: Qatar Central Bank

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

Source: Qatar Central Bank

Table 2.4: Input and Growth Rates of All Sectors of Qatar's GDP (1992 and 1993)

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

Source: Qatar Central Bank

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 are a Government issue. The GOQ forecasts oil production of 900,000 barrels per day by the year 2004. Production enhancement programs have already succeeded in increasing oil production to over 650,000 barrels per day.

In Qatar, the Government is the largest end-user of a wide range of imported products and services. Despite higher international oil prices and the resultant beneficial effects on Qatar's finances, the GOQ continues its fiscal austerity measures as far as internal spending is concerned. The private sector, extremely sensitive to

Government spending, still continues to feel the impact of conservative spending on the part of the Government.

Balance of Payments Situation:

Qatar became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on January 13, 1996. Qatar's main trading partners have been the U.S., Japan, U.K., Germany, France and Italy. However, in recent years Qatar has signed several agreements to sell its liquefied natural gas (LNG) and petrochemical products to Japan, Korea and India and is in the process of finalizing additional agreements.

As indicated in Table 2.5, the surplus in the trade balance surged 11.1 percent in 1999 to QR 7,928 million (US$ 2,179 million), from the 1998 level of QR 7,134 million (US$ 1,960 million). This was the result of a 5.9 percent increase in 1999 exports to QR 19,385 million (US$ 5,327 million), from the 1998 level of QR 18,311 million (US$ 5,032 million), coupled with higher 1999 imports, up 2.5 percent in 1999 to QR 11,457 million (US$ 3,148 million), from the 1998 imports of QR 11,177 million (US$ 3,071 million).

Table 2.5: Qatar's Balance of Payments (1995 to 1999)

(Latest available data) (All values in millions of QR)

US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980

	Item	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
(1)	**Trade Balance**	1,940	4,546	3,143	7,134	7,928
	Change from previous year (%)	*-59*	*134.3*	*-30.9*	*127*	*11.1*
	Exports (fob)	12,948	13,952	14,036	18,311	19,385
	Change from previous year (%)	*19.3*	*7.8*	*0.6*	*30.5*	*-5.9*
	Imports (fob)	-11,008	-9,406	-10,893	-11,177	-11,457
	Change from previous year (%)	*79.8*	*-14.6*	*15.8*	*2.6*	*-2.5*
(2)	**Service Transfers and Private transfers (Net)**	-9,801	-9,083	-9,254	-8,792	-9,517
(3)	**Current Account (1) + (2)**	-7,861	-4,537	-6,111	-1,658	-1,589
(4)	**Capital Transfers (Private/Official)**	4,815	2,629	4,336	458	4,852
(5)	**Surplus/Deficit in Balance of Payment (3) + (4)**	-3,046	-1,908	-1,775	-1,200	3,263
(6)	**Change in Reserves (Increase/Decrease)**	3,046	1,908	1,775	1,200	-3,263

Source: Qatar Central Bank and private banking sources.

Note:
- Data for 1998 and 1999 data are provisional.
- The figures for total imports, as published by the Qatar Central Bank, are quite different from those published by the Central Statistical Organization for the corresponding years,.

The invisible account, including services and private transfers, increased in 1999 to QR 9,517 million (US$ 2,615 million), from the 1998 level of QR 8,792 million (US$ 2,416 million). On the basis of the above changes, the current account deficit decreased in 1999 to QR 1,589 (US$ 436.7 million), from the 1998 level of QR 1,658 million (US$ 455.6 million). The capital transfers segment, which includes net foreign borrowings and repayments, together with official and private repayments, realized a large deficit at the end of 1999 amounting to QR 4,852 million (US$ 1,333 million), as against a moderate surplus in 1998 worth QR 458 million (US$ 125.9 million) .

As a result of the above developments in Qatar's financial transactions, the 1999 balance of payments recorded a surplus of QR 3,263 million (US$ 330 million), as against the 1998 level of QR 1,200 million (US$ 897 million), due to extensive foreign indebtedness.

Official and private financial analysts believe that revenues from oil exports will continue to rise as the pace of production accelerates from 600,000 bpd in 1999 to 650,000 bpd in 2000. This situation will prompt an increase in the volume of Qatar's exports, while a declining rate of LNG-related capital imports will bring about a decrease in total imports and provide for a positive trade balance in excess of US$ 2 billion in the year 2000-2001.

Table 2.6 shows unofficial estimates of the State's sovereign indebtedness and guaranteed loans, excluding relatively large borrowings from Japan on a project guarantee basis for the development of the North Gas field and LNG industry. It should be noted that the above forecast for both balance of payments and sovereign indebtedness will inevitably be subject to a certain decree of variance, whether positive or negative.

Table 2.6: Qatar's Sovereign External Debt (1995-1999), Including Government Guaranteed Debt

(Latest available data) (All values in millions of US$)					
Item	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998-99**	**1999**
Total direct Government Debt	1,174	1,693	2,359	3,739	4,739
Total Government guaranteed debt	790	1,170	1,261	1,755	1,755
Total Govt. & Govt. guaranteed debt	1,964	2,863	3,620	5,494	5,494
QGPC subsidiaries debt	242	2,965	3,988	4,192	4,592
Other Debt (3)	2,295	1,353	1,419	1,110	1,110
Total external debt outstanding	4,500	7,181	9,026	9,096	11,196
% of GDP	55	79	80	103	98

Source: Private banking sources.

CHAPTER 3. POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Nature of Political Relationship with the U.S. :

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, who took over as Emir of the State of Qatar in 1995, has always supported development of a strong U.S.-Qatari relationship based on shared interests in promoting regional peace, stability and trade ties. The Emir's official visit to the U.S. (the first of its kind since the U.S. and Qatar agreed to exchange diplomatic relations in 1974) paved the way for steady and constant development of relations in various fields between the two countries. These include 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. A border dispute with Bahrain is currently before the International Court of Justice. It was in this spirit that Qatar hosted the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) Conference in 1997 and will host the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in November, 2000. Future opportunities exist for further development of relations in various fields between the U.S. and Qatar.

Political System:

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

The new Constitution will establish 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 provides little chance for the Qatari people to play a direct role in the decision-making process. It vests extensive powers in the Emir. He enjoys both executive and legislative powers, and promulgates laws in consultation 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. The first election of a Central Municipal Council occurred in March 1999. Although all successful candidates were men, women were permitted both to vote and stand as candidates. Some women have been appointed to leading Government positions at the Undersecretary and Professor levels in the Ministry of Education and the State-owned Qatar University.

In his endeavors 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.

There is no doubt that the monarchical political system will go through further democratization and more social liberalization. Meanwhile, the Government continues to pay heed to Qatar's cultural and traditional values.

CHAPTER 4. MARKETING U.S. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Establishing a Local Office/Creating a Joint Venture:

The Government of Qatar (GOQ) 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 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 a business practice permit is more time consuming than the 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 business 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 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 investor 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 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 concern.

D. Based on the above Decree, the Qatari agent will register the new foreign company in the Commercial Registration Department of the Ministry 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 GOQ. 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 of exemption from corporate income tax 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.

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 into 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. Selection should be made 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 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 of and sale of brand name 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 temporary import of these products to a local merchant or company other than the appointed agent.

Need for a Local Attorney:

A list of local attorneys follows.

Note:
1. The country code for Qatar is 974 for all telephone and fax numbers.
2. There are no area codes within Qatar.
3. Telephone numbers in Qatar, as of June 7, 2000, are all uniformly of seven-digits. This includes: normal telephones, faxes, mobile telephones, bleepers (i.e. pagers). While mobile telephone numbers (beginning with the number 5) and bleepers

(beginning with the number 2) were already of seven-digits, telephone and fax numbers were converted to the 7-digit format with the addition of "4" at the beginning of each number.

4. Telephone/fax numbers are liable to change without notice.

Arab Law Bureau, P.O. Box 6607, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Ala'a Hamad
Tel: (974) 483-0202 Fax: (974) 483-0101
E-mail: albureau@qatar.net.qa
Areas of Practice: Banking & Finance, Company Law, Agency and Distribution, Joint Venture, Construction Contracts and Insurance Law.

Law Office of Abdul Latif Hoseni, P.O. Box 3960, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Abdul Latif Hoseni
Tel: (974) 432-2691 Fax: N/A
Areas of Practice: General

Law Office of Abdul Rab Al-Malki, P.O. Box 1850, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Abdul Rab Al-Malki
Tel: (974) 442-4856 Fax: (974) 443-4336
Areas of Practice: Attorneys and legal consultants

Law Office of Abdulla Al-Khulaifi & Ali Abdulla Jaffar, P.O. Box 22034, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Abdulla Al-Khulaifi & Mr. Ali Abdulla Jaffar
Tel: (974) 441-7885 Fax: (974) 441-8170
Areas of Practice: General

Law Office of Abdullah Essa Al-Ansari, P.O. Box 23399, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Abdullah Essa Al-Ansari
Tel: (974) 435-1418; (974) 435-1419; (974) 435-1420Fax: (974) 435-1421
Areas of Practice: Lawyers and legal consultants

Law Office of Ali Abdulla Jaffar, P.O. Box 11176, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Ali Abdulla Jaffar
Tel: (974) 443-2188; (974) 443-1024 Fax: (974) 443-0373
Areas of Practice: General

Law Office of Ali bin Nasser Al-Naimi, P.O. Box 2457, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Abouelhamd Hassan Areiba, Legal Consultant
Tel: (974) 443-2959; (974) 443-2747 Fax: (974) 443-2595
Areas of Practice: General

Law Office of Behzad Y. Behzad, P.O. Box 869, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Behzad Yousef Behzad
Tel: (974) 466-0333 Fax: (974) 466-4888; (974) 444-3635

Areas of Practice: Commercial, Banking, Company, Insurance, Trademark, Industrial, Civil

Law Office of Dr. Najeeb bin Mohamed Ahmed Al-Nuaimi, P.O. Box 9952, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Dr. Najeeb bin Mohamed Ahmed Al-Nuaimi, Advocate & Legal Consultant
Tel: (974) 431-1124 Fax: (974) 431-0314
E-mail: nnrblaw@qatar.net.qa Internet: http://www.nn-law.com
Areas of Practice: General

Law Office of Hassan A. Al-Khater, P.O. Box 1737, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Hassan A. Al-Khater
Tel: (974) 443-7770 Fax: (974) 443-7772
Areas of Practice: Full range of legal services. UK educated.
Law Office of Hassan Satti Al-Sayed, P.O. Box 6780, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Hassan Satti Al-Sayed
Tel: (974) 444-4749 Fax: (974) 444-4750
Areas of Practice: General

Law Office of Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiya, P.O. Box 9228, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact (1): Mr. Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiya
Tel: (974) 436-4447 Fax: (974) 436-4449
Areas of Practice: Litigation, civil law, commercial law, criminal law and marital law

Law Office of Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiya, P.O. Box 4004, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact (2): Mr. Gebran Majdalany
Tel: (974) 442-8899 Fax: (974) 441-7817
Areas of Practice: Specializes in business law (commercial, banking, company law), civil law including building law, real estate, shipping, insurance

Law Office of Majed Nasser Al-Badr, P.O. Box 17197, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Majed Nasser Al-Badr
Tel: (974) 444-9596 Fax: (974) 437-0814
Areas of Practice: General

Law Office of Rashid Jassim Al-Buainin, P.O. Box 9393, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Rashid Jassim Al-Buainin
Tel: (974) 447-7651 Fax: (974) 447-7427
Areas of Practice: Attorneys and legal consultants

Law Office of Rouhani and Partners, P.O. Box 8747, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Riad Rouhani
Tel: (974) 442-5815 Fax: (974) 444-1428
Areas of Practice: Specializes in criminal, labor and civil law

Law Office of Sayel Daher, P.O. Box 5684, Doha, State of Qatar

Contact: Mr. Sayel Mohammed Daher
Tel: (974) 441-5080; 1 Fax: (974) 444-3930
Areas of Practice: General. Associated with Walker Martineau, Lawyers, London, UK

Qatar Law Office, P.O. Box 8717, Doha, State of Qatar
Contact: Mr. Nizar Kabbani/ Mohsin Makki
Tel: (974) 442-0017; (974) 443-1015 Fax: (974) 443-2060
Areas of Practice: Commercial, civil, criminal, arbitration and Sharia law
Note: The non-Qatari lawyers above, namely, Sayel Daher and Nizar Kabbani, will not be able to operate under their current names after the year 2000. A Ministerial Decree issued mid-1996 by the Minister of Justice 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.

Distribution and Sales Channels:

The GOQ is reportedly preparing to promulgate major changes in 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, easing restrictions on local agent/sponsor clauses as well as foreign equity participation, foreign investments in certain sectors, and branching. While the new laws are likely to facilitate private sector activity and offer U.S. firms additional business prospects, it is not possible to provide details of these laws at this stage. U.S. firms are advised that this chapter of the Country Commercial Guide dealing with marketing U.S. products and services is being discussed in light of the current laws and regulations. There is no specific date when the new laws will be issued.

In order to sell their products and services in the Qatari market, U.S. firms must adhere to the 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 who are also wholesalers, distributors and retailers. A handful of large local companies tends to dominate sales. The French supermarket giant "Continent" is expected to operate in Qatar soon. Fresh produce importers also handle table egg imports and distribution. Consumer cooperative societies account for over 40 percent of food retail sales.

Franchising and Direct Marketing:

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.

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. Participation in a regional food show is highly recommended.

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.

Advertising and Trade Promotion:

The business framework to which U.S. firms are accustomed has been developed to a considerable 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, Tel: (974) 466-1354, Fax: (974) 466-2094, E-mail: webmaster@al-sharq.com, Internet: http://www.al-sharq.com
"Al-Watan" : P.O. Box 22345, Tel: (974) 435-4466, Fax: (974) 435-0930
"Al-Rayah": P.O. Box 533, Tel: (974) 446-6566, Fax: (974) 435-0476, E-mail: edit@raya.com, Internet: http://www.raya.com

English:
"Gulf Times": P.O. Box 533, Tel: (974) 446-6621, Fax: (974) 441-8811, Internet: http://www.gulf-times.com
"The Peninsula": P.O. Box 3488, Tel: (974) 466-3945, Fax: (974) 466-3965
(All in Doha, Qatar)

Both television stations, Qatar Television (QTV) and Al-Jazeera Satellite TV Station, along with the radio station Qatar Broadcasting Corporation (QBS), 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 Corporation (QBS), P.O. Box 1414, Doha, Qatar, Tel: (974) 486-4821, Fax: (974) 488-8288, Contact: Mr. Mubarak Jeham Al-Kuwari, Director. 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, Tel: (974) 486-4575, Fax: (974) 486-4511, Contact: The Director. Additional information on the Al-Jazira Satellite TV Station can be obtained from: Al-Jazira Satellite TV Station, P.O. Box 32123, Doha, Tel: (974) 432-7766, Fax: (974) 488-5333, Mr. Mohammed Jassim Al-Ali, Director.

Sales Service and Customer Support

This is the responsibility of the local agent. Foreign principals often provide regional and international training for salesmen who are non-Qatari expatriates.

Government Procurement Practices:

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 US$ 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 GOQ. 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 GOQ 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, whenever possible, to 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.

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 (US$ 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)		
US$ 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
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 Qatar'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 was issued in mid-1995. It is not known how much longer such exemptions will be allowed. Key Government officials are majority shareholders in the 13 joint stock companies operating in Qatar. Such firms include national banks, national insurance companies, navigation, cinemas and cement companies.

Protecting Your Product from IPR Infringement:

On July 5, 2000, Qatar became a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as well as the Paris and the Berne Conventions. Within Qatar, owners of trademarks and copyrights and holders of patents have been dependent on Qatari laws and regulations for protection.

Trademark: The Trademark Law No. 3 of 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 US$ 70 per registration per class of goods.

The 1978 Trademark Law 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. This law, however, has not been enforced. The Industrial Affairs Department of the Ministry of Energy and Industry is tasked with conducting meetings to exchange views on how to implement the patent law.

Copyrights: On July 22, 1995, the GOQ promulgated Law No. 25 for the year 1995 on Intellectual Property and Copyright Protection. A special department called the "Censorship Bureau" was established under the Ministry of Information and Culture to enforce this law, which is the first legislation of its kind in Qatar. The law took effect on October 22, 1996. But the abolition 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. Recent spot checks on software and music video dealers and other such efforts suggest that 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. Although its staff has been slightly expanded, this Bureau has yet to be activated on a larger scale.

CHAPTER 5. LEADING SECTORS FOR U.S. EXPORTS AND INVESTMENT

The data in this chapter was officially released by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) of the Government of Qatar (GOQ) . 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.

Further, it should be noted that the source of the figures in this chapter is the CSO. These figures – including imports and exports - appear to differ slightly from corresponding statistics for the same period issued by the Qatar Central Bank.

Best Prospects for Non-Agricultural Goods and Services:

Representing between 10 and 15 percent of Qatar's overall imports, the value of goods of U.S. origin imported into Qatar in 1999 stood at US$ 285 million, down from the 1998 level of US$ 477 million, because of the low oil price and its effect on Qatar's purchasing power during 1998-1999. In 1990-91, services of U.S. origin in Qatar were estimated at US$ 200 million, in 1992 at US$ 100 million and, from 1994 through 1998, at US$ 1 billion per year, concentrated in the oil and natural gas operations.

As indicated in Table 5.1, the U.S. has occupied the position of leading supplier of goods and services to Qatar in three out of the last five years, displacing the Japanese monopoly that lasted for a period of about 50 years. The U.S. share of the market has consequently increased to 12 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 the U.S. share of the import market.

Tables 5.1 through 5.8 show leading foreign trading 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 the latest available data.

Table 5.1: Imports From All Countries Into Qatar (1995 to 1999)					
(All values in millions of US$)					
Country	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
UK	346	340	347	384	288
USA	388	320	471	478	285
Japan	380	26	395	435	257
United Arab Emirates	140	128	173	277	200
Saudi Arabia	151	172	204	187	176
Germany	374	218	254	198	154
Italy	362	311	215	205	118
France	253	237	268	196	118
China	37	50	56	58	74
India	65	60	61	65	66
All other countries	789	927	823	861	702
Total	3,399	2,869	3,323	3,410	2,500

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

Note: The figures for total imports, as published by the CSO, differ from those published by the Qatar Central Bank for the corresponding years.

Table 5.2: Imports into Qatar, From All Countries, 1994-1998
As Percent of Total, of Leading Ten Countries In 1998, And Their Corresponding Ranks 1994-1998

Country	Percent of Total					Rank				
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
UK	10.2	11.9	10.5	11.2	11.5	5	1	3	3	1
USA	11.4	11.1	14.2	14.0	11.4	1	2	1	1	2
Japan	11.2	0.9	11.9	12.8	10.3	2	4	2	2	3
United Arab Emirates	4.1	4.5	5.2	8.1	8.0	8	8	8	4	4
Saudi Arabia	4.4	6.0	6.2	5.5	7.1	7	7	7	8	5
Germany	11.0	7.6	7.6	5.8	6.2	3	6	5	6	6
Italy	10.6	10.8	6.5	6.0	4.7	4	3	6	5	7
France	7.4	8.3	8.1	5.7	4.7	6	5	4	7	8
China	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.9	13	11	10	11	9
India	1.9	2.1	1.8	1.9	2.6	11	10	9	10	10
All other countries	23.2	32.3	24.8	25.2	28.1					
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**					

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

Table 5.3: Total Imports Into Qatar By Main Categories of the S.I.T.C., 1995-1998

(All values in millions of US$)						
S.I.T.C. R-3 Category	**Category Heading**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
0	Food and live animals	272.7	269.3	296.3	309.6	331.0
1	Beverages and tobacco	30.4	28.3	26.3	27.0	35.2
2	Crude material, inedible, except fuels	74.7	70.5	82.2	88.6	77.8
3	Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	15.0	13.5	20.2	17.7	15.7
4	Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes	14.5	13.4	12.5	14.7	15.2
5	Chemicals and related products n.e.s.	171.4	191.1	179.5	183.2	205.3
6	Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	900.7	745.8	752.0	863.5	475.9
7	Machinery and transport equipment	1,641.1	1,293.4	1,682.0	1,598.5	1,029.7
8	Miscellaneous manufactured articles	267.8	242.1	267.2	303.4	311.1
9	Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the S.I.T.C.	9.8	0.9	3.6	3.3	3.3
Total		**3,398.0**	**2,868.3**	**3,321.8**	**3,409.5**	**2,500.3**

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

During the five-year period 1993-1998, the category with the highest average annual imports into Qatar was that of “machinery and transport”, including the following headings: valves, boiler shells, tanks, etc.; motor vehicles (passenger types) and accessories; electrical distribution and control panels; building and construction machinery; and power generating machinery. This was followed by manufactured goods classified chiefly by material, including: building and construction structures; iron and steel products such as pipes, tubes, etc.; textiles and yarns; non-metallic products, including cement, tiles, glassware, tableware, etc.

The third major Qatari import was in the category of food and live animals. Fourth was “Miscellaneous manufactured articles,” including a very wide variety of goods, such as printed materials, stationery, floor coverings, plastic goods, household utensils, toys/games/sports equipment, musical instruments, jewelry, etc. Chemicals comprised the next major Qatari import over the past five years, including industrial and agricultural chemicals, pharmaceutical and cosmetic preparations, insecticides, etc.

Services in the oil and natural gas and other sectors: As indicated above, the GOQ does not issue statistical data on import/export of services. U.S. services in Qatar's oil sector (production and enhancement of recovery) are estimated at US$ 1 billion at present, and are expected to double as much in the next few years. Taken together with U.S. investments in the natural gas industry, total U.S. involvement in this sector is estimated in 1999 at US$ 6 billion and likely to increase by 2010 to US$ 11 billion. U.S. firms specializing 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., in a joint venture agreement with QGPC, has launched a US$ 1 billion petrochemicals project known as Qatar Chemicals Company (Q-Chem) in 1999.

Table 5.4: U.S. Exports To Qatar, 1998 v. All Imports into Qatar By Main S.I.T.C. Categories, In Descending Order of All Imports

S.I.T.C. R-3 Category	Category Heading	U.S. (millions of US$)	Total (millions of US$)	U.S. Share (%)
7	Machinery and transport equipment	319.2	1,599	20.0
6	Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	81.0	864	9.4
8	Miscellaneous manufactured articles	29.2	310	9.6
5	Chemicals and related products n.e.s.	20.3	303	15.0
0	Food and live animals	21.7	135	7.0
1	Beverages and tobacco	3.2	89	11.9
2	Crude material, inedible, except fuels	2.0	27	2.2
3	Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	0.4	18	2.2
9	Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the S.I.T.C.	0.5	15	16.7
4	Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes	0.1	3	6.7
Total		**477.6**	**3,410**	**14.0**

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

Note: Detailed breakdown of 1999 imports into Qatar not yet available.

Table 5.5: Top Ten S.I.T.C. Sectors of All Exports to Qatar, 1998, and U.S. Share,
In Descending Order of All Exports

S.I.T.C. R-3 Sectors	Sector Heading	U.S. (millions of US$)	Total (millions of US$)	U.S. Share (%)
74	General industrial machinery and equipment, n.e.s., and machinery parts, n.e.s.	67.5	394.0	17.1
78	Road vehicles (including air cushion vehicles)	43.8	353.6	12.4
69	Manufactures of metal n.e.s.	20.0	301.8	6.6
77	Electrical machinery apparatus and appliances, n.e.s., and parts thereof	27.1	299.2	9.1
67	Iron and steel	40.9	269.5	15.2
72	Machinery specialized for particular industries	60.6	181.8	33.3
71	Power generating machinery and equipment	74.4	167.8	44.3
89	Miscellaneous manufactured materials, n.e.s.	4	107	3.74
65	Textile yarn, fabrics, made up articles n.e.s. and related products	5	96	5.21
66	Non-metallic minerals manufactures n.e.s.	7.9	82.8	9.5

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

Note: Detailed breakdown of 1999 imports into Qatar not yet available.

Table 5.6: Top Ten S.I.T.C. Sub-Sectors of All Exports to Qatar, 1998, and U.S. Share,
In Descending Order of All Exports

S.I.T.C. R-3 Sub-Sector	Sub-Sector Heading	U.S.	Total	U.S.	Rank*
		(millions of US$)		(%)	
781210	Motor vehicles for the transport of persons of saloon or station kind	24.0	291.8	8.2	3
691100	Structures excluding prefabricated buildings of and parts thereof	4.9	198.6	2.5	5
679100	Tubes, pipes and hollow steel	31.4	150.7	20.8	1
723900	Parts N.E.S. of the machinery of headings 723000 and 744300 (building/construction)	48.2	131.4	38.7	1
747000	Taps, cocks, valves and similar appliances for pipes, boiler shells, tanks and the like	10.1	94.8	10.6	6
773100	Insulated wire cable and conductor	1.4	87.5	0.0	11
714990	Parts for the gas turbines of	28.3	62.2	45.5	1
784300	Other parts and accessories for groups 722, 781, 782 and 783 (building/construction)	7.8	53.4	14.6	3
281000	Iron ore and concentrates	0	51.9	0	0
772600	Boards, panels, consoles, and other bases for control of electricity and its distribution	2.0	51.5	3.9	1

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

* Rank among all countries exporting the specified sub-sector of goods to Qatar in 1998

Note: Detailed breakdown of 1999 imports into Qatar not yet available.

Table 5.7 Top 10 Sub-Sectors of Exports to Qatar, 1998, Where U.S. Was Leading Exporter

S.I.T.C. R-3 Sub-Sector	Sub-Sector Heading	U.S. (millions of US$)	Total (millions of US$)	U.S. Share (%)
723900	Parts N.E.S. of the machinery of	85.3	131.4	64.9
679100	Tubes, pipes and hollow steel	31.4	150.7	20.8
714890	Other gas turbines	30.0	35.6	84.3
714990	Parts for the gas turbines of	28.3	62.2	45.5
792900	Parts N.E.S. (not including parts) of goods of group 792 (transport equipment)	26.3	51.0	51.6
772600	Boards, panels, consoles, and other bases for control	13.7	51.5	26.6
001500	Horses, asses, mules and	12.1	12.2	99
699190	Other mountings, fittings and similar articles; base metal hat-rack and similar fixtures	8.7	12.5	69.6
759000	Parts and accessories for use with machines of groups 751 (office machines) and 752 (automatic data processing machines)	4.6	24.0	19.2
743690	Filters and purifying machinery	4.3	6.5	66.2
872200	Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical or veterinary sciences	3.5	9.3	37.6

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

Note: Detailed breakdown of 1999 imports into Qatar not yet available.

Table 5.8 Top 10 Sectors of Exports to Qatar, 1998, and U.S. Share, and Leading U.S. Sub-Sectors Within Each Top Sector

S.I.T.C. R-3 Sub-Sector	Sector/Sub-Sector Heading	U.S. (millions of US$)	Total (millions of US$)	U.S. Share (%)
71	**Power generating machinery**	**74**	**168**	**44.3**
714890	Other gas turbines	30		
714990	Parts for the gas turbines	28		
74	**General industrial machinery and equipment n.e.s. and machine parts n.e.s.**	**67**	**394**	**17.1**
741900	Parts for the machinery included at headings 7417 (generators) and 7418 (water heaters/sterilizers/hot drinks machinery, etc.)	11		
747000	Taps, cocks, valves and similar appliances for pipes, boiler shells, tanks and the like	10		
72	**Machinery, specialized**	**61**	**182**	**33.3**
723900	Parts n.e.s. of the machinery of headings 723000 (bulldozers/excavators, etc.) and 744300 (cranes/hoists/etc.)	48		

Table 5.8 Top 10 Sectors of Exports to Qatar, 1998, and U.S. Share, and Leading U.S. Sub-Sectors Within Each Top Sector				
S.I.T.C. R-3 Sub-Sector	**Sector/Sub-Sector Heading**	**U.S.**	**Total**	**U.S. Share (%)**
		(millions of US$)		
723330	Tamping machines and road	3		
723110	Bulldozers and angledozers	2		
728500	parts, n.e.s., of the machines and mechanical appliances of headings 72348 (bulldozers/excavators, etc.) and 72721 (food industry machinery)	2		
723290	Other self-propelled mechanical shovels, excavators and shovel-loaders	1		
78	**Road vehicles**	**44**	**354**	**12.4**
781210	Motor vehicles for the transport of persons of saloon type	24		
784300	Other parts and accessories of motor vehicles of Groups 722, 781, 782, 783 (building/construction)	8		
67	**Iron and steel**	**41**	**269**	**15.2**
679100	Tubes, pipes, and hollow profiles, seamless, of iron or steel	31		
79	**Other transport equipment**	**28**	**59**	**48.1**
792900	Parts, n.e.s. (not including tires, engines and electrical parts) of goods of Group 792 (transport equipment)	26		
77	**Electrical machinery, apparatus, appliances, n.e.s.**	**27**	**299**	**9.1**
772600	Boards, panels, consoles, and other bases for control of	14		
69	**Manufactures of metals, n.e.s.**	**20**	**302**	**6.6**
691100	Structures excluding prefabricated buildings of heading 811 and parts thereof	5		
699190	Other mountings, fittings and similar articles; base metal hat-rack and similar fixtures	9		
87	**Professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus, n.e.s.**	**14**	**45**	**31.3**
872200	Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical or veterinary sciences	4		
874300	Instruments and apparatus for physical or chemical analysis (e.g. polarimeters)	3		
00	**Live animals**	**12**	**46**	**26.1**
001500	Horses, asses, mules etc.	12		

Source: Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Qatar.

Note: Detailed breakdown of 1999 imports into Qatar not yet available.

Best Prospects for Agricultural Products:

Processed fruits and vegetables; frozen and chilled beef; dairy products, particularly cheeses; snack foods; frozen chicken parts; canned seafood; tree nuts, particularly almonds; fruit and vegetable juices; breakfast cereals and other miscellaneous food preparations, 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.

CHAPTER 6. 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 (GOQ). Prior to closing down the Arab Boycott of Israel Office in Doha in early 1995, the GOQ deleted unilaterally some giant foreign firms, including some U.S. corporations, from the blacklist. Qatar has lifted the secondary and tertiary aspects of the boycott and there is an Israeli Trade Representation Office in Doha.

Tariff Rates:

Tariffs are relatively low (4 percent) on a very wide range of products, including 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 GOQ 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 joint ventures 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.

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 expiration 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, and as of April 1, 2000 the importation and distribution of alcoholic liquor lie exclusively with the Qatar Distribution Company (QDC). 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 Qatar. 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 expiration 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 on an exceptional basis.

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 telephone numbers in Chapter 11).

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 serve 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 damage in transit to the goods covered under the L/C.

Standards:

Qatar and other GCC member states have recently established standards 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. This Agreement provides duty free access to all goods produced in the GCC States provided that the goods meet the 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 is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and was an observer in the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT). 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 CommerceP.O. Box 81, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 441-4333Fax: (974) 441-4959
Contact: Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim bin Fahd Al-Thani, Director
Mr. Miqbil Al-Hitmi, Assistant Director
Mr. Hijji Al-Malki, Office Director

CHAPTER 7. INVESTMENT CLIMATE

A.1 Openness to Foreign Investment:

Since the takeover of power in June 1995 by Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, this small country has attracted more foreign investment than it did throughout the first 24 years following independence from Britain in 1971. As a result, economic growth has been on an upward trend and the economy is expected to continue to expand at a rapid rate for the foreseeable future.

The main economic challenge which Qatar has confronted 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 US$ 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 World Trade Organization (WTO) standards. The long due new investment laws are expected to be promulgated by the end of 2000 or early 2001.

Until modified/enforced in the near future, current investment laws set foreign investment, as an equity, at no more than 49 percent, with the local partner with no less than 51 percent. While the private sector handles small foreign investments on its own, major foreign investments in the area of oil and natural gas are screened by the State-owned Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC) General Tender Committee/Technical Committee and the Board Of Directors who normally request higher authorities' endorsement. In both private and public sector foreign investment projects, personal contacts and local agents may be an asset.

The new codes are expected to ease the requirement for a local agent/sponsor and allow 100 percent ownership of foreign investment in certain sectors of the economy.

A2. 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 (GOQ) 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 US$ 0.27 or US$ 1.00 for QR 3.64, as set by the GOQ in June 1980 and unchanged since then.

Qatar does not delay remittance of foreign investment returns nor does it restrict 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. In certain cases involving possible money laundering, the Qatar Central Bank (QCB) may block entry of the investment funds. Foreign exchange is available at all times through banks and branches, and exchange companies.

A3. 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 handling Qatar's onshore operations in Dukhan on the west coast of the Qatari peninsula). The foreign interests were compensated promptly and fairly. Senior GOQ officials have referred to that act as "negotiation," not "nationalization".

A4. 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. If and when investment disputes do occur, Qatar accepts binding international arbitration between the GOQ and foreign investors. However, Qatari courts do not enforce judgments of other courts in disputes emanating from investment agreements made under the jurisdiction of other nations. Qatar and the U.S. have no reciprocity agreement on this matter. Resorting to arbitration to solve disputes can be more binding if 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.

A5. Performance requirements/incentives:

As a developing country, Qatar, which joined the WTO on January 13, 1996, is not yet in full compliance with the 1995 WTO/trips requirements which allow countries a five-year grace period to comply. The current investment laws do not allow foreign investors to expand their investments beyond limits set forth in the law, i.e., 49 and 51 percent in limited liability companies (see below).

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 were included as contribution to the foreign equity (20 or 25 percent), especially in the establishment of steel, fertilizer and petrochemical industries in the 1970s. This is still an accepted practice in Qatar. Unless otherwise stated in binding contracts, foreign equity cannot be diluted over time. The GOQ 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. Because of the increasing pressure on the public sector to provide jobs for the increasing number of Qatari graduates from local and foreign universities, the Council of Ministers decided in June 1997 that 20 percent of certain State-owned corporations should be in Qatari hands. In certain industries, this ratio is said to be in excess of 30 percent as of the year 2000. The investment law does not set performance requirements. However, tax holidays, access roads and land rentals are subject to negotiations. While screening 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. Qatar has no offset programs. Disclosure of financial and employment data is required but proprietary information is not.

A6. Right to private ownership and establishment:

Law No. 11 for the year 1981, as modified, controls the establishment of all private corporate business concerns in Qatar. This law is known as the Commercial Companies Law. Joint ventures involving foreign partners almost always take the form of limited liability partnerships. 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. Again, foreign investors may own up to 49 percent, and the Qatari partner no less than 51 percent, of a limited liability 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.

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 Telecom (formerly known as Qatar Public Telecommunication Corporation) (Q-Tel). Non-Qataris were allowed to invest in the privatized portion of this relatively large concern. By force of Emiri Decrees, foreign industrial firms have been allowed to own up to 25 percent in existing steel, fertilizer and petrochemical industries. Their contribution took the form of technology transfer and/or marketing expertise. It is generally believed that only Qatari nationals will be

allowed to own portions of the shares of those industries (with the GOQ's share 75 to 80 percent) in case of privatization. The GOQ is now looking at this step as a possible means of reinforcing private sector investment in the Qatari market.

A7. Protection of property rights:

On July 5, 2000, Qatar became a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as well as the Paris and the Berne Conventions. Within Qatar, owners of trade marks and copyrights and holders of patents have been dependent on Qatari laws and regulations for protection.

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

The Trademark 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 has been tasked with conducting meetings to exchange views on how to implement the patent law.

Copyright: On July 22, 1995, the GOQ promulgated Law No. 25 for the year 1995 on Intellectual Property and Copyright Protection. A special department called the "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 abolition 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. Recent spot checks on software and music video dealers and other such efforts suggest that 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. Although its staff has been expanded slightly recently, this Bureau has yet to be activated on a larger scale.

A8. Transparency of the regulatory system:

A member of the WTO since January 13, 1996, Qatar earlier participated in the GATT as an observer. As member of the GCC, it 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. In addition to the GCC economic agreement (1983), Qatar has signed economic/commercial cooperation agreements with several countries in recent years, including Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria and Israel. 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 religiously or politically sensitive items may be banned by the GOQ. Although tariffs are relatively low (4 percent on a very wide range of products), the GOQ 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). Tariffs in general are expected to go up when the GCC countries adopt a unified tariff code.

The Government's procurement regulations strongly favor Qatari and GCC nationals. According to an Emiri Decree issued in 1987, Qatari products are given priority in GOQ 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 GOQ 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.

As indicated earlier in this report, Qatar plans to issue new commercial and investment laws by the end of 2000. The new codes will ease the requirement for a local agent/sponsor and allow 100 percent ownership of investment in certain sectors of the economy.

A9. Efficient capital markets and portfolio investment:

In Qatar, there are no restrictions or incentives with regard to the export of capital and outward direct investment. As indicated above, the Qatari Riyal was pegged to the

U.S. dollar at the rate of US$ 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 82 branches operating in Qatar, including two Islamic banks. These include six Qatari-owned, two Arab and six foreign banks. A list comprising all banks and branches, as well as money exchange and insurance companies, is provided in 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 recently on a case by case basis.

The latest available data placed Qatar's banking sector assets at the end of 1999 at about QR 47.56 billion (US$ 13.1 billion). This represents an increase of about QR 4.0 billion (US$ 1.1 billion) above the 1998 level. Qatar's imports of various kinds of goods were estimated in 1999 at about QR 11.5 billion (US$ 3.1 billion). 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. However, in mid-1996, three leading Qatari banks (Qatar National Bank, Doha Bank and Commercial Bank of Qatar) provided a syndicated loan worth QR 200 million (US$ 55 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 US$ 1 billion in June 1999. More bonds are under consideration, possibly before January 2001.

Table 7.1: The Banking and Financial System of Qatar

Bank/Company (No. of Branches)	**Year Est.**
The Central Bank of Qatar (Formerly Qatar Monetary Agency)	1973
Commercial Banks: National:	
Al-Ahli Bank of Qatar (7)	1984
Doha Bank Ltd. (10)	1979
Qatar Industrial Development Bank (1)	1996
Qatar International Islamic Bank (4)	1990
Qatar Islamic Bank (12)	1983
Qatar National Bank (24)	1965
The Commercial Bank of Qatar (12)	1976
Commercial Banks: Arab:	
Mashreq Bank Psc (Formerly Bank of Oman)(1)	1971
The Arab Bank Ltd. (3)	1958
Commercial Banks: Foreign:	
ANZ Grindlays Bank Ltd. (1)	1956
Bank Saderat Iran (1)	1970
Banque Paribas (1)	1973
HSBC (Formerly British Bank of the Middle East)(3)	1954
Standard Chartered Bank (1)	1950
United Bank (1)	1970
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
Non-Banking System:	
Insurance Companies: National:	
Al-Khaleej Insurance Co.	1978
Doha Insurance Co.	2000
Qatar General Insurance and Re-Insurance Co.	1978
Qatar Insurance Co.	1964
Qatar Islamic Insurance Co.	1992
Insurance Companies: 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	

Credit facilities are provided to local and foreign investors within the framework of standard international banking procedures. Foreign investors are usually required to have a guarantee from their local sponsor/local equity partner. However, in accordance with central bank guidelines, banks operating in Qatar 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.

In addition, the Qatar Central Bank does not allow "cross-sharing" and "stable shareholder" arrangements among banks and other business concerns which result in fewer shares of some corporations actually trading freely in the market.

Qatar's stock exchange, known as the Doha Securities Market (DSM), was officially inaugurated on May 26, 1997. As of March 22, 2000, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nationals are allowed to trade on the DSM which was earlier open only to Qataris. This is in accordance with the amended unified GCC rules for the possession and dealing by GCC nationals of shares as endorsed by the 15th GCC Summit held in Bahrain in 1994. However, GCC nationals will not be allowed to trade in banks, exchanges, or insurance companies. Further gradual opening of this market to foreign investors is anticipated.

The trade and building/construction sectors receive a disproportionate share of bank credit operations. These two sectors 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.

Note: A list of banks with contact details is provided at the end of this chapter.

A10. Political violence:

Qatar has been politically stable. A strict internal security system has ensured 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 1999 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 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.

A11. Corruption:

The only one of its kind, 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 and the individuals concerned continued on the payroll.

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 are not available for corruption cases that could have constituted an obstacle to foreign investment. 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 (US$ 275). Criminal Law No. 14 for the year 1971 has not been modified. Qatar is not a participant in regional anti-corruption initiatives. No regional or local watchdog organization operates in this country. Unlike local firms, foreign investors are subject to corporate taxes. Violation is viewed as a crime.

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

B. Bilateral Investment Agreements:

Over the past ten years, Qatar has signed protocol investment promotion agreements with several Arab and foreign countries, including Romania, Germany, France, Bosnia, Indonesia and most Arab countries. These agreements have been the result of official visits at the highest and Ministerial levels between Qatar and the countries mentioned above. None of the agreements has yet been activated.

C. OPIC and other investment insurance programs:

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

Qatar has no plans to become a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

D. Labor:

Qatar's labor force consists primarily 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 Department of Labor of the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs 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 the respective country's position on certain issues of interest to Qatar.

Internally, Qatar's plan to develop its own manpower resources at all levels has continued to receive attention at all Government levels. However, Qatar 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 with a permanent residence visa in Qatar is only entitled to two sponsorship transfers throughout his/her stay in Qatar, provided he/she is below 60 years of age. The official fee for each transfer is about US$ 275. Government 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. Recent modifications in such rules allow workers on a one-year "work visa" to change their sponsorship overnight without being subject to the two-year rule for holders of permanent residence visas.

In early 1999, the Ministry of Interior decided to impose a fee of QR 1,000 (US$ 275) for each year of residency given to expatriate workers and employees, an increase of QR 950 (US$ 261) over the previously prevailing fee of QR 50 (US$ 14). Under the new rules, wives and children pay QR 500 (US$ 137) and QR 300 (US$ 82) respectively. Despite efforts and recommendations made by Qatar'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. Expatriates are charged for medical expenses for hospitalization, surgeries, and medicines.

It is common practice in Qatar for expatriate workers and staff to be provided accommodation, end of service benefits and return tickets to fly home every one or two years, in addition to salaries. 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).

Qatari laws do not allow formation of labor unions and trade associations. In the absence of such unions, workers have in recent months publicly started demanding rights, especially in matters involving non-payment of salaries for several months. Their normal recourse is the Department of Labor in the Ministry of Civil Service and Housing. This department has mediated amicable solutions in some cases while referring many others to the court.

E. Foreign trade zones:

Not applicable.

F. Foreign direct investments statistics:

In recent years, Qatar has attracted sizeable investments in the areas of enhanced oil recovery and production, as well as the development of Qatar's liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry. During the past ten years, the State-owned Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC) and other equity partners/investors have established LNG industries and related facilities/services upstream and downstream estimated at US$ 10 billion. The development of Qatar's offshore reserves at the North Gas Field will continue to loom over all projects in attracting foreign investors. Qatar's LNG industry has attracted investors/creditors from the U.S., European countries and Japan. The U.S. firm Exxon-Mobil alone has invested about US$ 1.5 billion as equity shareholder in Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas) 10 percent and Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (Rasgas) 30 percent.

Leading U.S. oil companies such as Occidental, Arco (part of the BP-Amoco Group), Pennzoil and Chevron are currently operating under production sharing agreements for enhanced oil recovery/production. The U.S. investment in the Qatari market (mainly in the oil and gas sector) is estimated unofficially in excess of US$ 8 billion.

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

Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO): Equity share capital: QR 360 million (US$ 99 million). Shareholders: GOQ 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: Unknown.

Qatar Fertilizer Company (QAFCO): Equity share capital: QR 100 million (US$ 27.5 million). Shareholders: GOQ 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: Unknown.

Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas): Equity share capital: QR 500 million (US$ 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. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (Rasgas): Equity share capital: QR 7.28 billion (US$ 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. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Qatar Chemicals Company (Q-Chem): QGPC 51 percent; Phillips Investment Company 49 percent. Phillips Investment Company is a subsidiary of the Oklahoma-based Philips Petroleum Company. The joint venture agreement between QGPC and Phillips Investment, signed in November 1997, has a term of 25 years from the commercial operation date, with automatic extension for a further 15 years. Established: October 6, 1998, by Emiri Decree. Objectives: To undertake the development, construction, ownership and operation of a world-scale petrochemical complex for the production, marketing, export and sale of ethylene, polyethylene, hexene-1 and certain associated by-products. End-users: Asia, Europe, Middle East and Africa. Commencement of commercial production: The project is scheduled to be completed and fully operational by October 2002, although it is expected to be commissioned earlier that year. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Qatar Fuel Additives Company (QAFAC): Equity share capital: QR 1.2 billion (US$ 330 million) (total capital QR 2.5 billion (US$ 687 million)); (QGPC) (50 percent), Chinese Petroleum Corporation (Taiwan) (20 percent), Lee Chang Yung Chemical Industry Corporation (Taiwan) (15 percent) and International Octane Ltd. (Canada)

(15 percent). Established: By Emiri Decree No. 20 in 1992. Objectives: To produce 830,000 mtpa of methanol and 610,000 mtpa of MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether). End-users: Worldwide. Commencement of commercial production: Formally inaugurated on October 12, 1999, QAFAC was actually commissioned ahead of schedule on July 1, 1999, and exported its first shipment of methanol on August 25, 1999. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Qatar Vinyl Company (QVC): QGPC 25.5 percent, State-owned Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO) 31.9 percent, Elf Atochem 12.9 percent, Norsk Hydro 29.7 percent. Established: On December 8, 1996, as a joint venture company. Objectives: To produce ethylene di-chloride (EDC) 175,000 tpa, vinyl chloride monomer (VCM) 230,000 tpa and caustic soda 290,000 tpa. End-users: Asian countries. Construction commenced May 1999. Commencement of commercial production: Mid-2001. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Contact information for investment-related inquiries:

A. Banks:

Central Bank of Qatar
H.E. Abdullah bin Khalid Al-Attiyah, Governor
P.O. Box 1234, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 445-6456 Fax: (974) 441-5587

Al-Ahli Bank of Qatar
Mr. Asaad Abdu Koshaish, General Manager
P. O. Box 2309, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 432-6611 Fax: (974) 444-4652

Arab Bank Ltd.
Mr. Ghassan Ahmed Bundakji, Senior Manager
P. O. Box 172, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 443-7979 Fax: (974) 441-0774

Bank Saderat Iran
Mr. Mohammed Zamani, Manager
P. O. Box 2256, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 441-4646 Fax: (974) 443-0121

Banque Paribas
Mr. Christian De La Touche, General Manager
P. O. Box 2636, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 443-3844/7 Fax: (974) 441-0861

HSBC Bank Middle East (formerly British Bank of the Middle East)
Mr. Matthew Smith, Chief Executive Officer

P. O. Box 57, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 438-2222 Fax: (974) 441-6353; (974) 438-2247 (CEO)

Commercial Bank of Qatar Ltd.
Mr. T. P. Nunan, General Manager
P. O. Box 3232, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 449-0222 Fax: (974) 444-3807; (974) 432-0716 (GM)

Doha Bank Ltd.
Mr. Mohammad Atiq, Acting General Manager
P. O. Box 3818, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 445-6600; (974) 445-6611 (GM)Fax: (974) 441-6631; (974) 435-5288 (GM)

Grindlays Bank Plc
Mr. John Fleming Murray, General Manager
P. O. Box 2001, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 447-3700 Fax: (974) 447-3710

Mashreq Bank Psc
Mr. Adel Al-Mannai, General Manager
P. O. Box 173, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 441-3213/7 Fax: (974) 441-3880

Qatar Industrial Development Bank
Mr. Maqbool Habib Khalfan, General Manager
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Qatar International Islamic Bank
Mr. Abdulbasit Al-Sheibi, General Manager
P. O. Box 664, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 433-2600 Fax: (974) 444-4101

Qatar Islamic Bank
Mr. Marwan Awad, General Manager
P. O. Box 559, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 443-8000; (974) 443-9498Fax: (974) 441-2700

Qatar National Bank
Mr. John Finigan, General Manager
P. O. Box 1002, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 440-7407 Fax: (974) 441-3753

Standard Chartered Bank Plc
Mr. Aris Mansoor, General Manager

P. O. Box 29, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 441-4251 Fax: (974) 441-3739

United Bank Ltd.
Mr. Mohammed Abdul Raouf, General Manager
P. O. Box 242, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 443-8666 Fax: (974) 442-4600

B. Stock exchange:

Doha Securities Market, P.O. Box 22114, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 432-5737Fax: (974) 432-6470
Contact: Dr. Hussain Abdullah, Director; Dr. Ghanim Al-Hammadi, Manager of Brokers and Circulation Department

C. Economic Commercial Section:

American Embassy, P.O. Box 2399, Doha, Qatar
Tel: (974) 488-4101; Comm.: (974) 488-4165
Fax: (974) 488-4298; Comm: (974) 488-4163
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Contacts: Ambassador Elizabeth McKune; Darrin Hink, Economic Commercial Officer; Jiryis H. Khoury, Economic Commercial Advisor; Sima Carri, Commercial Clerk

CHAPTER 8. 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 the Qatar Monetary Agency (QMA) in 1973, the QCB was inaugurated in 1993 by Law No. 14 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. QCB was created at a time when the economy of Qatar had reached some degree of maturity enabling the banking sector to reflect Qatar'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 total assets of commercial banks witnessed steady growth during this period, reaching in 1999 QR 47.6 billion (US$ 13.1 billion), from the 1998

level, QR 42.5 billion (US$ 11.7 billion). In previous years, the assets were: 1995: QR 34.2 billion (US$ 9.4 billion), 1996: QR 33.9 billion (US$ 9.3 billion) and 1997: QR 38.5 billion (US$ 10.6 billion).

There is no deposit insurance scheme in Qatar. 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. When Iraq occupied Kuwait in 1990, the GOQ assured all banks of its support in case of sizeable outflow of deposits to foreign markets. The GOQ stands firm 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 Qatar'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 annual financial statements of all banks operating in Qatar comply with international standards and that the auditing process is carried out by internally recognized auditors. As a safeguard, the QCB requires that auditors be changed every three or four years.

Tables 8.1 through 8.11 show various aspects of banking operations of the Qatar Central Bank and commercial banks in Qatar, for the years 1995 through 1999.

In Qatar, the Government is usually the end-user of the banking sector credit facilities. Banking sector credit facilities to the GOQ ranged from 42.5 percent of total credit operations in 1994 to 47.4 percent in 1998, with a high of 49.9 percent in 1996. The GOQ is expected to continue to be the leading borrower in the local market. Other borrowers are: Merchants: this sector's share of borrowings has declined steadily from 22.4 percent in 1995 to 15.7 percent in 1998; Housing sector: this sector reached a high of 8.1 percent in 1996 and declined to 3.4 percent in 1998; Industry: hovering around 1.5 percent; and Individuals: 16 to 24 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.

Table 8.1: Financial Statement of the Qatar Central Bank, 1995 –1999

(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Gold	151.4	151.4	57.0	56.5	20.2
Foreign Government securities	1,530.5	1,469.8	1,845.3	2,832.5	2,442.8
Balances with foreign banks	739.2	600.2	784.1	604.0	1,932.5
Balances with Local Banks	205.2	211.9	343.4	1,592.9	81.6
Interest Receivable	31.2	27.0	-	-	-
IMF Reserve Position	288.8	288.8	288.8	288.8	649.3
IMF Share A/C	162.3	157.0	-	-	-
SDR Dept. Deposit at IMF A/C	114.8	117.9	-	-	-
Unclassified assets	488.4	614.5	767.0	380.6	1,763.4

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

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 US$ 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.

Table 8.2: Major Indicators for Banking Sector

US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980				
Particulars	**1998 (QR Million)**	**1999 (QR Million)**	**Change**	
			Value (QR Million)	(%)
The Banking System:				
Money Supply (M1)	4,216.20	4,178.60	-37.60	-0.9
Quasi Money (M2-M1)	19,116.80	21,803.60	2,686.80	14.1
Money Supply (M2)	23,333.00	25,982.10	2,649.10	11.4
Foreign Assets (net)	4,935.90	5,496.70	560.80	11.4
Domestic Credit (net)	23,269.90	21,973.10	-1,296.80	-5.6
Domestic Assets (net)	18,397.10	20,485.40	2,088.30	11.4
Qatar Central Bank:				
Money in Circulation	1,729.20	2195.6	466.40	27.0
Foreign Assets	3,493.00	4,396.60	903.60	25.9
Ownership Rights	1,140.90	1,219.70	78.80	6.9
Commercial Banks:				
Total Deposits	27,082.00	30808.5	3,726.50	13.8
Private Sector Deposits	21,833.70	24,268.20	2,434.50	11.2
Private Deposits in Foreign Currencies	5,773.20	6,857.90	1,084.70	18.8
Total Domestic Credit	28,597.50	28,540.80	-56.70	-0.2
Private Sector Credit	14,428.40	15,639.80	1,211.40	8.4
Foreign Assets (net)	3009.1	3094.1	85.00	2.8
Own Resources	7,338.20	7,992.40	654.20	8.9
Ownership Rights	4,740.40	5,389.40	649.00	13.7

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.3: Commercial Banks Liabilities					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1999**
Foreign Currency Liabilities:					
Deposits	6,859.3	7,565.8	8,538.0	9,357.5	11,316.6

Bank Deposits	138.9	3,347.9	4,047.8	4,759.7	5,311.8
Interbank Borrowings	6,406.8	561.7	724.0	796.5	906.7
Liabilities in QR:					
Deposits	13,026.1	14,482.5	16,103.9	17,724.5	19,491.9
Bank Deposits	64.1	204.2	371.1	375.5	266.6
Due to QCB	69.0	60.1	139.7	71.8	94.4
Interbank Borrowings	212.8	42.1	7.8	0.0	15.0
Margins	86.7	80.0	104.1	89.5	51.3
Capital Accounts	3,536.4	3,783.9	4,254.5	4,740.4	5,389.4
Provisions	2,423.3	2,442.6	2,496.0	2,572.3	2,228.2
Other Liabilities	1,425.5	1,314.7	1,672.3	2,009.6	2,228.2
Total Liabilities	**34,248.9**	**33,885.5**	**38,459.2**	**42,497.3**	**47,549.4**

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.4: Commercial Banks Assets					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Reserves:					
Cash in QR	154.4	164.3	199.7	229.8	481.6

Due from QCB	584.9	687.8	718.9	833.9	687.2
Assets in Foreign Currencies:					
Cash in QR	8.3	9.8	14.3	18.7	65.1
Balances with Banks in Qatar	153.3	216.4	206.8	206.2	453.8
Balance with Banks Abroad	6,253.1	4,245.7	4,460.8	3,987.1	5,106.8
Balances with Head Office or Branches Abroad	2,653.8	1,890.1	2,841.7	2,185.9	1,808.4
Investments Abroad	358.9	273.5	324.9	306.5	344.1
Assets in QR:					
Balances with Banks Abroad	7.3	1.5	4.1	6.0	14.3
Balances with Head Office or Branches Abroad	63.5	40.6	24.8	29.2	67.5
Balances with Banks in Qatar	226.4	131.5	246.7	340.1	314.4
Overdrafts	7,819.2	8,835.9	9,500.6	12,567.4	12,266.9
Bills Discounted	405.8	279.2	280.1	240.3	274.8
Loans & Advances	12,838.3	13,576.4	15,431.7	17,116.3	17,014.1
Domestic Investments	1,531.1	1,583.8	2,392.3	2,613.8	6,723.4
Fixed Assets	228.9	208.1	252.7	279.8	295.4
Other Assets	961.6	902.7	1,559.1	1,536.3	1,731.6
Total Assets	34,248.9	33,885.5	38,459.2	42,497.3	475,649.4

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.5: Uses of Funds By Commercial Banks (1995-1999)
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals, unless otherwise indicated)

US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Total Assets	32,974.9	32,357.2	36,205.2	40,550.8	41,875.5
Domestic Credit	19,147.1	21,268.3	23,896.9	28,597.5	28,540.8
Foreign Assets	13,827.8	11,088.9	12,308.3	11,953.3	13,334.7
Cash & Balance with QCB	747.6	861.9	932.9	1,082.4	1,586.2
Balance with Qatari Banks	153.3	216.4	206.8	206.2	453.8
Fixed Assets	228.9	208.1	252.7	279.8	295.4
Other Assets	961.4	902.7	1,559.1	1,536.3	1,731.6
Credit to Total Assets (%)	58.1	65.7	66.0	70.5	68.2
Foreign Assets to Total Assets (%)	41.9	34.3	34.0	29.5	31.8
Cash Assets to Total Assets (%)	2.3	2.7	2.6	2.7	3.8
Total Deposits	19,885.4	22,048.3	24,641.9	27,082.0	30,808.5
Cash Assets To Total Deposits (%)	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.0	5.1

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.6: Distribution of Domestic Credit Facilities of Commercial Banks By Economic Purposes (1995-1999)					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Public Sector	8,925.9	11,062.0	11,409.3	14,169.1	12,901.0
Merchandise	4,292.5	4,146.5	4,407.6	4,597.5	4,574.6
Industry	310.2	300.5	378.4	428.3	404.8
Agriculture	30.4	14.3	16.7	14.7	19.3
Housing & Construction	549.6	665.2	315.1	738.7	851.0
Land	119.7	108.7	154.3	249.1	207.5
Transportation	265.3	259.9	270.8	356.0	339.4
Personal	3,814.4	3,336.8	5,806.2	6,937.5	7,892.5
Professionals	107.6	94.7	79.2	79.7	111.7
Others	731.5	1,279.7	1,059.3	1,026.6	1,239.0
Outside Qatar	1,916.2	2,261.4	1,315.5	1,326.5	1,015.0
Total	**21,063.3**	**23,529.7**	**25,212.4**	**29,924.0**	**29,555.8**

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.7: Distribution of Domestic Credit Facilities of Commercial Banks By Economic Purposes (1995-1999) (Percentage)

Table 8.7: Distribution of Domestic Credit Facilities of Commercial Banks By Economic Purposes (1995-1999) (Percentage)					
Particulars	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Public Sector	42.4	47.0	45.3	47.4	43.6
Merchandise	20.4	17.6	17.5	15.4	15.5
Industry	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.4
Agriculture	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
Housing & Construction	2.6	2.8	1.2	2.5	2.9
Land	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.7
Transportation	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1
Personal	18.1	14.2	23.0	23.2	26.7
Professionals	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4
Others	3.5	5.4	4.2	3.4	4.2
Outside Qatar	9.1	9.6	5.2	4.4	3.4
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.8: Deposits of Commercial Banks and Ratio of Bank Credit To Deposits (1995-1999)					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals, unless otherwise indicated)					
US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 as set by the Government of Qatar since June 1980					
Particulars	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Total Deposits	19,885.4	22,048.3	24,641.9	27,082.0	30,808.5
Foreign Currency Deposits	6,859.3	7,565.8	8,538.0	9,357.5	11,316.6
Local Currency Deposits	13,026.1	14,482.5	16,103.9	17,724.5	19,491.9
Domestic Credit	21,063.3	23,529.7	25,212.4	29,924.0	29,555.8
Credit to Total Deposits (%)	105.9	106.7	102.3	110.5	95.9
Credit to Qatari Riyal Deposits (%)	161.7	162.5	156.6	168.8	151.6

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.9: Total Assets, Deposits, Loans and Advances, Shareholders' Equity and Profit of All Banks In Qatar, As On December 31, 1998 (latest available data)					
(All values in millions of Qatari Riyals)					
US$ 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**
Qatari Banks:					
Qatar National Bank	19,487	10,737	16,140	3,181	422.7
Doha Bank Limited	4,545	3,433	2,416	392	80.1
Commercial Bank of Qatar	4,387	3,207	2,557	481	87.2
Al Ahli Bank of Qatar	2,373	1,943	1,248	234	59.5
Qatar Islamic Bank	3,743	3,063	3,042	290	65.1
Qatar International Islamic Bank	1,551	1,282	1,327	121	25.6
Industrial Development Bank	150		3	109	1.6
Total Qatari Banks:	36,236	23,665	26,733	4,808	741.8
Total Foreign Banks:	5,975	4,512	3,374	529	116.6
Total	42,211	28,177	30,107	5,337	858.4

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

Table 8.10: Total Assets, Deposits, Loans and Advances, Shareholders' Equity and Profit of All Banks In Qatar, As On December 31, 1998 (latest available data)
(Percentage)

Bank	Total Assets	Deposits	Loans and Advances	Share Equity	Profit
Qatari Banks:					
Qatar National Bank	46.2	38.1	53.6	59.6	49.2
Doha Bank Limited	10.8	12.2	8.0	7.3	9.3
Commercial Bank of Qatar	10.4	11.4	8.5	9.0	10.2
Al Ahli Bank of Qatar	5.6	6.9	4.1	4.4	6.9
Qatar Islamic Bank	8.9	10.9	10.1	5.4	7.6
Qatar International Islamic Bank	3.7	4.5	4.4	2.3	3.0
Industrial Development Bank	0.4	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.2
Total Qatari Banks:	85.8	84.0	88.8	90.1	86.4
Total Foreign Banks:	14.2	16.0	11.2	9.9	13.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Qatar Central Bank.

At the end of 1999, total assets of all banks operating in Qatar was estimated at about QR 47.56 billion (US$ 13.1 billion). In 1999, Qatar's imports of various kinds of goods were estimated at about QR 11.5 billion (US$ 3.1 billion). Almost all import transactions are controlled by standard Letters of Credit processed by local banks and corresponding banks in the exporting countries. Most 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 letter of credit 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.

Table 8.11: International Syndicated Financing for Qatari Companies				
Borrowing Organization	**Project**	**Year Project Launched**	**Amount (US$)**	**Source of Funds**

Qatar General Petroleum (QGPC)	Construction of Ras Laffan Port	1992	590	Mediocredito
Qatar Gas	Qatar Gas downstream project	1994	1995	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi
Qatar Petrochemicals Co.(QAPCO)	Ethylene plant	1994	200	Paribas, QNB
Qatar Fertilizers Co.	QAFCO II ammonia plant	1994	368	Paribas, German & Italian Export credits
Qatar Shipping Co.	Ship financing	1994	20	Gulf International Bank
QGPC and Mobil Qatargas Inc.	Qatargas Upstream Project	1996	570	Credit Lyonnaise, BZQ, Credit Suisse
QGPC	Ras Laffan Port Facilities	1996	864	Japanese syndicate
QGPC	Qatargas third train	1996	550	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi
RasGas	Financing of LNG trains	1996	1350	IBJ and Credit Suisse
RasGas	LNG plant bond financing	1996	400	Goldman Sachs, CSFB
RasGas	LNG plant bond financing	1996	800	Goldman Sachs, CSFB
Qatar Shipping Co.	Ship financing	1996	29	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi
Qatar Fuel Additives Co. (QAFAC)	Construction of MTBE/methanol plant	1997	350	Paribas, GIB, EDC
National Oil Distribution Co. (NODCO)	Refinery expansion project	1998	510	Barclays Bank
Qatar Vinyl Company (QVC)	Ethylene dichloride and VCM Plant	1998	415	Apicorp, CSFB, Paribas
Qatar National Hotels Co.(QNH)	New five-star hotel	1998	100	Qatar National Bank
QGPC Finance (Cayman) Ltd.	Natural gas liquids (NGL) plant	1999	400	Barclays, HSBC, Apicorp and Chase
Qatar Chemical Company (Q-Chem)	Polyethylene and ethylene hexane-1 plant	1999	750	NatWest, HSBC, Barclays, IBJ and Apicorp

Source: Private banking sources.

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 12 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 Qatar. Qatar's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) industry is 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 US$ 6 billion.

Because it is beyond the capacity of the local private banking system to finance oil and gas related upstream and downstream mega projects, the State-owned corporations and other corporations in which the State is a major shareholder, have resorted to foreign banking houses for the implementation of major projects in the oil and natural gas field. Some of those loans were State-guaranteed.

Table 8.11 provides a review of company borrowings, sources and line of business.

See Section A9, Chapter 7, Investment Climate Statement, for more information on banks in Qatar

CHAPTER 9. BUSINESS TRAVEL

Travel to Qatar is no longer restricted to business – 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 (GOQ) 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 GOQ 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 US$ 30.00. This fee may be waived if the visitor is sponsored by the GOQ.

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 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM, Saturday through Wednesday. Most Government and semi-Government organizations are closed for the weekend on Thursday-Friday or Friday-Saturday. The private sector usually works six days a week, closing only on Fridays.

Local Time:

Qatar local time is GMT plus 3 hours.

Holidays:

Officially, Qatar uses the Gregorian calendar. The Hijra (Islamic) calendar is also widely used. Religious holidays vary from year to year, as they are determined by moon sightings. Eid Al-Fitr (four days) marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan (during which business hours are restricted) and Eid Al-Adha marks the conclusion of the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca. The only fixed holiday is the Qatari Independence Day on 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 Qatar 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 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 that 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 is 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 port facility for Qatar Flour Mill Company to handle wheat imports to Qatar have been completed.

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 (US$ 1 billion), about 50 miles north of Doha on Qatar's East coast is used for exporting Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to world markets. Actual shipments of LNG from this port began in December 1996. The port is also 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 services Qatar. Doha International Airport is used by 20 international passenger airlines and 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 adjacent to the present one. The contract was valued at US$ 120 million.

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 telephone 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 telephones.

Housing:

Doha, the capital, is also Qatar'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 housing, the Government and the private sector have resorted to establishing housing complexes of various traditional and western designs.

It has been a common practice 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 US$ 5000 a month, some houses are now available at about half this rate. In newer housing complexes, three-bedroom villas are available at a monthly rent of US$ 2200, and four-bedroom villas at US$ 2,700. Qatari landlords usually require a one year lease with advance payment of six months' rent. 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. Due to declining oil production and revenues in the late 1980's and 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 birth registration. While medicines are generally dispersed free of charge for Qatari patients, the expatriate communities pay a nominal charge for all medicines.

Visitors to Qatar are required to pay for all medical services throughout their visit to Qatar. Prior to undergoing surgery, a resident expatriate patient is requested to donate blood.

There are numerous private clinics, all licensed by the State through the Ministry of Public Health. In 1982, the 660-bed Hamad General Hospital was inaugurated. A 300-bed Maternity Hospital, the only one of its kind in this country, operates under Hamad General Hospital. The Government owns and operates two other hospitals. Rumaillah Hospital handles geriatrics, rehabilitation and cosmetic surgery and provides basic treatment for psychological diseases. It should be noted that health insurance is not a common practice in Qatar.

Food:

Makhbous (rice with roast sheep) is the most common food in the Gulf. 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 also widely available.

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 five-star hotels in Doha which have international standards.

A wide variety of foodstuffs is imported into Qatar throughout the year in order to cater to the tastes of the large expatriate community. 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 the home of 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 may serve alcoholic drinks at home. In accordance with Islamic laws and regulations, pork and pork derivatives are not allowed to be brought into Qatar.

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; Tel: (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) 488-4101 or (974) 488-4165, or by fax at (974) 488-4298 or (974) 488-4163, or e-mail at: bfif97@qatar.net.qa

CHAPTER 10. ECONOMIC AND TRADE STATISTICS

Country Data:

Population: 522,023 (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.

Domestic Economy:

GDP:

1998:	US$ 10.5 billion
1999, provisional:	US$ 11.7 billion
2000, projected:	US$ 12.9 billion

GDP Growth Rate:

1998:	-7.4 percent
1999, provisional:	8.9 percent
2000, projected:	10.3 percent

GDP per capita:

1998:	US$ 20,038
1999:	US$ 21,841
2000, projected:	US$ 23,644

Government spending as a percent of GDP:

1998:	44.4 percent
1999:	32.0 percent
2000, projected:	US$ 23,644

Inflation (Consumer Price Index, base year 1988 = 100):

1998:	2.9 percent
1999:	2.2 percent
2000, projected:	2.5 percent

Unemployment: Not applicable.

Foreign Exchange Reserves:Foreign currency: 1999: US$ 5.6 million, gold reserves.

Exchange rate for US$ 1.00 = QR 3.64 (as set by the GOQ in 1980 and unchanged since then).

Foreign Debt: Not officially available. Current Estimate: US$ 12 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.

Trade:

Qatar's Imports:

From all countries:

1998:	US$ 3,071 million
1999:	US$ 3,184 million
2000, projected:	US$ 3,297 million

From USA:

1998:	US$ 478 million
1999:	US$ 285 million
2000, projected:	US$ 369 million

Qatar's Exports:

To all countries:

1998:	US$ 5,032 million
1999:	US$ 5,327 million
2000, projected:	US$ 5,622 million

To USA:

1998:	US$ 136 million
1999:	US$ 144 million
2000, projected:	US$ 152 million

(Source of 1998, 1999 data: Qatar Central Bank and Central Statistical Organization)

Investment Statistics:

U.S. investment is currently estimated at over US$ 8 billion. For further information, please see Chapter 7: Investment Climate.

CHAPTER 11. U.S. AND COUNTRY CONTACTS

U.S. and Country Contacts:

Note:

1. The country code for Qatar is 974 for all telephone and fax numbers.
2. There are no area codes within Qatar.
3. Telephone numbers in Qatar, as of June 7, 2000, are all uniformly of seven-digits. This includes: normal telephones, faxes, mobile telephones, bleepers (i.e. pagers). While mobile telephone numbers (beginning with the number 5) and bleepers (beginning with the number 2) were already of seven-digits, telephone and fax numbers were converted to the 7-digit format with the addition of "4" at the beginning of each number.
4. Telephone/fax numbers are liable to change without notice.

U.S. Embassy trade related contacts:

Embassy of the United States of America
Ambassador: Elizabeth McKune
Economic Commercial Officer: Darrin Hink
Economic Commercial Advisor: Jiryis H. Khoury
Commercial Clerk: Sima Carri
P.O. Box 2399
Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (Comm): (974) 488-4165 or (Embassy): (974) 488-4101
Fax: (Comm): (974) 488-4163 or (Embassy): (974) 488-4298
E-mail: bfif97@qatar.net.qa

Agricultural Trade Office
Ron Verdonk, Regional Director
P.O. Box 9343
Dubai, U.A.E.
Tel: (971-4) 331-4063
Fax: (971-4) 331-4998

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Home page: http://www.usembabu.gov.ae/atodubai.thm
(Covers: Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and U.A.E.)

Amcham and/or Bilateral Business Councils:

U.S. Qatar Business Council
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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.
Tel: (415) 398-9200
Fax: (415) 398-7111

American Business Council
President: Vacant
P.O. Box 8388, Doha, State of Qatar
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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
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Fax: (974) 462-1131

Management:
Dr. Majid Al-Malki, Director-General
Mr. Nasser Al-Fayhanni, Office Director
Mr. Nasser Al-Dulaimi, Public Relations Manager [Tel: (974) 442-3677]

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
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Fax: (974) 443-7660

Economic Studies Department:
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Mr. Bashir Yousef Al-Kahlout, Economic Researcher
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Tel: (974) 441-2942; (974) 441-6964; (974) 442-7370

Legal Affairs Department:
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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
Tel: (974) 442-2322; (974) 441-5299; (974) 436-1639
Fax: (974) 443-7660

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 [Tel: (974) 449-1381, Fax: (974) 483-6994]
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Department of Industrial Affairs:
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Ministry of Communications and Transport:
Minister's Office:
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Office of the Undersecretary:
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Department of Post:
Mr. Mohammed Ali, Director
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Department of Ports:
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Minister's Office:
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Mr. Jaber Hajaj Al-Shahwani, Office Director [Tel: (974) 441-3580, Fax: (974) 441-3395]

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Director of Agricultural Development Dept.
(Live plants and pesticide import regulations)
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Fax: (974)432-2002

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Dr. Majid R. Al-Kuwari
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Minister's Office:
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Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Dashti, Office Director
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Department of Economic Affairs:
Mr. Ali Al-Khalaf, Director
Mr. Saud Al-Jufairi, Assistant [Tel: (974) 441-3566, Fax: (974) 441-3682]
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Fax: (974) 441-5731

Department of Commercial Affairs:
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Commercial Registration:
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Commercial Agencies:
Mr. Abdullah Sultan Al-Asiri, Manager
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Trademark:
Mr. Ahmed Al-Jufairi, Manager
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Intellectual Property Rights Department:
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Exhibitions Department:
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Mr. Yousuf Al-Zaini, Head of International Affairs
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Central Tenders Committee:
Mr. Khalifa Al-Hitmi, Director
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Standards, Measurements & Consumer Protection:
H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Saud Al-Thani, Director
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Fax: (974) 447-8849

Customs Department:
Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim bin Fahd Al-Thani, Director
Mr. Miqbil Al-Hitmi, Assistant Director
Mr. Hijji Al-Malki, Office Director
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Ministry of Public Health:
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Office of the Minister:
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Mr. Hitmi Mubarak Al-Hitmi, Office Manager
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Fax: (974) 435-0012

Mr. Turki Al-Khater, Undersecretary

Dr. Khalifa Al-Jaber, Assistant Undersecretary/Technical
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Fax: (974) 444-2722

Pharmaceuticals and Medicines Control Department:

Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Hail, Director
Dr. Aisha Al-Malki, Drug Registration [Tel: (974) 449-3187]
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Ministry of Interior:
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Logistics Department:
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Ministry of Defense:
Qatar Armed Forces
Procurement Department, General Headquarters
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Fax: (974) 4433-464

Government/Quasi-Government Organizations:

Qatar General Petroleum Corporation:
H.E. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah (Minister of Electricity and Water/Energy and Industry), Chairman and Managing Director
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Tel: (974) 449-1491
Fax: (974) 483-6999

Public Relations Department:
Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Malki, Director
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 449-1391
Fax: (974) 483-1484

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
Tel: (974) 449-1348

Exploration and Development of New Ventures Department:
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 449-1288; (974) 483-3091
Fax: (974) 483-1850
Mr. Nasser K. Jaidah, Director
Mr. Rashid Ahmed Al-Sulaiti, Manager, Exploration and Joint Ventures [Tel: (974) 483-1286]
Mr. Ismail Nasralla, Manager, Downstream Joint Ventures [Tel: (974) 449-1448]

Corporate Planning Department:
Mr. Issa Al-Ghanim, Director
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 449-1390
Fax: (974) 483-1257

Operations Department:
Mr. Saied Al-Mohannadi, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 440-2400
Fax: (974) 440-2900

Legal Affairs and Contracts Department:
Mr. Mohammed Nasser Al-Fuhaid, Acting Director
Dr. Hassan Omar, Advisor
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
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Fax: (974) 447-8175

Information and Computer Services Department:
Mr. Abdullah Talib, Director

P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 440-2240
Fax: (974) 441-3629

Production Department:

A. Offshore Production:
Mr. Eid Al-Mohannadi, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 440-2655
Fax: (974) 440-2752

B. Onshore Production:
Mr. Ali Salem Al-Marri, Director
P.O. Box 71, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 471-6339
Fax: (974) 471-1790

Materials Department:
Mr. Ghanim Al-Kubaisi, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 433-2222
Fax: (974) 442-2498

Technical Department:
Dr. Mohammed Al-Saada, Director
P.O. Box 47, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 440-2697
Fax: (974) 440-2897

Umm Said Operation Department:
Mr. Ahmed Al-Najjar, Director
P.O. Box 50070, Umm Said, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 477-4300
Fax: (974) 477-0433

Gas Processing and Distribution Department:
Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Sowaidi, Director
P.O. Box 50070, Umm Said, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 477-4237
Fax: (974) 477-0420

Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahrama)
Note: This State-owned corporation replaced the former Ministry of Electricity and Water in July 2000 and is still under establishment.
P.O. Box 401, Doha, State of Qatar

Tel: (974) 484-5115
H.E. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah (Minister of Electricity and Water/Energy and Industry), Chairman; Mr. Hamza Al-Kuwari, Vice-Chairman

Public Relations Department:
Mr. Hamad Al-Kuwari
Tel: (974) 484-5454

Procurement Department:
Tel: (974) 484-5125/6/7
Fax: (974) 484-5193/4

Financial Administration:
Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Sayed
Tel: (974) 484-5444; (974) 484-5400

Qatar Telecom (Q-Tel):
Mr. Hamad Al-Attiyah, General Manager
P.O. Box 217, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (974) 440-0445
Fax: (974) 483-0008
Mr. Rashid Al-Bader, Office Director

Public Relations Department:
Mr. Abdulwahid Fakhroo, Director
Tel: (974) 440-0638
Fax: (974) 441-4514

Finance Department:
Mr. Aubrey Cloke, Finance Manager
Tel: (974) 440-0640
Fax: (974) 483-0641

Procurement Section:
Mr. Ibrahim Al-Obaidly, Manager
Tel: (974) 440-0363
Fax: (974) 483-0850

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC):
Hamad General Hospital (HGH):
H.E. Dr. Hajar A. Hajar, Chairman (Minister of Public Health)
Dr. Mohammed Al-Abbadi, Medical Director
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Fax: (974) 444-3099

Public Relations Department:Mr. Salem Al-Mohannadi, Director
Tel: (974) 439-2012
Fax: (974) 439-2263

Materials Management Department:
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Country Commercial Banks:
Qatar Central Bank
H.E. Abdullah bin Khalid Al-Attiyah, Governor
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Al-Ahli Bank of Qatar
Mr. Asaad Abdu Koshaish, General Manager
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Fax: (974) 444-4652

Arab Bank Ltd.
Mr. Ghassan Ahmed Bundakji, Senior Manager
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Fax: (974) 441-0774

Bank Saderat Iran
Mr. Mohammed Zamani, Manager
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Fax: (974) 443-0121

Banque Paribas
Mr. Christian De La Touche, General Manager
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Fax: (974) 441-0861

Commercial Bank of Qatar Ltd.
Mr. T. P. Nunan, General Manager
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Fax: (974) 444-3807; (974) 432-0716 (GM)

Doha Bank Ltd.

Mr. Mohammad Atiq, Acting General Manager
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Fax: (974) 441-6631; (974) 435-5288 (GM)

Grindlays Bank Plc
Mr. John Fleming Murray, General Manager
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HSBC Bank Middle East (formerly British Bank of the Middle East)
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Mashreq Bank
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Qatar Industrial Development Bank
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Fax: (974) 435-0433

Qatar International Islamic Bank
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Qatar Islamic Bank
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Qatar National Bank
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U.S. Department of State Office of Business Affairs:
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Fax: (202) 647-3953

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(For market access and regulatory problems only)
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Washington, DC 20230
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Country Desk Officer: State Department:
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Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)

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

Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC):
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Leading Qatari Firms:

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Al-Muftah Group
Mr. Abdulrahman Muftah Al-Muftah, Chairman;
Mr. Ibrahim Muftah Al-Muftah, Managing Director; Mr. P.A. Abu Bakker, General Manager;
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H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim Al-Thani, Chairman; Mr. Ghalib Shoush'a, Managing Director
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Faisal bin Jassim Group
Sheikh Faisal bin Jassim Al-Thani, Chairman; Mr. Ibrahim Naameh, General Manager
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Hamad bin Khalid (HBK)
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Hassan Ali bin Ali Establishment (HABA)
Mr. Hassan Ali bin Ali, Chairman
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Ali bin Ali Group
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Jaidah Motors & Trading Co.
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KABAS
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Kassem Darwish Fakhroo & Sons (KDS)
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Nabina Trading Establishment
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Nasir bin Abdullah and Sons Trading Co.
Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser Al-Thani, General Manager
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Fax: (974) 444-0203

Nasser bin Khalid (NBK) Group
Sheikh Nawaf bin Nasser bin Khalid Al-Thani, Owner
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Fax: (974) 442-5181; (974) 432-8412 (Owner)

Salam Group
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Saud bin Khalid Co. (SBK)
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Mr. Inqaz Al-Jasser, General Manager

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Fax: (974) 462-2225

CHAPTER 12: MARKET RESEARCH

Market Research: Not available.

List of Agricultural Reports:

-Agricultural Export Opportunities Update Reports

-American Food Directory in the GCC-5

-Guide for Doing Business in the Gulf

-Update of U.S. Agricultural Exports to the GCC-5

-GCC-5 Food Retail Sector Report

-Qatar Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

-Hotels and Restaurants Sector in the Gulf Region

-GCC-5 Dry Pulses Market Brief

-GCC-5 Food Industry Report

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

CHAPTER 13: TRADE EVENTS

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 2000 is provided in Table 12.1.

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
Tel: (974) 4834-450 Fax: (974) 4834-480
E-mail: qiec@qatar.net.qa Internet: http://www.qiec.com

Table 12.1: Trade Exhibitions Scheduled To Be Held In Qatar, 2000

Name of Exhibition	*Date of Exhibition*	*Organizers*	*Tel, Fax, E-mail and/or Internet Address*
Back to School Festival	September 2-8, 2000	Al-Marri & Public Relations, P.O. Box 3618, Doha, Qatar	Tel: (974) 444-7740 Fax: (974) 444-1146 Jaber@qatar.net.qa
Oil & Gas	September 16-19, 2000	Media for Exhibition, Production & Distribution, P.O. Box 15792, Doha, Qatar	Tel: (974) 465-2247 Fax: (974) 465-1339
International Book Fair for Ladies & Children	September 27-October 3, 2000	National Council for Culture, Arts &Heritage Dept., Libraries, Qatar National Library	Tel: (974) 442-9955 Fax: (974) 442-9976

Table 12.1: Trade Exhibitions Scheduled To Be Held In Qatar, 2000			
Name of Exhibition	***Date of Exhibition***	***Organizers***	***Tel, Fax, E-mail and/or Internet Address***
8th Islamic Trade Fair (ITF 2000)	October 15-20, 2000	Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce, P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar	Tel: (974) 446-1444 Fax: (974) 441-3617
***Milipol Qatar**	November 20-23, 2000	Ministry of Interior/AMEXPO, France	Tel: (974) 441-1818, (974) 443-6203 Fax: (974) 441-6262 In France: Tel: 033-1-46 27 82 00 Fax: 033-1-46 27 91 63 E-mail: milipol@qatar.net.qa Or: imexpo@wanadoo.fr Internet: http://www.milipol.com
Global Village 2000	December 23-27, 2000	Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce, P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar	Tel: (974) 446-1444 Fax: (974) 441-3617

Source: Fairs and Exhibitions Department, Ministry of Finance

Note: *Certified by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

International Buyer Program:

Table 12.2 lists trade events to be held in the U.S. during the Fiscal Year 2001 under the U.S. Department of Commerce International Buyer Program.

Table 12.2 International Buyer Program: Trade Events in the U.S., Fiscal Year 2001				
Event Name	**Industry**	**Dates**	**City & State**	**Contact Telephone (Washington, D.C.) & E-mail**
MedTrade	Medical Equipment & Supplies	October 3-6, 2000	Orlando, Florida	202-482-4918 Miguel.Olivares@mail.doc.gov

Table 12.2 International Buyer Program: Trade Events in the U.S., Fiscal Year 2001				
Event Name	**Industry**	**Dates**	**City & State**	**Contact Telephone (Washington, D.C.) & E-mail**
MINExpo Int'l 2000	Mining Equipment	October 9-12, 2000	Las Vegas, Nevada	202-482-6434 Kevin.Haley@ mail.doc.gov
Sunbelt Agricultural Expo	Agricultural Equipment	October 17-19, 2000	Moultrie, Georgia	202-482-1650 Frances.Lee@ mail.doc.gov
Pack Expo & The International Exhibition for Food Processors (IEFP)	Packaging and Processing Equipment	November 5-9, 2000	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-0106 Derek.Parks@ mail.doc.gov
Comdex Fall	Computer Hardware/ Software	November 13-17, 2000	Las Vegas, Nevada	202-482-4918 Miguel.Olivares@ mail.doc.gov
Power Gen International	Power Generation Equipment	November 14-16, 2000	Orlando, Florida	202-482-0905 Carol.Rudman @ mail.doc.gov
The Amusement Show	Amusement Rides and Games	November 15-18, 2000	Atlanta, Georgia	202-482-2267 Joan.Hall@ mail.doc.gov
Int'l Autobody Congress & Exposition (NACE)	Automotive Parts & Equipment	December 7-10, 2000	Orlando, Florida	202-482-5416 (L. Burlingame)
Int'l Consumer Electronics	Consumer Electronics Equipment	January 7-10, 2001	Las Vegas, Nevada	202-482-0905 Carol.Rudman @ mail.doc.gov
Int'l Housewares Showcase	Products for the Home	January 14-17, 2001	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-1650 Frances.Lee@ mail.doc.gov
The SGMA Super Show	Sporting Goods	January 21-24, 2001	Las Vegas, Nevada	202-482-5416 (L. Burlingame)

Table 12.2 International Buyer Program: Trade Events in the U.S., Fiscal Year 2001				
Event Name	**Industry**	**Dates**	**City & State**	**Contact Telephone (Washington, D.C.) & E-mail**
PROMAT	Materials Handling Equipment	February 12-15, 2001	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-0905 Carol.Rudman @ mail.doc.gov
NEPCON West	Electronics Manfaucturing	February 27 – March 2, 2001	Anaheim, California	202-482-6434 Kevin.Haley@ mail.doc.gov
Natural Products Expo	Natural Products and Foods	March 8-11, 2001	Anaheim, California	202-482-0106 Derek.Parks@ mail.doc.gov
Int'l Beauty Show	Beauty Supplies	March 10-13, 2001	New York, NY	202-482-1650 Frances.Lee@ mail.doc.gov
Wireless 2001	Telecommunications	April 2-4, 2001	Dallas, Texas	202-482-6434 Kevin.Haley@ mail.doc.gov
Waste Expo 2001	Environmental /Waste Equipment	April 3-5, 2001	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-5416 (L. Burlingame)
Nat'l Assoc. of Broadcasters	Telecommunications	April 21-26, 2001	Las Vegas, Nevada	202-482-4918 Miguel.Olivares@ mail.doc.gov
Kitchen/Bath Industry Show	Kitchen & Bath Supplies	April 27-29, 2001	Orlando, Florida	202-482-2267 Joan.Hall@ mail.doc.gov
FMI Supermarket	Grocery, Food and Equipment	May 6-8, 2001	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-0106 Derek.Parks@ mail.doc.gov
EnviroExpo	Environmental Equipment & Services	May 8-10, 2001	Boston, Mass.	202-482-6434 Kevin.Haley@ mail.doc.gov
Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show	Restaurant/ Hotel Equipment	May 19-22, 2001	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-2267 Joan.Hall@ mail.doc.gov
American Pet Products Show	Pet Supplies and Foods	June 7-9, 2001	San Diego, CA	202-482-0106 Derek.Parks@ mail.doc.gov

Table 12.2 International Buyer Program: Trade Events in the U.S., Fiscal Year 2001				
Event Name	**Industry**	**Dates**	**City & State**	**Contact Telephone (Washington, D.C.) & E-mail**
Clinical Laboratory Show	Laboratory Equipment	July 29 - Aug. 2, 2001	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-0905 Carol.Rudman @ mail.doc.gov
Bobbin World	Stitching & Sewing Equipment	August 16-18, 2001	Orlando, Florida	202-482-2267 Joan.Hall@ mail.doc.gov
Print 2001	Printing Equipment	September 6-13, 2001	Chicago, Illinois	202-482-5416 (L. Burlingame)
NAFEM	Food Processing Equipment	September 7-10, 2001	Orlando, Florida	202-482-4918 Miguel.Olivares@ mail.doc.gov
ISA 2001	Scientific Instruments	September 10-13, 2001	Houston, Texas	202-482-1650 Frances.Lee@ mail.doc.gov

Source: Fairs and Exhibitions Department, Ministry of Finance
Note: All International Buyer Program trade shows are listed at the following U.S. Department of Commerce website: http://www2.usatrade.gov

Agricultural Trade Event Schedule:

Table 12.3 lists Agricultural trade events to be held in the U.S. and GCC Countries during the Fiscal Year 2001.

Table 12.3 Agricultural Trade Events in the U.S. and GCC Countries, Fiscal Year 2001			
Event Name	**Industry**	**Dates**	**City & State**

Table 12.3 Agricultural Trade Events in the U.S. and GCC Countries, Fiscal Year 2001			
Event Name	**Industry**	**Dates**	**City & State**
Gulf Food 2001	Food & Equipment Exhibition (Regional)	February 25-28, 2001	Dubai, U.A.E.
The FMI 2001 Supermarket Industry Convention & Educational Exposition/NASDA	U.S. Food Export Showcase	May 6-8, 2001	Chicago, IL
The NRA 2001 Restaurant, Hotel, Motel Show	May 19-22, 2001	Chicago, IL	

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