

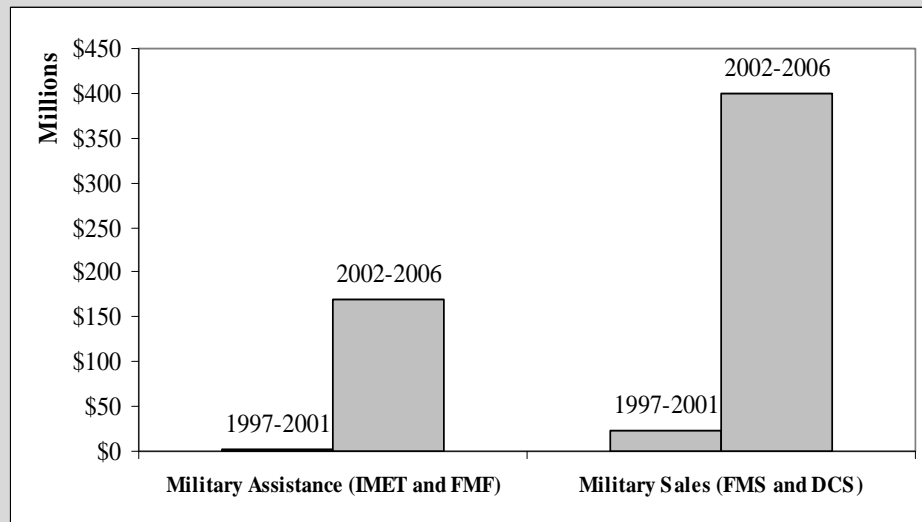


OMAN

Background

Oman is an absolute monarchy in the Persian Gulf that has been ruled by the al-Sa'id family since the mid-1700s. Although Oman was never a formal British colony, Oman has historically had a strong relationship with the United Kingdom based on a series of treaties that established economic and military ties between the two countries. Britain formally recognized Oman as an independent state in 1951, but British advisors continued to play a prominent role in the Omani military.

**U.S. Military Assistance and Sales to Oman,
Pre-Sept. 11 vs. Post-Sept. 11**



In the 1920s, Sultan Taymur bin Faisal al-Sa'id granted limited sovereignty of the interior territories of Oman to the tribes who lived there and were governed by the Imam of Oman, the religious leader of the Ibadhi Muslims – the majority in Oman. The Sultan ruled the remaining territory from the coastal city of Muscat. However, the discovery of oil in Oman in 1954 created an internal conflict when the Imam led a rebellion against the Sultan's attempts to reclaim control over the resource-rich territory controlled by the tribes. The rebellion lasted five years until it was defeated by Taymur's son, Sultan Sa'id bin Taymur al-Sa'id, with the help of the British. The Imam was exiled to Saudi Arabia and the Sultan consolidated his rule over all Omani territory.

In 1956, another rebellion began against the Sultan's rule, this time in Oman's western Dhofar province. The Marxist insurgents, known as the Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF), allied themselves with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG) and were supported by the communist government of South Yemen. During the insurgency, Sultan Sa'id bin Taymur was

overthrown by his son, Qaboos bin Sa'id, in a 1970 coup. By 1975, Sultan Qaboos managed to end the Marxist insurgency (with the help of the United Kingdom, Iran, and Jordan) and undertake an ambitious reform portfolio, establishing a modern government and infrastructure and beginning major development projects, in an attempt at undoing the restrictive policies of his father. In 1996, Qaboos introduced the country's first constitution-like document that established, in writing, the rights of the individual in Oman as well as identified the rules for succession within the royal family. However, Sultan Qaboos was only married briefly and currently has no obvious heir, thus his succession remains unclear.

The State Department's 2005 Human Rights Report noted that the government of Oman respects many of its citizens' rights, but continues to abuse others. The government remains a hereditary monarchy that Omani citizens do not have the right to change; Sultan Qaboos is the chief of state and controls all branches of the government. Citizens directly elect representatives to the Consultative Council in free, fair, and – since 2003 – universal elections. However, this council, founded in 1991 by the sultan, is not a true legislative body and, while it can advise the sultan on matters of economic and social policy, it cannot overrule his decisions. The judiciary is a separate branch of government, but is also ultimately responsible to the sultan. Formal political parties are not allowed in Oman.

Freedom of speech and the press are restricted in practice; disparaging comments about the government are prohibited and many journalists practice self-censorship in order to avoid repercussions. Freedom of association is likewise restricted in practice and all public events must be approved in advance by the government. NGO activity within Oman is restricted and no domestic human rights NGOs operate within the country. Warrants are not required for arrest. The State Department considers Oman to be a country of concern in terms of trafficking, as many foreign migrants to Oman (who make up nearly 20 percent of the country's population) end up in involuntary servitude situations and the government has not taken active steps to mitigate this trend.

The State Department's 2005 Terrorism Report noted that Oman enjoys a "high degree of internal stability," and Oman has worked to achieve the same measure of stability within the Gulf region and the Middle East in general. Oman has been an active participant in the Middle East peace process and other regional stability initiatives. Oman also maintains the region's most well-trained military – at a significant expense. Oman's defense expenditures constitute more than 10 percent of its total GDP, and the country is increasingly spending this money on U.S. weaponry. The fiscal year 2007 (FY 07) congressional budget justification for foreign operations identifies Oman's location on the Straits of Hormuz at the entrance to the Persian Gulf as, "a key naval chokepoint" for a large portion of global oil and gas shipments. This strategic location makes the country a critical U.S. ally. U.S. relations with Oman extend back to the 19th century, when Oman signed a treaty of friendship with the United States in 1833. Oman was also the first Gulf state to establish formal defense relations with the United States. A 1980 agreement granted the United States formal access to Omani military facilities, and in 2000, the agreement was updated, and the United States agreed to fund upgrades to the shared bases. The United States has used Omani facilities extensively since 1980, particularly during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

U.S. Military Assistance Prior to Sept. 11, 2001

Although the sultanate adopted the UN General Assembly resolutions on transparency in conventional weapons, the government did not submit any records of conventional weapons imports between 1993 and 2001.

Between FY 90 and FY 01, \$4.5 million in FMF and \$1.9 million in IMET was appropriated to Oman. Oman also concluded approximately \$13.5 million in Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) and \$160 million in Foreign Military Sales (FMS) between FY 90 and FY 01, although most of these sales were conducted in the early 1990s and sale values decreased beginning in the mid-1990s. However, Oman received substantial amounts of weaponry through the Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program including 100 M-85 machine guns, 191 MK-20 Rockeye Cluster Bombs, 100 M-239 smoke grenade launchers and 30 battle tanks.

U.S. Military Assistance Since Sept. 11, 2001

In the FY 02 supplemental foreign operations budget justification, Congress affirmed that Oman “is absolutely committed to being an active participant in the international coalition against terrorism.” Oman has openly supported the U.S. “war on terrorism” by making public statements of encouragement and cooperation for U.S. efforts against international terrorism. The United States has access to Omani military facilities courtesy of a long-standing defense treaty, and has used three of Oman’s air bases to house U.S. troops and launch operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Oman is also a top recipient of U.S. military assistance, particularly since Sept. 11, 2001.

Since FY 02, Oman has received nearly \$100 million more than the total military assistance received between FY 90 and FY 01. Although prior to Sept. 11, 2001, Oman had not been a regular recipient of FMF, \$25 million was appropriated in the FY 02 emergency budget supplemental in order to upgrade Omani facilities that were shared with the United States. Between FY 02 and FY 05, Oman has received more than \$150 million in FMF. IMET funding to Oman has also increased, with over \$1 million received in FY 05 and requested in FY 06 and FY 07. Commercial arms sales have likewise increased, with almost \$57 million in DCS concluded between FY 02 and FY 05, as compared with \$13 million in the 12 years between FY 90 and FY 01. FMS has increased each year since FY 02, with \$91 million worth of sales concluded in FY 05. In May 2002, Oman concluded a sale of 12 F-16 fighter jets from the United States, which were delivered during 2005 and 2006 and, in July 2006, Congress was notified of a potential sale to Oman of 250 Javelin anti-tank missiles.

Since FY 05, Oman has received funding to expand its counterterrorism capabilities through the Foreign Operations budget’s Anti-Terrorism Assistance program (NADR-ATA), which is part of the Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Activities account. Oman received \$254,000 in NADR-ATA funds in FY 05, and is slated to receive more than \$1 million in both FY 06 and FY 07. Oman is also a beneficiary of the Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP) and received \$200,000 in FY 05 and \$175,000 in FY 06 for further counterterrorism training.

U.S. Military Assistance and Sales to Oman, FY 90 - FY 08					
	IMET	FMF	DCS	FMS	EDA
1990	\$164,000	\$0	\$2,237,000	\$64,051,000	n/a
1991	\$214,000	\$3,000,000	\$2,841,000	\$42,017,000	n/a
1992	\$97,000	\$500,000	\$1,544,000	\$5,782,000	n/a
1993	\$92,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,709,000	\$7,411,000	\$0
1994	\$54,000	\$0	\$1,272,000	\$8,840,000	\$400,786
1995	\$131,000	\$0	\$1,575,000	\$5,886,000	\$0
1996	\$119,000	\$0	\$963,000	\$5,157,000	\$2,688,500
1997	\$117,000	\$0	\$236,000	\$4,827,000	\$2,758,929
1998	\$217,000	\$0	\$199,000	\$5,474,000	\$39,464,560
1999	\$233,000	\$0	\$665,000	\$5,730,000	\$3,958,929
2000	\$230,000	\$0	\$37,000	\$1,227,000	\$7,154,313
2001	\$250,000	\$0	\$176,000	\$3,787,000	\$0
1990-2001	\$1,918,000	\$4,500,000	\$13,454,000	\$160,189,000	\$56,426,017
1997-2001	\$1,047,000	\$0	\$1,313,000	\$21,045,000	\$53,336,731
2002	\$481,000	\$25,000,000	\$2,000	\$1,609,000	\$0
2003	\$567,000	\$81,000,000	\$839,000	\$6,823,000	\$0
2004	\$825,000	\$24,850,000	\$48,618,000	\$16,504,000	\$0
2005	\$1,141,000	\$19,840,000	\$7,498,000	\$91,989,000	\$0
2006	\$1,135,000	\$13,860,000	\$208,737,000	\$18,002,000	\$0
2002-2006	\$4,149,000	\$164,550,000	\$265,694,000	\$134,927,000	\$0
2007	\$1,135,000	\$14,000,000	\$5,790,000	\$21,900,000	\$0
2008	\$1,500,000	\$10,105,000	\$14,870,000	\$17,095,000	n/a

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