

15. SAUDI ARABIA

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Major Changes

- The RSAF received the first two aircraft, out of an order of 72 new Typhoon combat aircraft from the UK. The first of which are being manufactured in Britain, with the rest to be assembled in Saudi Arabia – in a new facility being built.
 - The RSAF is upgrading 84 of its aging Tornado IDS attack aircraft to the GR-4 standard. Concurrently it will phase out its obsolete F-5 aircraft.
 - The RSAF has ordered additional 12 AH-64D Apache combat helicopters and will upgrade the 12 existing older Apache AH-64A to the same standard. Other programs for the RSAF include an order for 3 A330 MRTT refueling aircraft, and upgrading the old E-3A AWACS
 - The air defense forces are upgrading their C4I system with new centers and new systems.
 - The Saudi Arabian National Guard launched a major upgrade program including the procurement of numerous armored combat vehicles.
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Saudi Arabia

General Data

Official Name of the State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Head of State: King Abdallah ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Saud

Prime Minister: King Abdallah ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Saud

First Deputy Prime Minister and Heir Apparent: Crown Prince Sultan ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Saud

Defense and Aviation Minister: Crown Prince Sultan ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Saud

Chief of General Staff: Lieutenant General Salih ibn Ali al-Muhaya

Commander of the Ground Forces: Lieutenant General Abdul Rahman ibn Abdullah al-Murshid

Commander of the National Guard: Crown Prince Abdallah ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Saud

Commander of the Air Force: Lieutenant General Abdul Rahman ibn Fahed al-Faisal

Commander of the Navy: Vice Admiral Fahd ibn Abdallah

Area: 2,331,000 sq. km.

Population: 25,000,000

Demography

Ethnic groups

• Arabs	22,850,000	91.4%
• Afro-Arabs	1,250,000	5.0%
• Others	900,000	3.6%

Religious groups

• Sunni Muslims	23,025,000	92.1%
• Shi'ite Muslims	1,250,000	5.0%
• Others (mainly Christians)	725,000	2.9%

Nationality

• Saudis	18,175,000	72.7%
• Others	6,825,000	27.3%

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Economic Data

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
• GDP (current prices)	\$ bn	250.3	315.6	356.6	382.0	448.2
• GDP per capita	\$	11,224	13,662	15,046	15,720	17,928
• Real GDP growth	%	5.3	5.5	3.2	3.4	7.2
• Consumer price index	%	0.4	0.6	2.3	4.1	11.7
• External debt	\$ bn	34.9	43.5	49.6	58.6	74.3
Balance of payments						
• Exports fob	\$ bn	125.9	180.7	211.3	226.7	334.2
• Imports fob	\$ bn	-41.0	-54.6	-63.9	-82.6	-108.3
• Current account balance	\$ bn	52.6	90.7	99.8	86.6	148.3
Government expenditure						
• Total expenditure	\$ bn	76.0	92.3	104.8	118.1	NA
• Defense expenditure	\$ bn	20.9	25.4	29.5	35.4	38.2
• Real change in defense expenditure	%	11.5	21.5	16.1	20.0	7.9
• Defense expenditure/GDP	%	8.3	8.0	8.3	9.3	8.5
Population	m	22.5	23.1	23.7	24.3	25.0
Official exchange rate	SR:1\$	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75

Sources: EIU Quarterly Report, EIU Country Profile, IMF International Financial Statistical Yearbook, SIPRI Yearbook

Foreign Military Cooperation

Type	Details
• Foreign forces	GCC "Peninsula Shield" rapid deployment force (currently only skeleton presence of other countries' forces is present;; some 8,000 Instructors and technicians from Pakistan; UK (25) (2004); US (290 troops)
• Joint maneuvers	Egypt (2004), France, GCC countries (2004), Jordan (2001), Pakistan (2008), UK (2007), US (2001), Yemen (2005)
• Security cooperation	France (2006), India (2007), PRC (2006), Russia (2008), Spain (2008)

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Arms Trade

Arms Procurement and Security Assistance Received

Country	Type	Details
Australia	• Military training	Pilot training in Australia (2008)
Egypt	• Military training	Instructors in country (2005)
France	• Arms transfers	Upgrading SAMs (2005), al-Riyadh missile frigates (2005), AD C ⁴ I system (2008), 155mm Caesar guns (2008), A330 MRTT tanker aircraft (2008), DAMOCLES targeting pods (2008), AS550 Fennec helicopters (2008)
India	• Military training	Training of naval personnel (2004)
	• Military training	Trainees in India (2008)
Jordan	• Arms transfers	Black Iris RVs (2004)
Norway	• Arms transfers	Tactical communication systems (2005)
Pakistan	• Arms transfers	Super Mashak aircraft (2004), al-Khalid MBTs (2004)
PRC	• Military training	Instructors and technicians (2004)
	• Military training	Foreign advisers/instructors/serving personnel for CSS-2 missiles (unconfirmed)
Russia	• Arms transfers	Armored trucks (2004)
Sweden	• Arms transfers	Communication systems (2004)
Turkey	• Arms transfers	Upgrading of M113 APCs (2008)
UK	• Arms transfers	Typhoon aircraft (2008), Upgrading of Tornado IDS aircraft (2008), Tactica APCs (2007), EW C ⁴ ISR system (2007)
	• Maintenance aid	Technical assistance and maintenance (2006)
US	• Arms transfers	AIM-9X AAMs (2008), AIM-120 AAMs (2006), upgrading of Hawk air defense batteries (2004), C ⁴ I naval system (2004), avionics for aircraft (2005), S-70 Blackhawk helicopters (2008), LAV APCs (2007), upgrading of M1A2 MBTs (2008), upgrading of AH-64 helicopters (2007), upgrading of E-3 AWACS aircraft (2008), JDAM (2008), Sniper targeting pods (2008), King Air 350 aircraft (2008), S-92 helicopter (2008), S-76 helicopter (2007), S-434 helicopter (2007), upgrading of FPS-117 AD radars (2008), AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters (2008)
	• Maintenance aid	Technical assistance and maintenance

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Country	Type	Details
	• Military training	(2006) Foreign advisers, trainees in the USA

Arms Sales and Security Assistance Extended

Country	Type	Details
Brazil	• Arms transfers	F-5 aircrafts (2006)
US	• Facilities	HQ at Riyadh, facilities for combat aircraft at Taif and Dhahran air bases

Defense Production

	M	P	A
Army equipment			
• al-Fahd 8x8 APC	✓		
• Small arms ammunition		✓	
• Upgrading of M113 to ACVs			✓
Air Force equipment			
• Some accessories and components for foreign-made aircraft, flares and chaff		✓	
• Paveway-2 laser-guided bombs		✓	
• Upgrading of Tornado IDS to TSP standard			✓
• Typhoon Tranche-2 aircraft			✓
Electronics			✓
• Radio transceivers			✓
• parts for EW equipment			✓
• Radar subsystems		✓	✓
• Components of aircraft radars			✓
• Hand-held thermal imager/binocular		✓	

Note: M - manufacture (indigenously developed)

P - production under license

A - assembly

Strategic Assets

NBC Capabilities

Nuclear capability

No known nuclear activity. Party to the NPT.

Chemical weapons and protective equipment

No known CW activities.

Personal protective equipment, decontamination units, US-made CAM chemical detection systems; Fuchs (Fox) NBC detection vehicles.

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Party to the CWC.

Biological weapons

No known BW activities. Party to the BWC.

Ballistic Missiles

Model	Launchers	Missiles	Since	Notes
• CSS-2	8-12	30-50	1988	Number of launchers unconfirmed

Space Assets

Model	Type	Notes
Satellites		
• Arabsat 1/2/3/4	Communication	Civilian satellite communication network
• Bader-4	Communication	Civilian TV broadcasting satellite
• Saudi Comsat	Research	Commercial micro satellites; Seven satellites, out of 24; 12 kg each.
• Saudi Sat 1/2/3	Remote sensing and space research	2 (10 kg. each) were launched in September 2000 by a Russian military rocket, and are orbiting 650 km above earth. The third satellite was launched in December 2002. Saudi Sat 2 (30kg) was launched in June 2004. Saudi Sat 3 was launched in April 2007.
Ground Stations		
• SCRS	Imagery	Receiving SPOT, Landsat and NOAA
Future procurement		
• Badr-5/6	Communication	Three New-generation satellites during 2008-2010.
• Arabsat-5/6	Communication	Fifth generation satellite planned for launch in 2011, 2012.

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Armed Forces

Order-of-Battle

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
General data					
• Personnel (regular)	171,500	171,500	171,500	214,500	214,500
• SSM launchers	8-12	8-12	8-12	8-12	8-12
Ground Forces					
• Number of brigades	20	20	20	20	20
• Tanks	750 (1,015)	750 (1,015)	750 (1,015)	750 (1,015)	750 (1,015)
• APCs/AFVs	~4,430 (~5,230)	~4,430 (~5,230)	~4,430 (~5,230)	~4,180 (~5,180)	~4,180 (~5,180)
• Artillery (incl. MRLs)	~410 (~780)	~410 (~780)	~410 (~780)	~410 (~780)	~410 (~780)
Air Force					
• Combat aircraft	256* (~340)	253 (~320)	250 (~320)	250 (~320)	252 (~325)
• Transport aircraft	38 (51)	57 (59)*	57 (59)	57 (59)	57 (59)
• Helicopters	228	228	228	226	226
Air Defense Forces					
• Heavy SAM batteries	25	25	25	25	25
• Medium SAM batteries	21	21	21	21	21
Navy					
• Combat vessels	27	27	27	27	27
• Patrol craft	68	68	68	70	70

* Due to change in estimate.

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Personnel

	Regular	Reserves	Total
Ground Forces	75,000		75,000
Air Force	20,000		20,000
Air Defense	4,000		4,000
Navy	13,500		13,500
National Guard	100,000		100,000
Royal Guard	2,000		2,000
Total	214,500		214,500
Paramilitary			
• Rapid Deployment Force	50,000		50,000
• Coast Guard	4,500		4,500
• Frontier Corps	10,500		10,500

Ground Forces

Formations

	Independent brigades / groups	Independent battalions
Armored (Ground Forces)	4	
Mechanized (5 Ground Forces, 3 National Guard)	8	
Infantry (Royal Guard)	1	
Infantry (National Guard)	6	19
Marines		2
Airborne/ Special Forces (Ground Forces)	1	
Total	20	21

Note: Saudi ground forces comprise 10 brigades (5 mechanized, 4 armored, 1 airborne/infantry), plus one Royal Guard brigade; the National Guard has 9 brigades (3 mechanized, 6 infantry)

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Tanks

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
MBTs				
High quality				
• M1A2 Abrams	315	200	1993	Being upgraded, 115 in storage
Medium and low quality				
• M60 A3	400	400	1985	
• AMX-30	300	150	1975	
Subtotal	700	550		
Total	1,015	750		
Future procurement				
• M1A2 Abrams	58			
• M1A2S Abrams	315			Upgrading of existing M1A2
• Al-Khalid	+			Under negotiation

APCs/AFVs

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
APCs				
• Piranha APC	420	420	2000	Of which 34 are ENGs and 67 ARVs
• M113 A1/A2	1,440	1,240	1976/1981	
• ACV	100	100	2004	Upgraded M113
• AMX-10/AMX-10P	500	500	1975	Of which 90 are carrying ATGMs
• BMR-600	140	140	1985	With marines
• M-3 (Panhard)	150	150		
Subtotal	2,750	2,550		
IFVs				
• Piranha IFV	570	570	1992	Of which 73 are 120mm TDA and 111 are ITVs
• M-2/M-3 Bradley	400	400		
• V-150 Commando	980	290	1977	690 in storage
• AML-60/90	350	~225	1969	
Subtotal	2,300	~1,500		
Reconnaissance				
• Piranha LAV-AG	130	130		
Total	5,180	4,180		

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Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Future procurement				
• Tactica	260			For the National Guard
• ACV	300			Upgrading of existing M113
• Piranha LAV	850			
Artillery				
Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Self-propelled guns and howitzers				
• 155mm M109 A2	280	110		
• 155mm GCT	51	51	1980	
Subtotal	331	161		
Towed guns and howitzers				
• 155mm M-198	90	60	1982	
• 155mm M-114	50	50	1980	
• 155mm FH-70	72	0		
• 105mm M102/ M101	100	0	1975	
Subtotal	312	110		
Mortars, under 160mm				
• 120mm TDA SP	73	73	2000	On Piranha
• 107mm M-30	+	+	1981	
MRLs				
• Astros II	60	60		180mm SS-40 or 127mm SS-30
Artillery/mortar-locating radars				
• AN/TPQ-37	+	+		
Total	~780	~410		
Future procurement				
• 155mm Caesar	80			6 to remain in France for training

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Logistics and Engineering Equipment

M-123 Viper minefield crossing system, Aardvark Mk 3 flail, M-69 A1 bridging tanks, bridging equipment, AFV transporters (600), Piranha ARVs (67), Piranha ENG (34)

Anti-Tank Missiles

Model	Launchers	Missiles	Since	Notes
• Piranha ITV	111	+	2001	Listed also under APCs
• AMX-10P SP	90	+	1982	Listed also under APCs; carrying HOT
• VCC-1 SP	200	+		Carrying TOW
• BGM-71C Improved TOW/BGM-71D TOW II	750	+	1988	
• M-47 Dragon	1,000	+	1977	
Total	2,150	+		

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Air Force

Order-of-Battle

Category	Quantity	In service	Notes
• Combat	~325	252	
• Transport	59	57	
• Helicopters	226	226	

Combat Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Interceptors				
• F-15 C/D Eagle	79	79	1982	
• Tornado ADV	21	21	1989	
Subtotal	100	100		
Advanced multi-role				
• Typhoon Tranche-2	2	2	2009	
• F-15S	69	69	1995	
Subtotal	71	71		
Multi-role				
• Tornado IDS	80	77	1986	12 of which are reconnaissance; being upgraded to TSP standard
• Tornado TSP	4	4	2008	
Subtotal	84	81		
Obsolete				
• F-5E/F	~ 70	0	1973	Some also listed under reconnaissance
Total	~325	252		
Future procurement				
• Tornado TSP	90			Upgrading program, to begin in 2008
• Typhoon	72			Deliveries to begin 2008

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Transport Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
• C-130E/H Hercules	54	52	1970/1980	Some of which are tankers and some VIP planes
• CN-235	5	5	1987	
Total	59	57		
Future procurement				
• King Air 350	5			Under negotiations

Training and Liaison Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Jet trainers				
• Hawk Mk65	46	46	1987	Possibly phased out
• BAC-167 Strikemaster	30	0	1968	
Subtotal	76	46		
Piston/Turboprop				
• Pilatus PC-9	50	50	1987	
• BAe Jetstream 31	2	2	1987	
• Cessna 172 G/H/L	12	12	1967	
• Super Mushshak	20	20	2004	
Subtotal	84	84		
Total	160	130		

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Helicopters

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Attack				
• Bell 406CS	15	15	1990	In army aviation
• AH-64A Apache	12	12	1993	In army aviation
Subtotal	27	27		
Medium transport				
• S-70A Black Hawk	37	37	1990	16 of which are Medevac
• AS-532 UC	12	12	1990	
• S-92	2	2	2008	
• KV-107/KV-107 IIA	18	18	1979	
• AB-412	16	16	2001	
• AB-212	29	29	1977	Number unconfirmed
• Bell-205	24	24		
Subtotal	138	138		
Light transport				
• AB-206 JetRanger	28	28	1967	
Naval combat				
• AS-365 Dauphin /AS-565MA	21	21	1986	Including 6 in SAR/Medevac role
• AS-532 SC Cougar	12	12	1992	
Subtotal	33	33		
Total	226	226		
Future procurement				
• S-92	16			
• S-76	15			
• S-434	9			
• NH-90	64			Under negotiations
• AS 550 Fennec	30			In service with Interior Ministry
• AH-64D Apache Block 2	12			
• AH-64D	12			Upgrading of existing helicopters
• S-70 Black Hawk	18			

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Miscellaneous Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Reconnaissance				
• Tornado IDS	12	12	1986	Also listed under Combat Aircraft
• RF-5E	8	8	1973	Also listed under combat aircraft
AEW/AWACS				
• E-3A AWACS	5	5	1986	Being upgraded
• RE-3A	2	2	2004	
Tankers				
• KC-130H	8	8	1973	Also listed under transport aircraft
• KE-3/Boeing 707	6	6	1986	
Target drones				
• TTL BTT-3 Banshee	+	+		
• MQM-74C Chukar II	+	+		
Future procurement				
• Airbus A330 MRTT	3			Under negotiations

Advanced Armament

Air-to-air-missiles

AIM-7F Sparrow (1,100); AIM-7M (1,000); AIM-9J/P Sidewinder (1,800); AIM-9L/M Sidewinder (1,500); AIM-9S (150), Red Top; Sky Flash (550), AIM-120 AMRAAM (500)

Air-to-ground-missiles

AGM-65A/D/G Maverick (1,805); ALARM (200); AM-39 Exocet; AS-15TT (220); Sea Eagle (350)

Bombs

CBU-86; CBU-87; BL-755 CBU; Paveway 2 (100); GBU-10/12/15

Bombs

ATLIS targeting pods (30)

Future procurement

AIM-9X (250), AIM-120C (50), JDAM (900), Democles targeting pods (30), AAQ-33 Sniper targeting pods (33), Marte AAMs

Note: Numbers in parentheses refer to quantity of units purchased, not to current inventory levels.

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Air Force Infrastructure

Aircraft shelters

For combat aircraft

Military airfields : 15

Abqaiq, al-Ahsa, Dhahran, Gizan, al-Hufuf, Jidda, Jubail, Khamis Mushayt, al-Kharj, Medina, Riyadh, Sharawra, al-Sulayyil, Tabuk, Taif.

Air Defense Forces

Surface-to-Air Missiles

Model	Batteries	Launchers	Since	Notes
Heavy missiles				
• MIM-104 Patriot	8		1991	
• MIM-23B Improved HAWK	17		1982	One used for training Being upgraded
Total	25			
Medium missiles				
• Crotale	16			Some are shelter-mounted for fixed sites
• Shahine I/II	5		1981	To be upgraded
Total	21			
Shoulder-launched missiles				
• FIM-92A/C Stinger		400	1984	
• MIM-43A Redeye		500		
• Mistral		900		
Total		1,800		

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Other Air Defense Systems

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Air defense systems (missiles, radars and guns)				
• 35mm Skyguard AD system	60	60		
Short-range guns				
• 35mm Oerlikon-Buhle 35x2 GDF	156	156		Included in Skyguard
• 20mm M-163 Vulcan SP	~100	~100		
• 30mm AMX-30 SA	52	18		
Total	~310	~275		
Radars				
• AN/FPS-117 (Seek Igloo)	17	17		To be upgraded
• AN/TPS-43G	28	28		
• AN/TPS-59	+	+		
• AN/TPS-63	35	35		
• Giraffe Agile	1	1		
• AN/TPS-70	+	+		
Command and control system				
• C ³ I Peace Shield System				Currently installed
Aerostat with airborne Radars				
• LASS	+	+		
Future procurement				
• SAMOC				Command and control system for AD batteries
• al-Madhallah				Early warning command and control, part of GCC belt.

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Navy

Combat Vessels

Type	Quantity	Length (m.)/ displacement (t.)	Notes/armament
Missile frigates			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> al-Riyadh class (F-3000S) 	3	135/4,500	1 probably non-operational 1xAS-565 helicopter 8xMM40 SSM 2x8 Aster 15/30 SAMs 1x76mm gun 2x20mm guns 4x533mm torpedoes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Madina class (F-2000) 	4	115.0/2,000	1xAS-365 helicopter 8xOtomat SSMs 1x8 Crotale Naval SAMs 1x100mm gun 4x40mm guns 4x533mm torpedoes
Subtotal	7		
Missile corvettes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Badr class (PCG-1 class) 	4	74.7/870	8xHarpoon SSMS 1x76mm gun 2x20mm AD guns 1x20mm Phalanx 6x324mm torpedoes
MFPBs			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> al-Siddiq (PGG-1 class) 	9	58.1/495	4xHarpoon SSMS 1x76mm gun 2x20mm AD guns 1x20mm Phalanx
Mine warfare vessels			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addriyah (MSC-322 class minesweeper) 	4	46.6/320	1x20mm AD gun Sonar, magnetic sweepers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> al-Jawf (Sandown class) 	3	52.7/450	2x30mm guns 2 PAP 104 Mk 5 Type 2093 sonar
Subtotal	7		
Total	27		

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Patrol Craft

Type	Quantity	Length (m.)/ displacement (t.)	Notes/armament
• al-Jubatel (Abeking- Rasmussen)	2	26.2/96	1x20mm gun 2x12.7mm MGs (with Coast Guard)
• al-Jouf (Blohm & Voss)	4	38.6/210	2x20mm guns 2x12.7mm MGs (with Coast Guard)
• Halter type	17	23.8/56	2x25mm guns
• Stan Patrol 2606 Class	6	26.5/55	
• Sea Guard	2	22.5/56	2x20mm guns (with Coast Guard)
• Inshore Patrol Craft	150	8-15m	With Coast Guard
• Simonneu Type 51	39	15.8/22	1x12.7mm MG
Total	70		

Landing Craft

Type	Quantity	Length (m.)/ displacement (t.)	Notes/armament
• Slingsby SAH 2200 hovercraft	3	10.6	2.2 tons or 24 troops with Coast Guard
• 1610 class LCU	4	41.1/375	170 tons or 120 troops 2x12.7mm MGs
• LCM 6	4	17.1/62	34 tons or 80 troops
• Griffon 8000TD(M)	5	21.1/18.2	16 troops 1x12.7mm MG
Total	12		

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Auxiliary Vessels

Type	Quantity	Length (m.) / displacement (t.)	Notes / armament
• Tabouk training ship	1	60/585	1x20mm gun
• Abdul Aziz (Royal yacht)	1	147/5,200	1x Bell 206 helicopter pad
• al-Yamama (Royal yacht)	1	82/1,660	1 helicopter pad
• Pegasus (Royal yacht)	1	27.4/115	2x20mm AD Vulcan
• Mod Durance class (Supply ships)	2	135.0/11,200	4x40mm guns 2 helicopter pads
• Coastal tugs	13	43m, 35m	
• Small tankers	3	28.7/233	

Coastal Defense

Type	Quantity	Notes
• Otomat	4	

Naval Infrastructure

Naval bases (including coast guard): 13

Aziziya (Coast Guard), al-Dammam, al-Haql (Coast Guard), Jidda, Jizan, Jubayl, Makna (Coast Guard), al-Qatif, Ras al-Mishaab, Ras Tanura, al-Sharma, al-Wajh, Yanbu

Ship maintenance and repair facilities

Repair of vessels dependent on foreign experts; 22,000-ton and 62,000-ton floating docks at Dammam; 45,000-ton and 16,000-ton floating docks at Jidda

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