

RNOV SHABAB OMAN

The RNO training ship RNOV Shabab Oman plays a prominent role in promoting Oman. A frequent competitor in the Round the World Tall Ships event, this magnificent, majestic sailing vessel has visited more than 140 ports around the world and covered the equivalent of a quarter of a million miles in order to let the peoples of the world know something about the Omani culture and its people, since she entered service in 1979. This is in addition to the ship gaining first places in international competitions for ships of her class.

THE ROYAL GUARD OF OMAN (RGO)

HM Sultan Qaboos, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, has played an important role in developing and rapidly modernising the RGO, a major component of Oman's modern military system with a high level of combat capability.

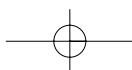
The force consists of infantry, armoured vehicles and artillery, reinforced by modern systems and equipment and by educational, technical and administrative units.

SAF ENGINEERING SERVICES

The Engineering Services section has the primary role of preparing blueprints for government construction projects and overseeing their implementation. In addition it provides SAF units with engineering support in various areas, including water, power and sewage. The Ministry of Defence predetermines the specifications for all projects managed by the Engineering Services, both capital construction and maintenance. Services provided include field, electrical and mechanical maintenance, the upkeep of roads on SAF camps and bases and support during military exercises.

THE NATIONAL SURVEY AUTHORITY [NSA]

The NSA was established in 1984 as the central authority responsible for producing military and civil maps and comprehensive aerial photographs of the Sultanate. It also sets standards for topographic surveys, manages the national geographical archive and provides aviation charts, flight maps and geographical data. Its qualified technical staff is supported in its research by extensive advanced technology, including precision satellite survey systems.





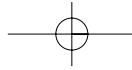
RAF personnel use a flight simulator programme.

Colleges and Schools

The SAF and RGO operate a series of training programmes in order to keep its finely honed expertise in men and machinery at its peak. Educational institutions are to be found in the armed forces, ranging from academic technological and technical military colleges to specialist centers of excellence. They include the Command and Staff College, the Sultan Qaboos Military College, the Sultan Qaboos Air Academy, the Defence Studies Centre, the Air Force Technical College, the Oman Aircraft Control College, the Navy training Centre and the Engineering Services Training Centre are among many specialist schools.

Military Social Services

The Directorate of Military Social Services, established in 1972, provides social welfare to past and present members of the military. The department provides for the social care requirements of members of the Defence Ministry, SAF and RGO personnel and their families, former soldiers with special needs, the families of those killed or wounded in action and the dependents of deceased or retired military personnel, in conjunction with the Ministry of Defence Pension Fund.



Moral Guidance

Since its establishment in 1974, SAF Staff Headquarters' Morale Guidance Department has taken responsibility for the promotion of military, social and cultural events. It publishes the military cultural magazine *Jund Oman* (Soldiers of Oman) and the magazine's monthly news supplements and an annual omnibus edition.

The department presents armed forces radio and television programmes and orchestrates the making of documentary films in collaboration with the Ministry of Information. It also commemorates religious occasions, holds lectures on social and cultural topics and organizes courses on a variety of subjects, among them war media and psychological warfare. In addition the department issues information booklets and arranges visits to sick and injured military personnel in conjunction with Military Social Services.

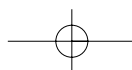
Sports teams, the Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra and military bands.

Sport is considered an essential part of military training in Oman. Accordingly, SAF has a wide range of sports programmes and facilities. Annual competitions are held in football, volleyball, hockey, swimming, athletics, running and shooting and competition is fierce.

SAF sports teams, including the national shooting team, the RGO's Red Helmets and the national free fall parachute teams stage impressive displays at a variety of exhibitions and events in addition to undertaking regular duties. They have represented Oman at numerous events abroad and have achieved excellent results.

Oman's Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra and military bands have also gained international recognition at events in which they have participated.

In 2003, the RAO band participated in the Edinburgh Tattoo, Scotland, as well as in competitions in the United Kingdom. In July 2004, the RAFO Traditional Music Group gave several performances in England including one for BBC Radio 3. In September 2001 the RAFO band performed at a festival in the Netherlands and in May 2002 at several venues in Germany. The





SAF operates a wide range of educational institutions.

Sultanate is proud of being the only Arab country which regularly participates in international musical competitions.

Meanwhile, the Royal Guard Stables, with their magnificent thoroughbred Arab horses, which is a popular participant at domestic events, has recently gained competitive success at international competitions.

THE SULTAN'S ARMED FORCES [SAF] MUSEUM

The SAF museum was inaugurated at Bait al Falaj Fort in Ruwi by His Majesty the Sultan on 11th December 1988 as a showcase for the development of Oman's armed forces and military history. The Fort was built at the advent of the 19th century during the reign of Sultan Said bin Sultan who used the fort as his summer house. The museum is open to the public and contains models, pictures and documents illustrating historic events and the role of weaponry and the military through the ages.

ROYAL OMAN POLICE

Despite its many departments, the Royal Oman Police (ROP), operates as a single nationwide unit, reflecting the directives of its Supreme Commander, HM Sultan Qaboos bin Said.

Civil Status Project

The end of 2003 saw the introduction of the Civil Status Project which followed on from the issuance of the Civil Status Law by Royal Decree 66/99. It marks a significant new phase in the ROP's entry into the electronic world. The ROP was already operating a database containing details of citizens' ID cards, expatriate visas and residence permits, which provided useful background information in setting up this new project.

The new ID card combined with biometric recognition will allow for automatic electronic validation. It is valid for 5 years. The first person to receive one was HM Sultan Qaboos bin Said.

Some of its main features are:

- All births, deaths, marriages and divorces will be registered in a single organisation, the Directorate of Civil Status. The Directorate is entrusted to register these events, and issue certificates of births, deaths and identity cards to Omani citizens, and residence cards for expatriates;
- Each card will contain the holder's Civil Status no., civil register data, passport number, address and driving licence. In future further features will be added, e.g. the medical file.
- The ID card is compulsory for citizens above 15 years' old, and for residents working in both the public and private sectors, and their family members above 15 years of age.
- The new cards are multi-purpose with an inbuilt electronic chip containing details of the holder, their photograph and signature. The data in the chip is confidential and cannot be seen or reviewed except by those authorised.

Highway Emergency Ambulance Service

This Service was introduced in early-April 2004 in response to the alarming rise in highway deaths and serious injuries. Its aim is to provide quality and urgent pre-hospital medical care for road accident victims at the scene of a traffic mishap.

It has well-equipped ambulances, and Omani doctors and nurses who have received special training in the United States form the nucleus of the Unit's



*The Highway
Emergency
Ambulance Service
is being expanded
to reach all regions
of the Sultanate.*

medical team. A large number of police personnel have also been recruited to the scheme after specialist training. The ambulance teams operate from six points in the Muscat Governorate area at present, but the Service is being continually expanded to reach all regions of the Sultanate.

Overland Border Crossing Points

The new border crossing points at Al Wajajah, Wadi Al Jizzi and Hafet, manned by the ROP, were opened as part of the government's directives on encouraging tourism and other economic activities in the Sultanate.

Other Units

- The Mounted Police unit is invaluable in reaching places inaccessible to other forms of transport. Its stables contain both horses and camels.
- The Police Dog Unit carries out guard, inspection and tracking duties and can sometimes be seen showing off its considerable skills at exhibitions and festivals.
- The Police Coastguard Unit based at Port Sultan Qaboos in Mutrah, guards the Sultanate's 1,700 kilometre coastline. ROP boats patrol the seas to prevent illegal immigration and smuggling. They are also called upon to

provide assistance to sailors, particularly in difficult weather.

- The Police Aviation Directorate transports medical and relief teams and operates a flying doctor service, as well as dealing with emergency situations during natural disasters providing aid and rescue services for those in trouble at sea, in the mountains or flooded riverbeds (*wadis*).

- Civil Defence. During the year under review eight Civil Defence posts have been opened in Nizwa, Nizwa Industrial Estate, Raysut Industrial Estate, Ibra, Jaalan Bani Bu Hassan, Awqad (near Salalah) Suwaiq and Khasab. 33 graduates from the privately-funded Fire Safety Engineering College have been appointed, and a further 60 are undergoing training there.

Sultan Qaboos Academy

The Royal Oman Police Academy, Nizwa (ROPAN) was established in 1980 to train male and female ROP personnel to work effectively in the field. The facility was renamed the Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences in 2002.

JUDICIARY

The fair and independent administration of justice is vital to every society. In recognition of this fact, Oman is constantly updating its justice system and legal institutions to keep pace with 21st century living.

The Judicial Authority Law, which came into force in 2001, has established an integrated judicial system consisting of the Supreme Court in Muscat, six Courts of Appeal - in Muscat, Sohar, Nizwa, Salalah, Ibra and Ibri - and 40 Courts of First Instance spread throughout the Sultanate's regions.

The Supreme Court is top of Oman's judicial pyramid and the highest court in the land. It oversees the proper application and interpretation of the law and is not a third level of the judicial system. Its function is limited to monitoring judges in their application and interpretation of the law and it does not intervene in their assessment of the facts.

The Administrative Court became operational in April 2001. This Court is designed to provide a forum for a review of decisions made by government bodies. The Court (which comprises First Instance and Appeal circuits) has the power to reverse decisions made by Government bodies and it can also award compensation.

The Judicial Authority Law created the above courts to replace the previous Sharia, commercial and criminal courts. Their records have been duly transferred to the appropriate departments. In addition, the Supreme Judicial Council was established and the Criminal Procedures Law promulgated, both by Royal Decree.



One of the 5 female Deputy Attorneys General swears an oath of allegiance, on appointment in 2004.

The Notary Public Law was promulgated last year under Royal Decree No. 40/2003 to regulate the functions and areas of competence of the notaries public. The notary public is the legal trustee responsible for recording and documenting debts and transactions.

Some 54 Notary Public Departments were set up in the Sultanate to replace the document recorders who had previously been attached to the Sharia Courts.

Public Prosecutor's Office

In 1999 a Royal Decree was issued establishing an independent prosecution service headed by a Public Prosecutor who was subsequently appointed in June 2001. This has replaced the Director-General of Criminal Public Prosecutions, which was previously part of the Royal Oman Police.

Information technology

In line with the government's plans to set up an "e-government" system in the Sultanate, staff are undergoing intensive computer training courses and a number of ambitious projects, aimed at creating the infrastructure for a computer network, have been researched. Under the first scheme net connections have already been installed at 27 sites across the country; the project is scheduled for completion in 2008.