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Currency

The official unit of currency is the riyal, consisting of 100 halalas.

Government

General

Saudi Arabia is located in Southwest Asia and occupies most of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered on the N by Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait; on the W by the Red Sea; and on the S and E by Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and the Persian Gulf.

A narrow plain, rising in Al Hijaz and the Asir Highlands, extends along the Red Sea coast and then gradually slopes E as a desert plateau to a low-lying coastal region along the Persian Gulf. The highlands attain heights of up to about 2,750m; the desert plateau is 760 to 1,070m high.

The climate is mostly harsh, dry desert with great extremes of temperature.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.



Flag of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is a monarchy ruled by a King in consultation with the royal family, a Council of Ministers, and religious leaders. A 90-member Majlis al-Shura (Consultative Council), headed by a chairman, is appointed by the King for a term of 4 years.

The legal system is based on Islamic law. Several secular codes have been introduced. Commercial disputes are handled by special committees.

The official capital is Riyadh. The religious capital is Mecca.

Holidays

Islamic holidays, which are subject to the appearance of the moon, include Eid Al-Fitr (End of Ramadan), Eid Al-Adha (End of Pilgrimage), Hijrah (Islamic New Year), Ashoorah, and the Prophet's Birthday.

Industries

Oil is the principal resource, and oil production and oil refining are the principal industries. Other industries include petrochemicals, cement, steel, and fertilizers.

Agricultural products include dates, grains, and livestock.

Languages

The official language is Arabic.

Mined Areas

Vessels are advised that mined areas exist in the N part of the Persian Gulf. Further information should be obtained from the local authorities. Mine sightings should be reported to the naval authorities by INMARSAT (150 5612) or to Coalition naval vessels on VHF channel 13 or 16. Details of areas reported to be dangerous due to mines are also promulgated by Notice to Mariners issued by the Middle East Navigation Aids Service (MENAS) and by MARAD advisories.

Regulations

General

The Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf has issued a set of rules and regulations valid for Saudi Arabian ports. Every vessel entering a port should have a copy or obtain one immediately on arrival. These rules and regulations are extensive and extracts are given below:

1. Guidelines concerning standards of dress and behavior are laid down and strictly enforced.

2. The import of certain articles is strictly prohibited and includes such items as religious matter not pertaining to the Moslem faith; playing cards or other gambling devices; narcotics; printed matter, photographic matter, or video tapes depicting what could be considered pornographic; and alcoholic beverages, including beer, table wines, and liquor.

Any of the above items on board any vessel calling at Saudi ports must be secured in appropriate locked storerooms which will be sealed by the authorities who may carry out inspections to ensure that the seals are intact and that none of the above articles are in use. Penalties for violations are severe and major delays to vessels can be incurred.

Pilotage

Pilotage is compulsory for all vessels of 150 nrt and over, except pleasure craft, entering or navigating within or leaving the pilot zones of Saudi Arabia.

Vessels equipped with VHF should contact the Port Control Signal Station as soon as the vessel enters within VHF range.

Notification

The owners of vessels bound for a port within Saudi Arabia with cargo must give preliminary notice of the vessel's intended arrival to the Port Management of the discharge port(s) by telex or cable, either directly or through the vessel's agents, on arrival at the first or sole loading port, before loading commences. Estimated time of arrival and estimated quantity of cargo by type must be given with the preliminary notice.

On completion of loading cargo for Saudi ports, the following information must be sent to the Port Management of the discharge port(s) by telex or cable, either directly or through the vessel's agents:

1. Vessel's name and former names, if any.
2. Flag, port of registry, and call sign.
3. Length overall, grt, nrt, and dwt.
4. Expected draft on arrival.
5. Expected time of arrival.
6. Cargo particulars, including nature, weight, tonnage, and stowage by hatches; car carriers, ro-ro, and container vessels to give both number and weight in tons of each type of unit.
7. Any other cargo being carried for other destinations.
8. If dangerous cargo is being carried, the quantity and class must be indicated in accordance with the IMDG code and it must be stated whether this cargo is to be discharged or is in transit.
9. Number, position, and S.W.L. of derricks and/or cranes, and particulars and positions of ramps.
10. The number and nationalities of passengers to be disembarked or in transit.
11. Expected requirements for bunkers and water.
12. Name of the vessel's agent.
13. Vessels intending to call at Saudi ports must submit to the Port Management a detailed list of arms and ammunition carried on board for the purpose of self-defense, at least 48 hours prior to arrival. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in heavy fines and seizure of the arms by the Saudi authorities.

A further notice of ETA is to be sent 5 days, 2 days, and 1 day prior to arrival at the port.

Having complied with the above and received the necessary permission to proceed with loading, the vessel's agent must submit to the relevant Port Management full details of all cargo on board, whether to be discharged in Saudi ports or elsewhere.

Any vessel that fails to comply with these procedures, or is found to be carrying weapons, explosives, and ammunition without prior permission will be detained.

The discharge of cargo for transshipment to another port, whether in or outside the waters of Saudi Arabia, is strictly forbidden.

Vessels calling at any commercial port in Saudi Arabia, with cargo destined for non-Saudi ports, must submit manifests declaring the nature of such cargo. Violation of this requirement may lead to the detention of the vessel.

Ship Reporting System

The Saudi Ship Reporting System (SSRS) is a voluntary service for vessels navigating in the Red Sea. Such vessels are requested to report to the SSRS center at Jeddah (HZH). Reports should be sent every 24 hours, either between 0700

and 0730 UT (GMT) or between 1900 and 1930 UT (GMT), and consist of the following format:

Identifier	Content
A	Vessel name, call sign, flag, and cargo.
B	Date and time UT (GMT) of report.
C	Latitude and longitude.
E	Course.
F	Speed.
G	Port of departure (name of last port of call).
I	Port of destination, including latitude and longitude, and ETA.
K	Port of arrival, including latitude and longitude, and time of arrival.
L	Route.
M	Details of frequencies guarded.
V	Medical resources.
X	Remarks.
Y	Remarks.
Z	Crew nationality and number.

Signals

Every vessel approaching the limits of a port must hoist the ship's signal letters (in case of VHF failure), the International code "Q" flag in accordance with health regulations; the International code "B" flag in accordance with the carrying of

dangerous goods or hazardous materials, and the national flag of the country to which the ship belongs.

In addition, every vessel entering a port must display the flag of Saudi Arabia from the foremast and keep it flying at all times while the vessel is in port. The Saudi Arabian flag is properly displayed when the writing appears on top and the sword on the bottom.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is CHARLIE (-3). Daylight Savings Time is not observed.

The capital and all major port cities keep the Zone Time. It is reported that much of the remainder of the country keeps Islamic sun time or "Arabic Time." (All clocks are set daily to 12 midnight at sunset.)

World Time Zone Chart

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is located on Collector Road M, Diplomatic Quarter, Riyadh.

The mailing addresses are, as follows:

1. International mail—
P.O. Box 94309,
Riyadh 11693
2. Diplomatic pouch—
APO AE 09803-1307

U. S. Embassy Saudi Arabia Home Page

<http://usembassy.state.gov/riyadh>