

## **Ras Al-Khaimah eGovernment**

### **Vision**

Enable a modernized and efficient Ras Al-Khaimah Government to embrace and utilize the latest developments in eGovernment technology for meeting the needs of citizens, residents, tourists, businesses, and investors.

### **Mission**

Implement high quality information and communication technology solutions within Ras Al-Khaimah Government, enabling it to deliver effective, efficient and value-added services, and making it accessible from any where and at any time.

### **Principle and Values**

Reliability;

Professionalism

Integrity and trust;

Efficiency and effectiveness;

Commitment to service;

Partnership;

Performance accountability;

Long range planning;

Individual worth and diversity;

Innovation and continuous improvement;

Excellence; and

Collaboration and teamwork.

### **Slogan**

“Towards achieving a seamless eGovernment, hurriedly, but surely!”

### **eGovernment**

A young ambitious leader who has a strong passion for his country, H.H. Sheikh Saud bin Saqr AlQassimi, the Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Ras Al-Khaimah, promises his emirate to continue the development movement and achieve an e-society.

The e-society of his dreams employs the latest ICT mechanisms for the purpose of providing online services and facilitating the lives of citizens and customers of the

government. Launching RAK eGovernment portal is one step toward that dream. This initiative has earned a strategic value, being the second such initiative in UAE, as it showcases a strong union and spirit of integration.

The most significant accomplishment of RAK eGovernment portal is the establishment of the first Hypothetical Government Complex for all the emirates departments. The portal user finds a detailed description of their locations along with a sufficient definition of each department and its means of contact. The establishment of this complex aims to simplify procedures, getting on hand information of all governmental departments and qualitatively improving the services that these departments provide. The portal was launched on June 30, 2004 with simple, elegant design with "two click" information seek feature that connects together Ras Al-Khaimah citizens, residents and government departments.

The portal will soon offer e-services, deploying latest IT mechanisms to fulfill the broad vision of H.H. Sheikh Saud bin Saqr AlQassimi, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of the emirate : "the E-society of my dreams".

The portal is bilingual (can be accessed via Arabic and English homepages) , with compatible standard protocol and platform which ultimately will allow a considerable integration with the Union (Federal) eGovernment portals– the eUAE portal.

RAK eGovernment portal is not a brochure or an advertising website, it is a joint that connects together Ras Al-Khaimah citizens, residents and government departments and ultimately with the universe. This connection has a tremendous impact on their daily integration. By opening a communication channel between the government and its people, Sheikh Saud aspires to create a sincere relationship in which suggestions and creative ideas presented by simple users which are, the true impulse of this initiative.

The vision of promoting the ICT infrastructure in Ras Al-Khaimah was scheduled over a period of ten years, but H.H shortened this period to two years. To dismantle the technical obstacles off-setting our mission, H.H. entrusted a specialized central authority – ([EGA](#)) – with all the government's technology aspects, including the establishment of the ICT infrastructure, purchasing the required hardware and software and the employment of supervising and operating technical staff. After attaining all technical and electronic installations, EGA directly headed toward planning and scheduling for the enforcement of the eGovernment initiative. Adopting open systems to implement the department's technical solutions throughout the past in RAK, contributed greatly to the success of RAK Government mission. These systems employ advanced programming solutions such as Oracle Database and Unix Systems, which are consistent and open to expansion and development to fully run all implementations and operating tasks. A major factor that affected ICT success was, and still is, the unlimited support of H.H Sheikh Saud, the Crown Price and Deputy Ruler of Ras Al-Khaimah who opened all doors and eliminated all routine procedures that would have delayed the work progress. H.H.'s exact words to us were, "If it was me who stands in your way and hinders your mission, go past me and continue with your journey until you complete your goal".

During the first stage, EGA relied on advanced technical systems and programmes to operate the portal. These systems are based on highly efficient network connections. EGA also have a high security programme that eliminates any sabotage endeavors, either by hackers or viruses. Both operating and security programmes are linked to a developed Oracle environment and backend. EGA also supplied the portal with programmes required for context control, data updates, device performance monitor and visitors statistics surveillance. High-speed servant devices are used to

stabilize these programmes. They are connected to an immediate spare copying system and equipped with standby energy resources. The central server room is provided with a modern fire-fighter system and with high security arrangements. As it was mentioned earlier here, in upcoming stages, EGA will establish a government information network (RAKGIN) to link all departments together to improve their e-services.

EGA divide the operating stages into two categories; the first being the execution steps of the E-information and E-services portal project, which include:

1. Setting a strategy plan to execute the eGovernment project that details each department.
2. Launching the Ras Al-Khaimah eGovernment portal.
3. The participation of all Ras Al-Khaimah departments in the eGovernment portal.
4. Offering e-services before the December, 2005, and concentrating on 'Quick Wins', quick-return services essential to individuals and the business sector.
5. Connecting government departments by an integrated information network.
6. Transferring all government services to the e-model.
7. Communicating and integrating with other e-governments in the country.

Central infrastructure of e-services will be provided, such as ePay and the portal members unified identification system.

The second category of the operating stage – prior to the implementation of the Quickwins – is the infrastructure setup required for delivering e-services to the users via number of channels such as:

1. Cellular phones
2. Ground telephones
3. Government net
4. International net
5. Substations

Ras Al-Khaimah eGovernment project is 100% central. No institution is authorized to carry on the project except the department H.H Sheikh Saud entrusted with this mission. H.H. heads the eGovernment Board, followed by the Board's CEO, whose administration consists of four key departments under the [EGA](#): Development, Projects, e-services and the Financial Department. Each department has full responsibilities related to its specialty to achieve integration in the project's execution. Having touched the benefits of centralism, the departments accepted their role, especially with the presence of a technical qualification and training center in the Authority. This center has a great impact on the employees as a constant source of experience and practice.

Meanwhile, EGA have exceeded the limitations of training government staff, and are steering towards wiping out ICT illiteracy in Ras Al-Khaimah. By offering over than 700 training seats for

different courses in basics and advanced computer topics, EGA have touched the increase in people's interest and awareness of technology.

## **RAK.AE – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

Out of RAK eGovernment's concern to spread awareness, EGA prepared few questions with their answers to make aware the public's full comprehension of its role.

Is this portal a private project?

No. The portal was designed completely under the government's directions to serve the community.

After the project's completion, what are its major features?

Our e-services are accessible via many channels and have no geographical limitations. For example, people in Al-Jazeera Al Hammra and Sha'am can pay their bills anywhere. Our services also operate during the holidays.

Are citizens charged for using e-services?

No. Extra fees are added in exchange of using our services electronically.

Are we charged to register online?

No. Registering online is free of charge.

How do you accept payments?

All payment passages are accepted: cash payment, eDirham, check, transfer or credit cards

If a customer makes his water and electricity payments via your portal, is it possible that he might be disconnected from these services?

No. The portal's database is connected with the relevant government departments. All payments are updated, transferred and posted immediately to the concerned department. Besides, the customer receives a voucher that proves he made his payments.

How legitimate is this voucher?

It is credible and proves payment authenticity.

How many users can benefit from the same service at the same time?

An unlimited number of users can benefit from a service at the same time.

What is the portal's address?

[www.rak.ae](http://www.rak.ae) ; or simply [rak.ae](http://rak.ae)

Can government e-services be accessed from home?

Yes. E-services can be accessed either by using PC, cellular phones ,substations or ground phones.

When will the portal's e-services be generalized and put into active use?

In the meantime, we are finalizing the required facilitations, and God willing, RAK E-services will be enforced soon as we get the final word from H.H. Sheikh Saud.

## **Ras Al-Khaimah (RAK)**

### **Vision**

Make Ras Al-Khaimah one of the top destinations in the Middle East for business, investment, and tourism.

### **Mission**

To provide responsive, cost-effective, efficient and innovative Local Government services to the citizens, residents, tourists, businesses, and investors.

### **The new RAK**

Ras Al-Khaimah (RAK) is the fourth largest of the seven emirates that form the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The others are Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Fujairah and Umm UI Quwain

RAK has a heritage from as far back as 5000 BC. Archaeological finds speak of its strong trade links with many ancient civilizations including Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley.

This Emirate has since come a long way from the times of its legendary mariner Ahmad Ibne Maajid. A time when RAK's distinct little dhows (wooden ships) sailed the world to trade.

Today, the world is seeking out the new RAK.

And it is ready. With its great natural advantages, a vibrant economy, all infrastructure in place, a track record with some of the world's best business success stories and a stable, visionary Government firmly committed to free enterprise.

### **RAK at a Glance**

Location : On the Arabian Gulf, between Latitudes 25 and 26 degrees North and Longitudes 55 and 60 Degrees East.

Land Area : 3000 Square Kilometers

Climate : Straddling the Tropic of Cancer, all of UAE is warm and sunny in winter, and hot and humid during the summer months. Temperatures range from a recorded minimum of 8.1 degree Centigrade to a maximum of 46.9 degree Centigrade. Average rainfall is 56 millimeters

Total Population : 195,000

Males : 115000

Females : 80,000

Crude birth rate : 17.4

Average annual population growth : 3.9%

Density of population : 65 per Sq Km

Official language : Arabic. Other widely spoken languages include English, Hindi, Urdu, Malayalam, Farsi and Tagalog, among others. Arabic and English are the most used in business and commerce.

Official religion: Islam. But other faiths are free to practice their religion privately

Currency : The UAE currency is Dirham (abbreviated as AED or Dh), each Dirham made up of 100 fils. The Dirham is fully convertible and is pegged to U.S. Dollar (\$) approximately @ AED3.671 and Euro (€) approximately @ AED4.577.

## History of Ras Al-Khaimah

Ras Al-Khaimah has a very unique archaeological heritage. The area had always enticed settlers with a combined presence of all the four types of landscapes in the United Arab Emirates the fertile plains, the mountain region, the coastal region and the desert environment.

The Ubaid Period (5000 - 3800 BC) is the oldest historic period known of RAK. Large shell middens and surface collections near Jazirat al-Hamra give clear hints of human presence in that period.

Burial cairns built on high mountain plateaus during the Hafit Period (3200 - 2600 BC) have been discovered in Khatt, in the mountains. And also in Wadi al-Beih and Wadi al-Gawr areas.

The middle of the third millennium BC saw the rise of the Umm un-Naar culture (2600 - 2000 BC), arguably the most important period in the development of a civilization in the UAE. Evidence suggests that trade in copper with Mesopotamia and the Indus valley was common. The area then used to be called the 'Land of Majaan'.

Excavated tombs of this period in Asimah and elsewhere threw up locally produced pottery of very high quality, besides pottery from south-eastern Iran, the Indus Valley, Mesopotamia and also Bahrain, (then known as Dilmun): More indications of RAK's presence in a vast international trade network.

After the Umm un-Naar Period, well known for its circular tombs, the beginning of the second millennium BC is marked in the UAE by a sudden change in settlement pattern, style of pottery and tombs. About 150 large tombs of this period found in Shimal area of RAK is the largest collection of prehistoric graves found in the Oman Peninsula.

The RAK of the second half of the second millennium BC, the late Bronze Age (1600-1250 BC) comes through from archaeological sites in the Shimal area. Built at the foot of the rising mountains, these showed traces of 'areesh' style housing, typical of the United Arab Emirates until as recently as 50 years ago.

The Iron Age (1250-300 BC) here is best known from finds from the southern part of RAK. The first surveys were carried out by Beatrice de Cardi in the Wadi al-Gawr and Wadi Muna'i area and were later followed by excavations of British archaeologists

The later pre-Islamic times, the Hellenistic and Parthian Period (300 BC to 300 AD) are also evidenced in the northern parts.

In the northern part of Ras Al-Khaimah, two important settlements in the shape of a huge mound (Tell) have been found, pointing to occupation of the northern part of the Emirate during the Iron Age.

The Sassanian occupation (300-632 AD) of Ras Al-Khaimah territory is now becoming increasingly evident. Archaeologist, J. Hansman excavated a small site on the island of Hulaylah that was occupied during the Sassanian Period. A British team unearthed a Sassanian fortress, built to control the fertile plains around the northern part of the Emirate.

### Julphar

Apparently, after the Sassanians abandoned their fortress, settlers re-used the older structures and lived there for the next 700 years. While mud-brick buildings were found in Kush, the island of Hulaylah was probably settled with 'arish' style buildings, leaving less visible but important remains.

Both sites are only a few kilometers apart and can probably be identified with the area of ancient Julphar, an important town known from Islamic geographers like Al-Muqdasī in the 10th century and Al-Idrisi in the 12th century.

Finds of Chinese porcelain at both sites, as well as Abbasid pottery imported from Iraq and elsewhere show that the people of Julphar were heavily involved in trade. Of particular interest was the recovery of seeds from the settlements and probably the oldest coffee bean in the world was found in a 12th-century living area at Kush. This predates by a couple of centuries the period that historical sources usually mention the use and trade of coffee to have begun.

By the middle of the 14th century Kush and Jazirat al-Hulayla were abandoned and the people settled on a sandbar, at that time in front of the coast. This settlement too took the name Julphar, and is still called that.

It has been proved that Julphar was a large settlement between the 14th and the 17th centuries. The city was built of mud brick houses and remains of a mosque and a fortress stand there. Julphar was defended by a large mud brick wall about 4 meters tall. Arabic and European sources of the period amplify the trade importance of Julphar far beyond the pale of the Gulf. It was more or less the equivalent of modern Dubai.

A huge amount of Chinese porcelain and other pottery point to Julphar's long-range trade. Home to merchants and seafarers, the great Arab seafarer, Ahmad Ibne Maajid, apparently came from Julphar.

## The RAK Economy

RAK's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2003 was AED 6.96 billion (USD 1.9 billion), up by 5.4 per cent during the 1999-2003 period. Exports grew to touch AED 1242 million, while imports logged AED 1172 million.

The services sector dominates RAK's economy, contributing 58% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Agriculture, livestock rearing and fisheries contribute 17% while the Industries sector accounts for 11%. Its Building and Construction sectors contribute another 10%.

Major exports are ceramic tiles, medicines, cement, crushed rocks, and fresh fish. Imports consist of clinker, live sheep, cars and gold. The biggest export destinations include Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman. The Emirate's imports come from Iran, Oman, India, Japan, Bulgaria, Italy, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Australia and Greece.

Re-exports too followed an exponential growth curve, touching AED 3779 million in 2003, from AED 1103.5 million in 1998.

In the 1980's, RAK had a modest oil strike at its offshore Saleh field. The Emirate is going ahead with the explorations, both onshore and offshore.

The non-oil foreign trade in RAK witnessed a steady increase, in value terms from AED 2233.27 million in 1998 to AED 6193 million in 2003. In quantity terms, the non-oil foreign trade climbed from 8220.78 thousand tones in 1998 to 21,776.62 thousand tones in 2002.

Reflective of the fast paced growth of the economy, the total capital investment in RAK industries jumped from AED 2108 million AED in 2000 to AED 3044 million in 2003. Industrial employment went up from 10, 045 to 11,595 during the period. Power generation was stepped up from 1253.73 MW/H in 1998 to 1954 MW/H in 2003.

#### Agriculture

In the past, RAK's traditional economic mainstays had largely been agriculture and fishing. The Emirate has one of the region's largest agricultural areas, practicing many innovative arid zone cultivation methods. RAK has UAE's pioneering agricultural research center, established way back in 1955. Federal research centers devoted to dates function in the Emirate and over 45 different varieties of date palms are now grown locally.

RAK's agrarian land area grew by 4.5% in the 1999-2003 period, with cultivated area accounting for over 97% of farm area

RAK also has a substantial dairy industry sector.

## RAK Today

### Industries in Ras Al-Khaimah

RAK is endowed with rich natural resources and an abundance of natural raw materials, minerals and mining resources. It also has a hugely recognized potential in the agricultural sector.

This Emirate is noted for the range and scope of its industries, covering an entire spectrum from the construction and housing sector including various types of cement, clinker and ceramics; to pharmaceuticals and more.

RAK's Ceramic industry, in particular, is a global success symbol. Ceramics from this Emirate now command the market in around 130 countries worldwide.

Another prospering segment is the manufacture, assembling and maintenance of oilfield drilling rig equipment, including tanks and small barges used in the oilfield exploration industry.

## Ceramics

RAK Ceramics is a company of the stuff that legends are made of. Incorporated in 1989, it firmly established itself as a world leader in high quality ceramic wall & floor tiles, gres porcellanato, and sanitaryware all in a few years.

It is now one of the top three ceramic manufacturers in the world, and globally considered to be a pioneer in assimilating and adapting to gilt-edge technology as soon as it leaves the drawing board. It exports to more than 125 countries on both sides of the equator. Logging global sales in excess of US\$ 300 million..

Beginning with an output of just 5000 Square meters in 1991, RAK Ceramics had expanded continuously, absorbing the most sophisticated technology available from world leaders in Ceramic technology. It now has 18 production lines, 14 kilns and 16 large presses producing 112,000 Square meters of ceramic / gres porcellanato tiles a day.

Its sanitary ware factories produce 5,000 pieces a day including complete bathroom sets with water closets, wash basins, bidets, bathtubs, shower trays, and all related accessories in a wide range of colors and designs.

The company operates nine manufacturing facilities in the Emirate besides plants in Bangladesh, Slovakia and China, and more are coming up elsewhere.

## Cement

Cement and building materials industry has developed as one of the important local industries in the Emirate. Local stone, quarried from the mountains, is used to produce a large variety of building materials, from aggregates to ceramic tiles. RAK is the only emirate in the UAE to produce oil-well cement, white cement and lime, and is a major domestic supplier and exporter. The Emirates has three Portland cement factories and a White Cement factories catering to both local and export markets.

### Union Cement Company

Union Cement Company (UCC) was UAE's first cement manufacturer when it was established in 1972 in the Khor Kuwair Industrial Area. It commenced production in 1975, and now has an annual production capacity of about 2 million tones of internationally rated products, used worldwide. UCC products include ordinary Portland cement, moderate sulphate resistant cement and high sulphate resistant cement. UCC is also the only producer of oil well cement in UAE.

### Ras Al-Khaimah Cement Company (RAK Cement Company)

The RAK Cement Company was founded in 1995. It was designed and built using the latest available technology to utilize prime quality raw materials available in the Emirate's mountains. The plant has an installed capacity of one million tonnes with an employee strength of just 150 people, making it the most efficient cement producer in the country. It is also one of UAE's most high-tech cement factories.

### Ras Al-Khaimah Company for White Cement and Construction Materials

This company was commissioned in 1986 with an installed capacity of 450,000 tonnes from its three kilns. It now exports its products throughout the world using the adjacent Saqr Port.

## Quarrying

The Emirate's vast reserves of high quality limestone deposits are being successfully exploited by its highly diversified quarrying industry. RAK has the biggest limestone quarries and crushers in UAE for aggregate production, construction, steel industry and cement industry.

The Ras Al-Khaimah Lime Company, Noora, is a subsidiary of RAK White Cement Company. It is the only producer of lime in the UAE. The Lime Brick Factory, a subsidiary of Noora, manufactures calcium silicate bricks.

## Pharmaceuticals

RAK is home to Gulf Pharmaceutical Industries, a highly rated international drug major. Its exports to 40 countries have now crossed US\$ 136 million, and commands a strong presence in many parts of Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and Latin America. The company is better known under its brand name, Julphar – the ancient name of RAK.

In addition to its headquarters in RAK, Julphar has two more plants in the UAE and one each in Ecuador and Germany. The group also owns several affiliates providing support services.

Julphar manufactures a wide range of pharmaceutical products in all dosage forms. It has ensured strict compliance with the Current Good Manufacturing Practices (CGMP) of the United States Federal Drug Administration.

The Julphar I plant in UAE is dedicated to the manufacture of oral and topical products with a capacity of over one billion tablets, 300 million capsules, 45 million bottles of syrups and suspensions, 12 million bottles of drops, 10 million tubes of ointments and creams and 50 million suppositories.

Julphar II concentrates on injectible products, including a highly specialized line of lyophilized products, ampoules, vials and pre-filled syringes. Julphar III is dedicated to over-the-counter consumer products.

The Ecuador factory of Julphar IV manufactures oral dosage forms and supplies products throughout South America, while Julphar V, based at Eschewage in Germany, complies with EC guidelines and caters to the European market.

## Garments

RAK has a well developed garment manufacturing industry which has secured a global market for its products.

## Glass Table Wares

The glass table ware factory at RAK exports to around 50 countries worldwide.

Packaging Industry

RAK has a very sophisticated line up of packaging and carton factories.

## **Food**

The dairy farms at RAK are among the first to be set up in UAE. They sell an entire range of products including milk, yogurt, etc. The poultry production (chicken and eggs) at RAK is also one of the first in UAE. There are also small vegetable production houses in the emirate.

## **Others**

Small scale industries of RAK include fishing boats, aluminum and many more.

## **Workforce**

UAE is home to a large pool of skilled and motivated multicultural workforce. Employers are free to either hire from the existing pool of workers within the UAE or hire people internationally. The average indicative monthly salaries, inclusive of food, housing and insurance, amount to the following:

Unskilled worker USD 350

Skilled worker USD 500

Technician (electrician/ mechanic) USD 700

Engineer (electrical/ mechanical) USD 1,000

Secretary USD 500

Accountant USD 800-1,000

Sales Executive USD 800-1,000

The normal working hours are 48 hours a week. Employees get one month paid leave per annum. The Emirate is free from strikes and employee unions.

RAK's labor force is growing at an approximate rate of 5% per annum constitutes nearly 44% of the Emirate's total population. It has a significant share of Asian (especially Pakistan and India) and Arab expatriates.

## **Electricity**

Reliable power is available everywhere in RAK at the rate of AED 0.2 per KW (equivalent to USD 0.055). Power generation in the Emirate was augmented from 1253.73 MW/H in 1998 to 1954 MW/H in 2003.

## **Water**

The government has made big investments in water desalination projects to ensure sufficient availability. The current rate is AED 0.02 per gallon (equivalent to USD 0.0055 per gallon)

## Sewerage Systems

RAK recently commissioned the first of a three-phased and sophisticated central sewerage system costing AED 300 million. It will be totally commissioned by 2006 and can take care of the Emirate's sewage disposal- needs at least till 2030.

## Housing

RAK has shown rapid progress in real estate development during the last few years. A multitude of villas and flats, suitable for AI-I budgets, are available for rent and sale. The rents are very competitive and range from US\$ 2,500 per year for a flat of one bedroom, one sitting room and one kitchen and goes up to around USD 15,000 for a deluxe villa of 250 sq. meter (with central air conditioning and garden).

## Schools and Colleges

In the educational sector, the number of students in private schools increased from 7722 in academic year 1998-1999 to 9203 in 2002-2003.

RAK has many schools and modern higher learning institutions that serve all communities and languages. Among schools, the Ras Al-Khaimah English Speaking School is one of the most prominent, offering educations from nursery to the university level. It follows an English / American curriculum and is now poised to offer the International Baccalaureate program. The school has teachers from England, Australia and Canada.

The Ittihad University in RAK city is fast developing into a centre of modern academic excellence. The Higher Technical Colleges including the Ras Al-Khaimah Women's College and the Men's College are known for their academic standards and facilities.

## Hospitals

There are four major government hospitals in RAK, all equipped with state-of-the-art equipments and well qualified doctors. There are also many private hospitals and clinics offering quality specialized medicare. Besides, many more hospitals and healthcare institutions can be easily be accessible in Dubai and Sharjah, which are just approximately an hour drive from RAK.

## Shopping Centers

The Manar Mall combines the region's best shopping experience with entertainment facilities, great dining and leisure options, and much more. The Mall has a formidable line up of international brands, food courts, super markets and cinemas.

Located on the creek waterfront on the Al Nakheel side of the City, it is the first of its kind in UAE.

Designed along the lines of modern malls in the United States and Europe, Manar Mall is a single level structure with no secondary corridors. It has a total area of 45,000 square meters.

The leading French hypermarket chain, Carrefour is one of the anchor tenants of the Mall. Its Al Massa Cineplex is a seven screen, state-of-the-art cinema complex. Foton Edutainment, a 2,500 square meter electronic games centre, is another big draw. The Mall offers a wide range of products and services including fashion, jewelry, cosmetics, music, sports goods, home

furnishings, books and periodicals, pharmacies and medical clinics, opticians, banks, foreign exchange facilities, beauty salons, boutiques, video games and specialty outlets.

Manar Mall also has a 600-seat food court with 10 leading outlets offering international and local cuisine. Besides Manar Mall there are many other malls also in RAK to explore.

## **RAK International Airport**

Operating round the clock, this airport is known for its safety, efficiency, capacity and comfort levels.

The RAK airport handled around 178,000 passengers and nearly 20,000 tonnes of cargo in 2001. Twenty seven airlines now operate passenger and cargo services. Scheduled and non-scheduled services from the airport link RAK with destinations throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, Africa and the Far East.

The terminal offers a host of facilities which include restaurants, a transit lounge, a VIP lounge and a mosque. The departure area provides additional facilities such as duty free shopping complex, an information desk, automated teller machines, a travel agency and an audio/video store. The arrival terminal area houses a variety of food and beverages stores as well as a gold jewelry outlet.

Plans are afoot to greatly increase the airport's capacity. It deserves special mention that the master plan for expansion of RAK International Airport could have no conflicts of interest with local residents as it is 18 kilometres away from the city, surrounded by pastoral land.

Even as the RAK International Airport continues to target Russia and the CIS as valuable niche markets, the main focal growth area is the transit of cargo between Europe, the Indian Subcontinent and the Far East. The airport has signed an MoU with Emirates Sky Cargo to operate a cargo collection centre.

The 7,000 square meter cargo area at the airport consists of two dedicated buildings with cold storage facilities, X-ray equipment and special security zones for the storage of hazardous cargo and valuables. The cargo area can handle bulk cargo, live animals, fresh meat and dangerous goods (including radioactive material.)

The two cargo buildings apart, the airport also has provisions for cargo airlines or freight forwarders undertaking heavy cargo operations. These can be had on a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) basis, or on a five year free land lease agreement, depending on the volume of operations.

## **Sea Ports :**

### **Saqr Port**

As one of the most active ports in the Gulf region, the Saqr Port plays a key role in the economic growth of the Emirate. Built in 1976, the port is close to major international shipping lanes and the Strait of Hormuz.

The port has eight deep water berths, each 200 metres long and dredged to 12.2 metres at mean low water spring tide. It has two ramps with specialized berths for handling bulk cement and aggregates.

Advanced cargo handling facilities include mobile cranes, fork lifts, trailers and yard hustlers. It can accommodate vessels up to 260 meters in length and a maximum draught of 11.5 meters. (Those with a draught of up to 12.2 metres can enter the port at higher tide.) Saqr Port also has a small boat and fishing harbor with a quayside depth of 4.5 metres, which occasionally handle barge traffic.

Saqr Port can handle 20,000 TEUs per day and is indeed the only port in the Gulf region where oil exports are not the dominant traffic. It lacks in no modern facilities for UAE importers for transshipment traffic to other Gulf countries, India and Pakistan. The country's excellent road network makes overland transshipment throughout the Middle East smooth. Mina Saqr is also the closest port to Bandar Abbas for transshipment to Iran.

A massive container terminal is being developed at the port, at a cost of US\$ 45 million.

Large ships can discharge at Mina Saqr and their cargoes can be reloaded on smaller vessels to serve the ports in Gulf, India and Pakistan, which have limitations in servicing bigger vessels. Distribution and packing centers can also be set up within the port at reasonable costs.

## Ras Al-Khaimah Sea Port

This port extends along a water tongue (the creek) running across Ras Al-Khaimah city. The port receives many types of wooden ships, particularly medium sized and small vessels, merchant dhows and launches. The port is active in re-export and export activities with neighboring countries. The wharves of the port are located along the sides of the creek, close to the business district and the Customs headquarters.

## Al- Jazeerah Port

A third seaport- Al- Jazeerah Al- Hamra - was commissioned in 2003 to handle the growing demand for bulk shipments of aggregates and rocks for the burgeoning construction industry in UAE.

Located 20 Kms south of Ras Al-Khaimah City, it is the first port of contact for incoming vessels. Al- Jazeera has the bonus of being close to the national highway linking RAK and Dubai.

The port has nine berths and a total length of 1.1 kms. The main port is designed for loading/discharging all types of cargo, while the breakwater area of the port is meant for loading rock materials.

Al- Jazeera has agency services, customs and immigration facilities, afloat repair and maintenance infrastructure, pilotage, towage and tug assistance, and bunkering facilities. The port is equipped with the latest navigational systems from UK and Germany.

It is currently on an expansion mode, adding on a ship lift system, and a refurbished dry dock with two loading ramps. The floating dock facility and a Synchro Lift will be commissioned by mid 2005.

A fourth port for the Emirate is being planned near the border with Oman. This will have a 350 meter berthing space and passenger terminal to facilitate ferry services between Bandar Abbas and RAK.

## Roads

Ras Al-Khaimah has a well laid out network of roads. Two free flowing dual-carriageways link RAK with the other northern emirates and beyond. One stretches through the beautiful beaches and deserts while the other runs out towards the airport in the direction of Khatt, Fujairah and Dhaid.

A new Expressway will soon further revolutionise RAK's road connectivity, drastically cutting travel time to Dubai and beyond.

Taxis, trucks and pickups are readily available for hire throughout the Emirate.

## **Telecommunications**

Emirates Telecommunications Corporation (Etisalat) provides world class telecommunication services to the United Arab Emirates and is one of the leading service providers in the Middle East region.

Etisalat's reach in Ras Al-Khaimah is near total. In spite of the Emirate's challenging terrain, it has reached its services to even remote areas through alternative backhaul systems. By 2003, the services covered almost all the inhabited areas of RAK, with a total of 49,596 landlines, 17,792 GSM lines and 86,684 Al- Wasel lines.

Besides voice communication infrastructure, Etisalat provides these products and Services too:

Wireless Communication - Etisalat was the first to introduce mobile telephones in the Middle East in 1982 and launched the GSM Service in September 1994. The subscriber base which stood at 130,000, at the end of 1996, has now swelled to over 2 million.

Data Communication – Etisalat offers cutting edge communication solutions in data transmission. You can access one of the most reliable and fool proof communication solutions that have been tried, tested and evaluated to meet exacting international standards.

## **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

The Government of Ras Al-Khaimah is fully committed towards ICT; upon which, and to fulfill such commitment, it has established the Technological and Development Information Center (TDIC) in the year 1418H (1998).

In the year of 1425H (2003) , and in view of the ambitious total development plan for Ras Al-Khaimah to allocate appropriate position in the modern world led by H.H. Sheikh Saud bin Saqr AlQasimi, the Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Ras Al-Khaimah who have issued a decree to establish the Electronic Government Authority (EGA) in place of (TDIC) in order to have a better and more effective understanding and embracement of e-International trend. The (TDIC) was REVAMPED to (EGA), with its main objective of promoting computerized knowledge and providing ICT solutions to every and all governmental departments through the undergoing project to build Ras Al-Khaimah Government Information Network (RAKGIN) - supported on powerful backbone network provided by the secured local Internet Service Provider (ISP), ETISALAT.

Recently, EGA has announced the launch of an eGovernment portal – RAK.AE for e-Information and knowledge. It will soon offer e-services through the same, accepting various payment mechanism based on number of accessible hardware channels and emirate wide eService substations.

[For more information, click here on the EGA Department link](#)

## **Ras Al-Khaimah at the Helm**

Steering the new, resurgent, RAK racing purposefully to its future of promise under its Ruler His Highness Sheikh Saqr Bin Muhammad AlQasimi, is His Highness Sheikh Saud Bin Saqr AlQasimi, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler.

An alumni of the Michigan University in US, from where he graduated in Political Science and Economics, Sheikh Saud's vision for Ras Al-Khaimah is founded on the bedrock of free enterprise. A vision focused clearly on ensuring the maximum socio-economic advantages for its people as Ras Al-Khaimah realizes its tremendous latent potentials.

When his father, His Highness Sheikh Saqr Bin Muhammad AlQasimi, Member of the Supreme Council of UAE and Ruler of Ras Al-Khaimah, appointed him as the Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler on 14 July 2003, 48-year-old Sheikh Saud was bringing in a unique combination of resources and talents to the second highest office.

One was his track record as one of UAE's most admired corporate icons. To mention a couple of highlights, it was under Sheikh Saud's baton that Gulf Pharmaceuticals (Julphar) made its biggest strides from being a modest local pharmaceuticals manufacturer to a full-blooded transnational, with several manufacturing facilities abroad now. Julphar today exports to 40 world countries, with a turnover crossing AED 500 million.

A bigger tribute to Sheikh Saud's corporate stewardship has been RAK Ceramics, now a US \$ 350 million turnover world leader, commanding the ceramic markets in about 130 countries on both sides of the equator. It was his pioneering vision that powered this company from a small, obscure factory in Ras Al-Khaimah to a truly global player, with manufacturing bases in several countries all in about 14 years.

Sheikh Saud also founded Al-Manar Mall, Ras Al-Khaimah's state-of-the-art multiplex easily vying with the best malls in Europe and north America . He heads a slew of other companies and institutions as well.

As the Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler, Sheikh Saud also brought in long years of hands-on administrative experience in key Government positions, including as the head of Ras Al-Khaimah's civic body, chief of the Ruler's Court, and in other important capacities.

For Ras Al-Khaimah's future, Sheikh Saud has his sights clearly set on catalyzing a dynamic, result-driven partnership between the Government and private investment. His vision sees the private sector as the capable reservoir of investment and talents crucial to creating the Emirate's future. He envisions the Government's role as releasing that capability, supporting and sustaining it, and working to put in place a high-yield environment for enterprise and partnership.

## **Ras Al-Khaimah of Tomorrow – (Future Commitments)**

Improving the investment climate by removing impediments or burdens that may be present at the legal, administrative or other levels, and which act as barriers or diminish the incentive to invest and to do business.

Providing or making available enabling infrastructure and other support services to the private sector at competitive costs and service levels, so that the investors would find Ras Al-Khaimah an attractive place to invest in and to base their business.

Providing clarity, objectivity and transparency in the legal and regulatory framework, so that investors can see a level playing field for all, and can operate within a world class regulatory environment designed to support the development of a modern economy.

The Government will also proactively promote Ras Al-Khaimah as an investment destination with special emphasis on selected sectors and activities, as well as an attractive place for people to live and work in.

## Priority Strategic Areas

There are six priority strategic areas that will be the main focus of action by the government to directly support the policy program. These include the following:

Reform of laws and regulations of the Emirate to make it more hospitable to investment and more enabling for business

Working closely with the Federal Government and seek their assistance in areas such as the provision of modern infrastructure and services

Negotiating concessions or waivers, where possible, regarding restrictive laws and regulations; and the options of Free Zones will be more exhaustively explored.

Institutional reforms, including federal institutions, in RAK to streamline and better direct these institutions towards mobilization and facilitation of investment in RAK. This would include incentive programs to reward the mobilization of investment, as well as competition between institutions and organizations for those rewards.

High performance can only come from the human resource. Therefore, we will be supporting the change agenda by providing education and training to administrative personnel to build new skills and capacity to be more efficient and effective in supporting the goal of investment mobilization, and improving the quality of life of the workforce.

A thorough and future-focused review of the infrastructure needs of the Emirate, both for the short term and the long term is in hand, and will cover areas like:

- o Air carrier services, aviation and airports
- o Ports
- o Roads and bridges
- o Energy
- o Soft infrastructure, telecommunications and digital communications required by the new economy
- o Water for community and industry use
- o Waste disposal
- o Services that will be needed by an expanding resident workforce such as healthcare, education, housing and other social services

Today we are taking the first step in a process. The vision, policy and strategy is being followed by a plan of action on which work has already begun. This programme is central to RAK's future vision, and to establish an importance benchmarks for its implementation.