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Understanding the Key Government Institutions and Ministries in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Background

As a result of the new economic realities brought about by reduced global oil prices and the resultant reduction in the oil export revenues of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for so long the country's economic lifeblood, there are many significant changes taking place in the Kingdom. In response to these new economic realities, "Saudi Vision 2030", a wide-ranging privatisation and economic reform program, was released in early 2016 and sets out a vision for repositioning the Kingdom's economy away from its dependence on oil export revenues and Government spending.

Certain Ministries and government entities have been allocated key roles in the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 and as part of the implementation of the vision, the Government is undergoing a major restructure (largely through down-sizing and consolidation of Ministries) with the aim of allocating resources more efficiently and streamlining decision-making. As a result of this major restructuring, Royal Decrees issued in May 2016 renamed, merged and created various Ministries and government entities, although the roles of many of the newly formed government entities are still to be clarified.

This article sets out a brief description of some of the key Ministries and Government entities in the Kingdom.

Saudi Aramco

Saudi Arabian Oil Company ("**Saudi Aramco**") is one of the largest oil and gas companies in the world. Saudi Aramco was established in 1933 following the grant of an oil concession by the Government to Standard Oil Company of California. Today, Saudi Aramco is a fully integrated global petroleum and chemicals enterprise owned 100% by the Government.

Saudi Aramco is responsible for all exploration, drilling and production activities in the Kingdom. International oil companies operate through joint ventures with Saudi Aramco in Saudi oil fields and refineries. Saudi Aramco also undertakes a number of downstream oil and gas activities with joint venture partners, which include:

- **Petro Rabigh** - the largest integrated refining and petrochemical complex in the world. It is a joint venture between Saudi Aramco and Japan's Sumitomo Chemical.¹
- **Saudi Aramco Mobil Refinery Co. Ltd.** - a joint venture between Saudi Aramco and Mobil Yanbu Refining Company Inc., which processes approximately 400,000 barrels of Saudi Aramco's crude oil per day.

¹ Shearman & Sterling LLP has advised Rabigh Arabian Water and Electricity Company in connection with the IWSP being developed for the Petro Rabigh project.

- **Saudi Aramco Total Refining and Petrochemical Co.** - a joint venture between Saudi Aramco and France's Total Oil Co. for 400,000 bpd refinery with integrated petrochemical production at Jubail.
- **Sadara Chemical Company ("Sadara")** - a US\$20 billion joint venture between Saudi Aramco and The Dow Chemical Company, which is the world's largest chemical complex ever built in a single phase, with 26 integrated world-scale manufacturing plants that produce more than three million tons of products every year.²

Private sector involvement in the construction of pipelines, storage facilities and other infrastructure for the oil and gas sector is conducted through tender processes run by Saudi Aramco. In some instances, Saudi Aramco may also seek partners for particular projects, like for the projects mentioned above. No direct foreign investment in the Kingdom's oil and gas sector is permitted without the participation of Saudi Aramco.

Saudi Aramco employs more than 65,000 workers worldwide and combined with its responsibility for all exploration, drilling and production activities in the Kingdom, Saudi Aramco has been the driving force behind the Kingdom's economy. Saudi Aramco has subsidiaries and affiliates across the globe, including in the Kingdom, China, Egypt, Japan, India, The Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Singapore, the UK and the USA.

While functionally independent from the Ministry of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources ("**MEIM**"), Saudi Aramco is directly overseen by the highest levels of Government and its board comprises the Ministers of Energy, Industry & Mineral Resources, Finance and Communication and Information Technology together with the secretary of the Supreme Council of Saudi Aramco, the rector of King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, three overseas representatives and Saudi Aramco's president and CEO, Amin Nasser.

Saudi Vision 2030 outlines the following plans for Saudi Aramco:

- A listing of up to 5% of Saudi Aramco's shares, with domestic and foreign investors invited to participate. The proceeds of the Saudi Aramco listing will go to the Public Investment Fund ("**PIF**"), a sovereign wealth fund that will also hold the Government's remaining portion of Saudi Aramco's shares. PIF is discussed further below.
- Saudi Aramco will be converted into a holding company with greater disclosure of its financial information.
- Subsidiaries of Saudi Aramco will also be listed and an autonomous board will be elected.

Website: www.saudiaramco.com/en/home.html

Ministry of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources

The Ministry of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources ("**MEIM**"), previously the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, is charged with the supervision of the oil, gas and petrochemicals, electricity and industrial sectors in the Kingdom. MEIM is also in charge of research and development - it has three training centers dedicated to R&D and exploration of innovations and techniques relevant to the oil & gas and energy sectors.

² Shearman & Sterling LLP advises The Dow Chemical Company on all aspects of the Sadara project.

The electricity sector was previously overseen by the Ministry of Water and Electricity, which was abolished by Royal Decree on 8 May 2016. Its functions relating to the water sector have been transferred to the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture.

The industrial sector was previously overseen by the Ministry of Commerce and Investment (“**MOCI**”). Following the Government’s restructuring initiatives, the oversight of the industrial sector was transferred to MEIM on 8 May 2016. MEIM is now also responsible for reviewing and approving industrial permit applications and related matters.

Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Faleh is the Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources and was previously the Minister of Health. The Minister is also the Chairman of the Board of Saudi Aramco, a position which he has held since 2015. The appointment of Mr Al-Faleh as the Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources reinforces the importance of MEIM to the future economic success of the Kingdom given that:

- in addition to petroleum and mineral resources, the responsibility for: (a) the power sector (and the control of SEC) will now rest with MEIM and the Ministry of Water and Electricity will no longer exist, which will help to bring together the various stakeholders in the power sector under the one Ministerial “roof”; and (b) the industrial sector will now rest with MEIM instead of the MOCI; and
- Mr Al-Faleh will continue in his role as chairman of Saudi Aramco and holds one of the key positions in the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030.

Website: <http://www.meim.gov.sa/arabic/pages/default.aspx> (Arabic Only)

Council of Economic and Development Affairs

The Council of Economic and Development Affairs (“**CEDA**”) is a policy and decision-making body established by Royal Decree on 29 January 2015. CEDA oversees the Kingdom’s domestic affairs and was established to replace several Supreme Councils abolished at the same time as part of an effort to streamline administration of the Kingdom.

CEDA is also responsible for the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 and development of mechanisms, policies and programs necessary to achieve the goals set out in Saudi Vision 2030. CEDA has established a number of committees and offices to facilitate the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 including a Finance Committee, Media Team, Strategic Committee, Strategic Administration Office and Project Management Office. Two specialist centers have also been established:

- the Center for Achievement and Quick Intervention was established to provide support in design and implementation of various programs and initiatives; and
- the National Center for Evaluating Performance of Public Agencies was established to strengthen transparency and accountability, monitor progress of various programs and initiatives, report on key indicators and provide regular audited reports.

The Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud presides over CEDA and its 22 members include heads of major ministries and some of the members of the Council of Ministers.

Ministry of Economy and Planning

The Ministry of Economy and Planning (“**MEP**”) was established in 2003. Under the auspices of Saudi Vision 2030, MEP’s role and structure was changed by CEDA with the final structure and hierarchy being approved in June 2016. MEP’s role is to provide support for all executive and strategic bodies in the Kingdom, and to specifically monitor and assist 16 ministries³ to achieve the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 through regular reporting and progress monitoring, private sector engagement, technical advice and research, development and implementation of policies, preparation of national development plans and budget estimation and allocation.

MEP has launched the “Qawam” program aimed at ensuring effective spending of budget allocations.

Within the context of Saudi Vision 2030 and MEP’s objective of involving the private sector in achieving the vision, it is understood that MEP will oversee the planned privatisation of up to 146 state-owned entities, which are to include Saudi Aramco, Saudi Electricity Company, the Kingdom’s major airports (King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah, King Khaled International Airport in Riyadh and King Fahd International Airport in Dammam), the Kingdom’s regional and internal airports and municipalities and state-owned entities in the healthcare, education, air navigation and the IT sectors.

Adel bin Muhammad Faqeih is the current Minister for Economy and Planning.

Website: <http://www.mep.gov.sa/en/>

Public Investment Fund

The Saudi Arabian Public Investment Fund (“**PIF**”) was established by Royal Decree in 1971. PIF seeks to invest through equity, loans or guarantees, and through allocations of public funds to specific projects or transactions that are strategically significant to the economy of the Kingdom. PIF provides medium and long-term loans to the large-scale government and private industrial projects (e.g. the Sadara project) and invests in telecoms, aerospace, energy, green technologies and security with a particular focus on housing finance, renewable energy and information technology. Examples of PIF’s domestic investments include a number of Saudi banks, Tadawul, Ma’aden, STC and project companies developing I(W)PPs. In more recent times, PIF’s investments have included the acquisition of a 38% stake in South Korea’s Posco Engineering and Construction Company and a 5% stake in Uber for US\$3.5 billion.

Following the release of Saudi Vision 2030, there has been a great deal of attention on PIF and its change of focus for the following reasons:

- The proceeds of the Saudi Aramco IPO will go to PIF and PIF will own the remainder of Saudi Aramco, making it the largest sovereign wealth fund in the world.
- PIF will have a mandate to “kick-start” domestic investment.

³ Ministries of: Justice; Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources; Finance; Health; Housing; Hajj and Umrah; Labor and Social Development; Commerce and Investment; Transport; Telecommunication and IT; Municipal and Rural Affairs; Civil Service; Culture and Information; Environment, Water and Agriculture; and Education.

- PIF will become a global investment powerhouse by developing further investment vehicles.
- The efficiency of PIF's management and its return on investment will be improved, with the aim to diversify Government resources and the economy.
- PIF will not compete with the private sector, but instead, will help unlock strategic sectors requiring intensive capital inputs.
- PIF will maximise investment capabilities by participating in large international companies and emerging technologies from around the world.
- PIF will encourage major Saudi corporations to expand across borders and compete in global markets.

PIF is governed by a Board of Directors and is overseen by the CEDA.

Website: <http://pif.gov.sa/indexEn.htm>

Saudi Industrial Development Fund

The Saudi Industrial Development Fund (“**SIDF**”) is a Government institution that focuses on the finance and support of the private industrial sector by providing medium and long term low cost loans to Saudi and foreign companies within the Kingdom for the purposes of setting up new factories and the expansion, upgrading and modernisation of existing factories. Many manufacturing companies in the Kingdom seek to obtain SIDF financing as the terms of such financings are viewed as more favorable than financing from commercial banks, primarily because SIDF loans have no interest rate and low management fees.

Projects financed by SIDF include:

- establishing an industrial complex for production of sulfuric acid, phosphoric acid, ammonia, and phosphate compound fertilisers in cities of Ras Al-Khair and Turaif (SAR4 billion);
- expansion of an existing industrial project in Riyadh producing calcium chloride (SAR119 million);
- establishment of a white sugar factory in Jazan (SAR840 million);
- setting up a facility for the co-generation of electricity and desalinated water in Yanbu (SAR900 million); and
- establishing a reverse osmosis sea water purification project in Jubail (SAR600 million).

In addition to the major infrastructure projects, SIDF provides industrial loans to finance small and medium size projects.

SIDF also provides IT, financial, operations, technical and marketing management consulting services.

SIDF is supervised by a Board of Directors chaired by Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Faleh, the Minister for Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources. Saleh Ibrahim Al-Rasheed, the Director General of MODON, and Dr Aabed A Al-Saadoun, the Deputy Minister for Companies Affairs, are the other two board members.

The Office of the Director General, presently headed by Abdulkarim Ibrahim Alnafie, oversees the administrative and executive functions of SIDF and implements decisions and directives of the Board of Directors.

Website: <http://www.sidf.gov.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Saudi Industrial Property Authority

The Saudi Industrial Property Authority (“**MODON**”) is a Government authority created by a Ministerial Resolution in 2001 and is responsible for the development, promotion and regulation of industrial cities and technology zones in the Kingdom. MODON is part of the initiative to encourage the private sector to become more involved in the development, operation and maintenance of such cities. MODON oversees 29 industrial cities with a total area of approximately 150 million square meters. At the moment, investments in MODON’s industrial cities are estimated to exceed SAR250 billion and over 350,000 workers are employed by businesses located there. MODON also incentivises factories and plants to establish their operations within the less-popular industrial cities. Incentives include low lease rates for industrial properties.

MODON is headed by Director General, currently Saleh Ibrahim Al-Rasheed. MODON is supervised by a Board of Directors chaired by Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Faleh, the Minister for Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources.

Website: <http://www.modon.gov.sa/en/pages/default.aspx>

Ministry of Commerce and Investment

The Ministry of Commerce and Investment (“**MOCI**”) is the government body overseeing the commercial and investment sectors in the Kingdom. MOCI’s main tasks include:

- participation in setting out and implementing the commercial policies of the Kingdom;
- development and proposal of commercial laws and their implementing regulations;
- monitoring the implementation of laws and regulations applicable to the commerce and investment sectors;
- maintenance of the commercial registry;
- regulating domestic trade markets and protecting them against exploitation and monopolies, price control and developing foreign trade relations;
- licensing chambers of commerce and monitoring and supervision of their activities;
- monitoring the supply and quality of commodities entering the Kingdom;
- issuing agency registration certificates, adjudication of disputes and monitoring the implementation of the Commercial Agencies Law;
- approving and licensing Government contractors; and
- examining, processing and maintaining trade mark registrations, monitoring their usage and dealing with trade mark infringement.

MOCI is the supervising Ministry for the Kingdom’s membership of the WTO, and participates in the work of regional and international organisations including the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf. MOCI issues licenses to organise temporary exhibitions in the Kingdom and abroad and evaluates invitations for the Kingdom to participate in international exhibitions.

All companies in the Kingdom are required to be registered with MOCI. Additionally, all commercial agency contracts must be registered with MOCI. MOCI operates a number of agencies, referred to as deputy ministries, which include Consumer Protection, Engineering Management, Strategic Planning and Projects and IT Management among others. MOCI has a branch in every major city of the Kingdom.

Dr. Majid Bin Abdullah Al Qasabi is the current Minister of Commerce and Investment.

Website: <http://mci.gov.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority

The Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (“**SAGIA**”) is the Government institution overseeing foreign investment within the Kingdom and, for this reason, is pivotal to the Kingdom's plans to diversify its economy and reduce its dependence on oil revenues. Foreign investment in the Kingdom is permitted in many business sectors in the Kingdom, including industry, trade, consultancy, education and contracting. SAGIA prescribes the requirements and guidelines for investment in each sector.

SAGIA also assists in the process of registering and obtaining all necessary permits and licenses required to do business in the Kingdom through its network of “one-stop-shop” business centers established throughout the Kingdom in Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Hail, Medina, Jizan, Tabuk and Abha. Each center provides resources to assist companies in setting-up quickly and efficiently by providing representatives of all related Government departments including MOL, General Directorate of Passports, MOCI, Zakat and Income Tax Department and Notary Public.

SAGIA is overseen by the Board of Directors chaired by Dr. Majid Bin Abdullah Al Qasabi, the Minister for Commerce and Investment.

Website: <https://sagia.gov.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance (“**MOF**”) was converted from the General Directorate of Finance to MOF by Royal Decree in 1932, making it the second Ministry to be established in the Kingdom. In its early stages, MOF had a broad scope of responsibility, administering the Petroleum and Minerals directorate, the Public Works directorate and the Customs directorate; in addition to the bureaus concerned with corporations, development projects, Zakat, revenue and Hajj affairs. In the years since its inception, MOF has had jurisdiction over many of the Kingdom's sectors. However, most of the divisions and directorates under MOF's responsibility have now become either Ministries on their own or independent government agencies.

Today, MOF has a branch in every major city of the Kingdom and its scope of responsibility includes:

- supervising implementation of the government's fiscal policy and preparing the government's budget;
- controlling current accounts between MOF and the other government agencies;
- monitoring pre-disbursement phase of budgetary funds and implementation of the government's policy for providing loans to individuals and national corporations through its banks and funds, including the Agricultural Bank, Credit Bank, SIDF, Real Estate Development Fund and PIF; and

- designation as the “paying party” for all Government contracts.

Ibrahim Abdulaziz Al-Assaf is the current Minister of Finance.

Website: <https://www.mof.gov.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency

The Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (“**SAMA**”) was established in 1952 as the Kingdom’s central bank. SAMA’s central bank functions include:

- acting as the Government’s banker;
- supervising the commercial banks;
- managing foreign exchange reserves;
- issuing the national currency (the Saudi Riyal); and
- operating a number of cross-bank electronic financial systems such as MADA and SADAD.

In addition to its central bank functions, SAMA is also the regulator of all banking, insurance, financing and credit reporting activities in the Kingdom. SAMA issues licenses and permits to the banking, insurance and finance sectors, which allows these institutions to operate in the Kingdom. SAMA’s approval is required for all insurance products available in the Kingdom. Additionally, one of SAMA’s main objectives is protect consumers in the banking, insurance and finance sectors.

SAMA is managed by a Board of Directors with executive role carried out by the Governor. The Board comprises SAMA’s Governor, Vice Governor and three more nominated members from the private sector, all of whom are appointed, removed or have their terms extended by Royal Decree.

The current Governor of SAMA is Dr. Ahmed Abdulkarim Alkholifey.

Website: <http://www.sama.gov.sa/en-US/Pages/default.aspx>

Capital Markets Authority

The Capital Market Authority (“**CMA**”) was unofficially established in the 1950s and continued to operate successfully, until the Government enacted its basic regulations in the 1980s. The Capital Market Law promulgated pursuant to Royal Decree No. (M/30) dated 2/6/1424H, formally brought CMA into existence in 2003.

CMA is a financially, legally and administratively independent authority and it reports directly to the King, in his capacity as the Prime Minister of the Kingdom. CMA functions as a regulator and supervisor of the Kingdom’s capital markets, as well as being the regulator of the Saudi Stock Exchange (“**Tadawul**”). CMA regulates the entities operating in the Kingdom’s capital markets, including financial advisors and brokers. Additionally, CMA is charged with regulating and monitoring disclosure of information relating to securities and capital markets participants.

CMA’s main objectives are to:

- create an appropriate investment environment;

- reinforce transparency and disclosure standards in all listed companies; and
- protect investors and dealers from illegal acts and unfair practices in the market, such as insider trading, manipulation and cheating.

Besides Tadawul and the Securities Depository Center, CMA has also formed the Committee for the Resolution of Securities Disputes and its Appeal Panel, the decisions of which are considered final and binding on the parties in dispute.

As part of Saudi Vision 2030, CMA's ongoing strategy includes new developments designed to increase the attractiveness of the Kingdom's capital markets for both local and international investors.

CMA is governed by a Board of Commissioners with Mohammed A. Aljadaan being the current Chairman of the Board. Executive management of CMA consists of five CMA deputies in charge of Listed Companies & Investment Products, Corporate Resources, Market Institutions, Strategy & International Affairs, Legal Affairs & Enforcement, respectively, and two Directors in charge of Communication & Awareness and Internal Audit, respectively.

Website: <http://www.cma.org.sa/En/Pages/home.aspx>

Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture

The Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture (“**MOWA**”) was established in May 2016 following the abolition of the Ministry of Water and Electricity by Royal Decree on 8 May 2016. The oversight of the water sector was delegated to the Ministry of Agriculture, and its name was amended to the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, with the effect that the Ministry is responsible for the environment, water and agriculture sectors in the Kingdom.

Pursuant to Saudi Vision 2030, MOWA plans to spend over SAR12.9 billion on new initiatives over the next five fiscal years, including the expansion of the number of the cities covered by the services of The National Water Company in collaboration with the private sector. Targets to be achieved by 2020 include:

- percentage of desalinated water production through strategic partners to increase from 16% to 52%;
- percentage of treated water production through strategic partners to increase from zero to 20%; and
- percentage of cities covered with water and sewage services through The National Water Company to increase from 42% to 70%.

Abdulrahman bin Abdulmohsen Al-Fadhli is the current Minister for Environment, Water and Agriculture and the Chairman of the Board of The National Water Company. Al-Fadhli was appointed Minister of Agriculture in January 2015 and assumed additional roles with the abolition of the Ministry of Water and Electricity in May 2016.

Website: <http://www.mowe.gov.sa/enindex.aspx>

Ministry of Labor and Social Development

The Ministry of Labor and Social Development (“**MOL**”) was formed in 2004 (as the Ministry of Labor), when the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs was divided into two separate ministries. The Ministries were again combined in 2016 to form the current Ministry.

MOL is responsible for:

- proposing and implementing laws, regulations and policies governing the workplace and the work force;
- establishing and administering the labor dispute resolution committees (the Preliminary and Higher Commission for the Settlement of Labor Disputes);
- facilitating the employment of Saudi nationals in the private sector (the “**Saudisation**” program);
- skills training for Saudi nationals; and
- administration of social protection schemes.

Saudisation is one of the main focus areas of MOL given the Kingdom's drive to replace foreign workers with Saudi nationals in the private sector. To facilitate this process, MOL imposes strict industry-specific Saudisation quotas on companies doing business in the Kingdom and has established the “Nitaqat” program, which categorises companies based on their Saudisation levels. Nitaqat categorisation is then used to determine the level of access to MOL's services available to companies.

MOL is one of the main authorities concerned with the issue, transfer and renewal of work permits for the non-Saudi employees in the Kingdom, as well as being the main authority in charge of licensing and regulating recruitment offices and manpower suppliers.

MOL also maintains a database of the employees who work in the private sector, both Saudi and non-Saudi, and registration with MOL is part of the process of establishing a business in the Kingdom.

As part of MOL's participation in the reforms of employment and immigration regulations, it has launched the “Ajeer” regulatory regime. Ajeer is designed to regularize temporary work for non-Saudi employees and their dependents within the Kingdom.

Dr. Mufarrej bin Saad Al-Haqubani is the current Minister of Labor.

Website: <https://portal.mol.gov.sa/en>

Human Resources Development Fund

The Human Resources Development Fund (“**HRDF**”) was established as a financially and administratively independent government entity in 2000. HRDF is also an affiliate of the Ministry of Labour. HRDF's main objective is to support Saudisation of the Kingdom's workforce and facilitation of employment of Saudi nationals in the private sector. To achieve this objective, HRDF:

- provides subsidies to assist with employment and training of Saudi nationals in private sector;
- funds projects designed to increase skills levels of Saudi nationals; and
- provides finance to the private sector to establish training programs, expand and modernise and conduct research and studies related to these areas.

HRDF assists employers who are looking for Saudi nationals to fill specific jobs by offering candidate recommendations. HRDF maintains a database of Saudi nationals who are seeking jobs in various industries in the private sector. Additionally, a popular HRDF program is the contribution to the salaries of young Saudi employees during their training periods within the private sector, with such contribution extending for a term of two years (maximum) for those who qualify. This program aims to encourage the private sector to hire and train Saudi employees, as HRDF will share the employment cost being incurred by employers. HRDF also offers local and international training programs for Saudi employees as an incentive for those who fulfill requirements such as maintaining a private sector job for two consecutive years.

HRDF is governed by a Board of Directors. The Minister of Labour, Dr. Mufarrej bin Saad Al-Haqubani, is the current Chairman of the Board of Directors of HRDF.

Website: <https://www.hrdf.org.sa/>

General Organisation for Social Insurance

The General Organisation for Social Insurance (“**GOSI**”) was established to implement the provisions of the Social Insurance Law 1969, as amended in 2001, and to monitor provision of comprehensive insurance coverage for employees and their family members.

Insurance coverage provided by GOSI insurance extends to both the private and public sectors and covers pensions and occupational health for Saudi nationals. Non-Saudi nationals are only covered for occupational health.

GOSI exercises its activities through the head office and 21 field offices located in a number of regions and governorates in the Kingdom.

GOSI is a semi-governmental entity that is both administratively and financially independent. GOSI is supervised by a Board of Directors. The Minister of Labour, Dr. Mufarrej bin Saad Al-Haqubani, is the current Chairman of the Board of Directors of GOSI. The executive management of GOSI is delegated to the Governor, currently Sulaiman Abdulrahman Algwaiz.

Website: <http://www.gosi.gov.sa/portal/web/guest/home>

Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs

The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs (“**MOMRA**”) was transformed in 1975 from a directorate under the Ministry of Interior into its own independent ministry. At its inception, it was entrusted with the task of conducting urban planning of the Kingdom’s cities, including providing the necessary roads and fixtures, improving the cities and living areas and the development of towns and rural areas. It was also tasked with maintaining the cleanliness of the environment and public places. There are approximately 243 municipalities in the Kingdom, each regulating its designated region while ensuring compliance with MOMRA’s outline for the Kingdom’s cities, rural areas, streets and construction designs.

MOMRA has a very important role in the Kingdom’s urban planning and development. It has various departments and directorates and is the authority in charge of licensing various works, premises, public advertising placements and all types of construction activity. MOMRA also carries out studies relating to the Kingdom’s urban planning and

development. MOMRA is also the authority charged with ensuring that private sector factories and food preparation institutions and workers in these sectors are duly licensed in compliance with the Kingdom's hygiene regulations.

Additionally, MOMRA conducts and manages the contractor and engineering qualification regime. Contractors are ranked based on the system adopted by MOMRA and the classification dictates the projects that a contractor is permitted to bid for.

Abdul Latif bin Abdul Malik Al-Sheikh is the current Minister for Municipal and Rural Affairs.

Website: <https://www.momra.gov.sa/> (Arabic Only)

Ministry of Culture and Information

The Ministry of Culture and Information ("**MCI**") was established in 2003. Prior to then, it was known as the Ministry of Information, but its portfolio expanded to include culture. MCI is responsible for everything media-related in the Kingdom, from newspapers to magazines, radio, television and the internet. MCI monitors online data and media content, and ensures that the content is in compliance with the Kingdom's traditional and religious values.

Additionally, MCI has set up the Committee for the Settlement of Media Violations and the Committee for the Settlement of Electronic, Visual and Optical Publications Disputes (with appeal committees for both) to resolve media-related disputes. MCI is also tasked with protecting publishing rights and copyright, violation of which is considered a criminal offense in the Kingdom.

MCI is the authority responsible for the issue of licenses to private entities planning to undertake media related activities in the Kingdom, which may include advertising, publications, newspaper agencies, copying and/or duplicating media content, libraries and printing presses. MCI also sponsors and/or oversees cultural shows and events, in addition to supervising and regulating locally made movies and other media content.

Adel Al Toraifi is the current Minister of Culture and Information.

Website: <http://www.info.gov.sa/> (Arabic Only)

Ministry of Communication and Information Technology

The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology ("**MCIT**") was established in 1975. MCIT was originally named the Ministry of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones and was renamed as MCIT in 2003.

MCIT's responsibilities include:

- supervising the activities of the IT sector in the Kingdom;
- establishing general policies and development plans for the communications and IT industries in the Kingdom;
- initiating and drafting legislation for the IT sector;
- representing the Kingdom in various local, regional and international organisations, conferences and events involving the IT sector;
- approving the rules governing the awarding of IT contracts to private sector by Government bodies;
- approving regulations for implementation of e-government initiatives;

- regulating e-transactions;
- combating IT crime;
- granting licenses to telecom service providers; and
- the creation and development of online government services (e-government).

Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Suwaiyel is the current Minister of Communications and Information Technology.

Website: <http://www.mcit.gov.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (“**MOE**”) was established in 2015. Prior to that, the Kingdom had two ministries in charge of its education sector:

- the Ministry of Education and Cultivation (schools); and
- the Ministry of Higher Education (higher education).

MOE regulates and oversees domestic and international, public and private, educational institutions operating in the Kingdom, ranging from primary to higher education. All of the Kingdom’s educational facilities and programs are either issued or approved by MOE.

MOE is the regulatory body which grants licenses to the private sector to participate in the Kingdom’s educational sector. MOE oversees activities that include the building of facilities (schools and universities) to the development of educational programs. MOE also governs school-related extracurricular activities and summer-camp-like programs for youth in the Kingdom.

Pursuant to Saudi Vision 2030, MOE plans to spend over SAR24 billion on new initiatives over the next five fiscal years, including encouraging private sector investment in public education in the Kingdom. Tatweer Building Company, the entity responsible for managing and tendering MOE facilities including school buildings, educational facilities and administration buildings, has already sought tenders for the advisory roles in respect of future schools PPP projects.

Dr. Azzam ibn Muhammad Al Dakhil is the current Minister of Education.

Website: <https://www.mohe.gov.sa/en/default.aspx>

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (“**MOH**”) was established in 1950. It is responsible for building hospitals and health care centers, as well as drafting and enforcing laws and regulations which provide the necessary standards for practicing medicine and pharmacology in the Kingdom. MOH also regulates the qualification and licensing procedures for medical practitioners and the health sector in general.

MOH also regulates both public and private medical centers, rehab and physical therapy facilities, pharmacies and clinics, as well as operating these facilities in the public sector.

Pursuant to Saudi Vision 2030, MOH will spend over SAR23 billion on new initiatives over the next five fiscal years, including reform and restructuring of primary health care, the establishment of private public partnerships, the privatisation of one of the medical cities and the localisation of the pharmaceutical industry. By 2020, the Government hopes to see significant increases in private healthcare expenditure (from 25% to 35%) and total revenue generated by the private sector (from SAR300 million to SAR4 billion).

Dr. Tawfiq Al-Rabiah is the current Minister of Health.

Website: <http://www.moh.gov.sa/en/Pages/Default.aspx>

Ministry of Transportation

The Ministry of Transportation (“**MOT**”) was established in 1977. MOT is currently separated into two divisions with the following split responsibilities:

- planning, design, construction and maintenance of roads and bridges in the Kingdom; and
- planning and supervision of land transport and freight sectors.

Whereas MOT previously administered ports and railways in the Kingdom, ports and railways in the Kingdom are now supervised and operated by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ports Authority and the Saudi Arabian Railways Company, respectively.

MOT’s regulation and supervision of the transportation sector in the Kingdom includes all means of transportation (land, air and sea) and the transportation of imports/exports, people and haulage.

MOT’s other responsibilities include:

- issuing licenses to persons engaging in works and services in the transportation sectors;
- issuing licenses and permits for plots of land used for the storage of large/heavy equipment; and
- administering tenders for the construction, repair and maintenance of roads, bridges and other transportation platforms.

Pursuant to Saudi Vision 2030, MOT will spend over SAR5.5 billion on new initiatives over the next five fiscal years, including the establishment of private sector operation and maintenance concession contracts and development of an integrated program to increase the efficiency of ports.

Sulaiman bin Abdullah Al-Hamdan is the current Minister of Transport.

Website: <https://www.mot.gov.sa/ar/Pages/Home.aspx> (Arabic Only)

Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice (“**MOJ**”) was established in 1962 and commenced operations in 1970. MOJ has a major role in the development of the judiciary. In addition to the supervision of courts and judges, MOJ also oversees the works of the Notaries Public and quasi-judicial bodies. Although the majority, if not all, of quasi-judicial bodies in the Kingdom are governed by their relevant ministries, MOJ is in the process of implementing changes designed to bring these quasi-judicial authorities under its umbrella (including the Commission for Resolution of Labour

Disputes, currently under the Ministry of Labour, and the Commission for Resolution of Securities Disputes currently under CMA). MOJ is the ministry responsible for the licensing of legal practitioners (lawyers), arbitrators, notaries public and judges.

Waleed bin Mohammad Al Samaani is the current Minister of Justice.

Website: <https://www.moj.gov.sa/En/Pages/default.aspx>

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