

Jordanian Armed Forces

The Kingdom of Jordan gained independence in 1946 after the Second World War. It is situated in the centre of the Middle Eastern region bordering Israel, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. This particular geographic position made Jordan a very interesting partner for the Western powers. Israel-Palestine, Iraqi-Gulf and most recently the Syrian conflict/crisis have all been happening on the borders of the Hashemite Kingdom. Although Jordan has a military strength of one hundred thousand personnel, it usually relies on its foreign partners for security (mainly the US). One of the biggest issues for the Kingdom is the lack of natural resources. Throughout its existence Jordan needed to rely on foreign aid in order to sustain its economy during difficult times. The overall hostile atmosphere in the Middle East only made matters worse.

The Arab Spring and the Syrian crisis are becoming main security issues for the Jordanian government. A rather bad economic situation in the country is further worsened by the high unemployment rate, especially among the younger generations. These worsened economic conditions are favoring the extremists who are exploiting the situation for their own recruitment agenda. Some towns on the Jordanian-Syrian border have already become hotspots for Jihadists seeking their way into Syria. Although the Jordanian Armed Forces are members of the coalition against the Islamic State, it is questionable if Jordanian security apparatus can withstand a potential spillover from the crisis in the region.

The Jordanian Armed Forces had first been formed in 1920 as a "Mobile Force" under the command of British Captain Frederick Peake. Few years after that they were renamed as the Arab Legion, and finally in 1956 the Jordanian Armed Forces have been formed, with the King as its commander in chief, according to the constitution. The King can declare war, conclude peace or sign treaties. The King usually has a vast authority over the Armed Forces while the Defense Ministry mainly has administrative functions such as mobilization, conscription, logistics etc. The commanding officer of the Armed Forces is usually someone close to the King and also a leading member of a prominent beduin clan.

Jordanian military benefits from a high level of defense spending in comparison to their overall GDP. The military is also known for its constant engagement in international peacekeeping missions and humanitarian operations. Main security priorities for the Jordanian security Forces include: Israel-Palestine conflict (much of the Jordan's population has Palestinian origin and there are many Palestinian refugees in Jordan), terrorist threats which are shaking the entire region and finally the Syrian crisis which has a great potential of spillover.

The Jordanian Armed Forces have a total of 100,500 active and 65,000 reserve personnel in Army, Navy and Air force.

Jordanian Army

Jordanian Arab Army has been active in the regional conflicts since 1950s. One of the major conflicts was the Arab-Israeli war which resulted in the defeat of the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian security forces. Today Jordanian Army consists of a lighter more mobile force primarily orientated as a defensive force, due to the instability in the region. The Army operates under four regional commands: Northern, Southern, Central and Eastern; each with 74,000 personnel. Although the Jordanian military closely operates with the US forces, their structure and ranks are similar to the British Army, this is mostly due to the military's heritage.

FORCES BY ROLE

Manoeuvre

1 armored division

1 armored brigade

5 mechanized brigades

3 light infantry brigades

Combat Support

3 artillery brigades

3 air defense brigades

1 multiple rocket launcher brigade

EQUIPEMENT OF THE JORDANIAN ARMY

MBT 752: 390 CR1 *Challenger* 1; 274 FV4030/2 *Khalid*; 88 M60 *Phoenix*

RECCE 153: 103 *Scimitar*; 50 *Ferret*

AIFV 452: 31 BMP-2; 321 Ratel-20; 100 YPR-765

APC 819+ **APC(T)** 634+: 100 M113A1; 300 M113A2 Mk1J; 234 YPR-765 **PPV** 185: 35 *Cougar*; 25 *Marauder*; 25 *Matador*; 100 *MaxxPro*

ARTY 1,441+ **SP** 568: **105mm** 30 M52; **155mm** 390: 370 M109A1/A2; 20 M-44; **203mm** 148 M110A2 **TOWED** 100: **105mm** 72: 54M102; 18 MOBAT; **155mm** 28: 10 M1/M59; 18 M114 **MRL** 14+: 227mm 12 HIMARS **273mm** 2 WM-80 **MOR** 759 **SP81mm** 50 **TOWED** 709: **81mm** 359; **107mm** 50 M30; **120mm** 300 *Brandt*

ATMSL 975 SP 115: 70 M901; 45 YPR-765 with *Milan* **MANPAT**S*Javelin*; M47 *dragon*; TOW/TOW-2A; 9K135 *Kornet* RL **112mm** 2,300 APILAS

ADSAM 930+ SP 140: 92 9K35 *Strela-10*; 48 9K33 *Osa-M* **MANPAD** FIM-43 *Redeye*; 9K32M *Strela-2M*; 9K36 *Strela-3*; 240 9K310 *Igla-1*; 9K38 *Igla*

GUNSSP 356: **20mm** M163 *Vulcan*; **23mm** 40 ZSU 23-4; **40mm** 216 M-42

RADAR LAND 7 AN/TPQ-36 *Firefighter*/AN/TPQ-37 *Firefinder*

ARV 137: *Al Monjed*; 55 *Chieftain* ARV; *Centurion* Mk2; 20 M47; 32 M88A1; 30 M578; YPR-806

MW 12 *Ardvark* Mk2

Jordanian Navy

The Royal Jordanian Navy was established in the fifties as a Royal Coast Guard. Though it represented a naval element of the Jordanian Armed Forces the navy remained an integral part of the Army. Jordanian Navy usually provides assistance to the harbor security and maintenance, and cooperates with the customs and immigration personnel in order to ensure implementation of the country's law and regulations. Royal Jordanian Navy has around 500 personnel.

EQUPEMENT OF THE JORDANIAN NAVY

PB 7: 3 *Al Hussein*; 4 *Abdullah* (and 12 patrol boats under 10 tones).

Jordanian Air Force

The Jordanian Air Force was established in 1948 by King Abdullah Bin Al-Hussein. In the beginning the Air Force was a part of the Arab Legion and its development was strictly monitored by the British government. Over the years the Jordanian Royal Air Force has made a significant progress by acquiring better equipment and better training conditions for their pilots. Today the Air Force is charged with protecting the country's sovereignty, providing air support for the army, tactical bombing and transport of supplies and troops. The Jordanian Royal Air Force is deployed across several bases in the country including: King Abdullah I and King Abdullah II Air Base in Amman, King Hussein Air Base in Mafraq, Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Azraq, Prince Hassan Air Base and Rweished Air Base in Ruwaished. Their pilots have around 180 flying hours per year.

FORCES BY ROLE

FIGHTER/GROUND ATTACK: 2 squadrons with F-16AM/BM *Fighting Falcon* 1 squadron with F-5E/F *Tiger II*

TRANSPORT: 1 squadron with C-130E/H *Hercules*; CN -235; C-295M 1 squadron with Cessna 208B; EC635 1 unit with Il-76MF *Candid*

TRAINING: 1 OCU with F-5E/F *Tiger II* 1 squadron with C-101 *Aviojet* 1 squadron with T-67M *Firefly* 1 helicopter squadron with AS350B3; Hughes 500

ATTACK HELICOPTER: 2 squadrons with AH-1F *Cobra*

TRANSPORT HELICOPTER: 1 squadron with AS332M *Super Puma* 1 squadron with Bell 205 1 royal fleet with S-70A *Black Hawk*; UH-60L/M *Black Hawk*

AIR DEFENCE: 5-6 batteries with PAC-2 *Patriot*; 5 batteries with MIM-23B Phase III I-HAWK; 6 batteries with *Skyguard/Aspide*

EQUPEMENT OF THE JORDANIAN AIR FORCE

75 Combat capable Aircrafts

FTR 29 F-5E/F *Tiger II*

FGA 38 F-16AM/BM *Fighting Falcon*

ATK 2 AC-235

TPT 20: **Heavy** 2 Il-76MF *Candid*; **Medium** 7: 3 C-130E *Hercules*; 4 C-130H *Hercules*; **Light** 11: 6 AT802 *Air Tractor*; 5 Cessna 208B

TRG 25: 15 T-67M *Firefly*; 10 C-101 *Aviojet*

HELICOPTERS

ATK 25 AH-1F *Cobra*

MRH 13 EC635

TPT 70: **Medium** 20: 12 AS332M *Super Puma*; 3 S-70A *Black Hawk*; 3 UH-60L *Black Hawk*; 2 UH-60M *Black Hawk*; **Light** 50: 36 Bell 205; 8 Hughes 500D; 6 AS350B3

AIR DEFENCE

SAM 64: 24 MIM-23B Phase III I-HAWK; 40 PAC-2 *Patriot*

MISSILE ASM AGM-65D *Maverick*; BGM-71 TOW

AAM IR AIM-8J/N/P *Sidewinder*; R-550 *Magic*; SARH AIM-7 *Sparrow*; R-530; ARH AIM-120C AMRAAM

Jordanian Special Forces

Joint Special Operations Command was formed in the sixties with main objectives such as reconnaissance, counter-terrorism, search and rescue and protection of key areas in the country, similar to other special operation units around the world. One of the main features of the Jordanian Special Forces is the Training Center (KASTOC). This unique facility in the region provides training for elite units, law enforcement units, counter-terrorism units and single military operators. The Center is not only used for domestic purposes, various military and police units around the world regularly participate in training courses on this field. The site is located north of Amman covering a 25 square kilometers area with various shooting ranges, CQB sites and equipment needed to provide top training capabilities.

FORCES BY ROLE

2 Special Forces battalions, 2 Airborne battalions, 1 Airborne artillery battalion, 1 psyops (psychological operation) unit.

Manoeuvre

1 Royal Guard security brigade

TRANSPORT

1 Squadron with An-32B

TRANSPORT HELICOPTER

1 squadron with MD-530F

1 squadron with UH-60L *Black Hawk*

EQUIPEMENT OF SPECIAL FORCES

AIRCRAFT

TPT Light 3 An-32B

HELICOPTERS

MRH 6 MD-530F

TPT Medium 8 UH-60L *Black Hawk*

Aberrations used:

MBT-Main Battle Tank

RECCE-Reconnaissance

AIFV-Armored Infantry Fighting vehicle

ARTY-Artillery

MRL-Multiple Rocket Launcher

AT-Anti Tank

MW-Mine Warfare

TPT-Transport

MRH-Multi-Role Helicopter

AAM-Air to Air Missile

APC-Armored Personnel Carrier

SP-Self-propelled

MSL-Missile

ARV-Armored Recovery Vehicle

FGA-Fighter Ground Attack

TRG-Training

SAM-Surface to Air

ASM-Air to Surface Missile

Sources used for this article:

The Military Balance 2015 and Global Security

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