Geographic Names Standardization Policy
for Qatar

United States Board on Geographic Names
Foreign Names Committee

June 2018

1. Introduction

This geographic names standardization policy has been prepared as an aid to those geographic names experts who are the working staff for the United States Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in the standardization of the geographic names of Qatar for United States Government use. The BGN and its staff work to effect consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in US Government databases, publications, maps, and charts. The country policies are intended to satisfy, in part, the statutory requirements levied upon the BGN in Public Law USC 80-242 to develop principles, policies and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions with respect to the principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography.

2. Language and Language Policy

a. Demographics

According to the 2016 CIA World Factbook, the Qatari population is estimated at 2.3 million, with only 11.6% of the country's people classified as ethnically Qatari, while 88.4% are classified as non-Qatari. The majority of the population, 67.7%, is Muslim, followed by 13.8% Christian, 13.8% Hindu, 3.1% Buddhist, and 1.8% affiliated with other religions.[1]

b. Languages

Arabic is the official language of Qatar. In particular, the Gulf dialect is the most prevalent. There are northern and southern variations of this dialect used. Modern Standard Arabic is the written standard. English is used commonly as a second language in Qatar as well. Since the vast majority of the country's population is comprised of immigrants, a variety of Arabic dialects and other languages are represented in small clusters: Egyptian Arabic (ISO 639-3 arz), 43,900 speakers); Najdi Arabic (ISO 639-3 ars), 43,900 speakers; North Levantine Arabic (ISO 639-3 apc), 432,000 speakers; South Levantine Arabic (ISO 639-3 ajp), 294,000 speakers; and Sudanese Arabic (ISO 639-3 apd), 43,900 speakers.[2]

c. Geographic Names Standardization

In a September 2016 publication, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) explained that Qatar does not have a specific naming authority although the stewardship of geographic names falls under the Ministry on Municipality and Environment.[3]

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[1] Qatar. CIA World Factbook Online. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html>. September 19, 2017.

[2] Simons, Gary F. and Fennig, Charles D. (eds.), 2017. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Twentieth edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. <http://www.ethnologue.com/>. March 22, 2018.

[3] National Names Authorities. UNGEGN online.

3. Toponymic Policies

a. Script and Orthography

Toponyms on official Qatari map products have traditionally been rendered in standard Arabic script. A limited selection of geographic names as seen in the Centre for GIS' online portal are now observed as deviating from this, where the Arabic script definite article is truncated, with the initial *alif* left off of the article within certain script names. It is unclear at this time whether this is part of a larger trend regarding the spelling of geographic names on future Centre for GIS sources.[4]

b. Romanization

Arabic geographic names are to be romanized using the BGN/PCGN 1956 System for Arabic. Source materials containing romanized names may be consulted for short vowel romanization.

c. Diacritics

This table lists the special characters and letter combinations used as part of the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic, along with their respective Unicode values.

Character	Unicode Value	Character	Unicode Value
'	2018	'	2019
Ā	0100	ā	0101
Á	00C1	á	00E1
Ḍ	1E10	ḍ	1E11
Ḥ	1E28	ḥ	1E29
Ī	012A	ī	012B
Ş	015E	ş	015F
Ţ	0162	ţ	0163
Ū	016A	ū	016B
Ẕ	005A+0327	ẕ	007A+0327

d. Generics

A generic is a term that describes a feature. Examples include words such as 'river,' 'hill,' and 'lake.' A generic term associated with a specific feature designation is considered a true generic unless map symbology indicates otherwise, in which case the term would not be collected as a generic. Generics are not collected for populated places.

For a glossary of Arabic generic terms, see Appendix A.

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[4] The Centre for GIS - State of Qatar Portal. <http://geoportal.gisqatar.org.qa/qmap/index.html>. May 24, 2018.

e. Hyphenation and Capitalization

Qatari geographic names that incorporate hyphens, especially those that may be found on larger-scale map sources, should be collected as compound names, preserving the original name structure, both in romanized and Arabic script forms. However, hyphenation is rare in Qatari geographic names.

f. Long and Short Forms

Short forms of geographic names are collected for the country name and administrative divisions, whether in Roman script or Arabic script.

For railroad stations (RSTN), if short form names are present on authoritative source material, these names should be collected as Approved, in addition to their respective Approved long form names.

g. Numbers

Numerals are collected in their expanded forms. However, unexpanded forms may be collected in variants, whether in Arabic script (e.g., ١, ٢, ٣, etc.) or in Roman script (e.g., 1, 2, 3, etc.).

h. Abbreviations

Abbreviations are not generally found in the geographic names of Qatar. However, if present, they will be expanded to their full form and romanized accordingly.

4. Political Geography Policy

a. Country Name and Capital

Conventional Long Form:	State of Qatar
Conventional Short Form:	Qatar
Approved Long Form:	Dawlat Qaţar
Approved Short Form:	Qaţar
Native Script Long Form:	دولة قطر
Native Script Short Form:	قطر

b. Capital Name

Conventional Name:	Doha
Approved Name:	Ad Dawḩah
Native Script Name:	الدوحة

c. First-Order Administrative Divisions

Qatar is comprised of eight (8) municipalities (*baladīyah/baladīyah*; pl.: *baladīyāt*).

Name	Seat	GEC	GENC
Ad Dawḥah الدوحة	Ad Dawḥah الدوحة	QA01	QA-DA
Al Khawr wa adh Dhakhīrah الخور و الذخيرة	Al Khawr الخور	QA04	QA-KH
Al Wakrah الوكرة	Al Wakrah الوكرة	QA10	QA-WA
Ar Rayyān الريان	Ar Rayyān الريان	QA06	QA-RA
Ash Shamāl الشمال	Madīnat ash Shamāl مدينة الشمال	QA08	QA-MS
Ash Shīḥānīyah الشيحانية	Ash Shīḥānīyah الشيحانية	QA14	QA-SH
Aẓ Ẓaʻāyin الظعاين	Aẓ Ẓaʻāyin الظعاين	QA13	QA-ZA
Umm Şalāl أم صلال	Umm Şalāl ʻAlī أم صلال علي	QA09	QA-US

d. Conventional and Anglicized Names

Conventional Names

Name	UFI	UNI	Designation
Arabian Peninsula	-3092884	-4361702	PEN
Arabia	-3092883	-4361700	RGN
Doha	-785169	-1130190	PPLC
Gulf of Bahrain	-784882	-1129402	GULF
Qatar	-785517	14066169	PCLI
State of Qatar	-785517	-1131063	PCLI

e. Unique Geopolitical Situations

There have been territorial disputes over the Hawar Islands between Qatar and Bahrain. The International Court of Justice awarded Bahrain the Hawar Islands (excluding Janan Island) in 2001.

For the latest country-specific boundary dispute information, consult the US Department of State Office of the Geographer and Global Issues.

5. Source Material

a. Preferred Sources

The preferred sources for Qatar map and geospatial products are those produced by Qatar's Centre for Geographic Information Systems, also known as the Centre for GIS. What follows is a list of authoritative sources released by this body as well as non-authoritative sources produced by Hunting Surveys, Ltd.

Primary Sources

In 2010, the Centre for GIS made available online through its website (www.gisqatar.org.qa) an exhaustive, large-scale 173-page gazetteer of geographic features found throughout the entire country. This fully-exploited resource is currently considered the foundation for Qatari place name information, followed by more traditional map products produced by the Centre.

Topographic Line Maps

Geographic Names in the State of Qatar (Centre for Geographic Information Systems)
- 1:50,000 series, 2010. Nineteen maps in this series are available for use, providing 100% coverage of Qatari sovereign territory. None have been exploited thus far for names collection.

State of Qatar (Centre for Geographic Information Systems)
- 1:100,000 series, 1995. Four maps are available for use, covering 100% of Qatar. None have yet been exploited.

State of Qatar (Centre for Geographic Information Systems)
- 1:100,000 series, 1995. Four satellite-imagery based maps are available for use, providing 100% coverage of Qatar. None have been exploited.

State of Qatar (Centre for Geographic Information Systems)
- 1:150,000 series, 2001. One of two map sheets is available, covering the southern half of Qatari territory. It has not yet been exploited.

State of Qatar (Centre for Geographic Information Systems)
- 1:20,000 series, 1999. Two map sheets are available, covering Qatar's national capital region only. These have yet to be exploited.

Secondary Sources

Qatar Ministry of Information
- 1:250,000 series, 1979. One sheet in this series, covering all of Qatar. This sheet has been fully exploited.

Hunting Surveys, Ltd., London
- 1:100,000 series, 1978. Four geological maps are available, covering 100% of Qatar. These have been fully exploited.

Appendix A. Glossary of Generic Terms

Below is a comprehensive list of generic terms for geographic features across Qatar.

Generic	Feature Designation	Designation Code
'Afjah, 'Afjān, Jaww, Mamlaḥah(t), Sabkhah(t), 'Ufayjīn	sabkha(s)	SBKH
'Ayn, Bi'r, 'Idd, Mā', Mushāsh, Qalamah(t), 'Uqlah(t), 'Uwaynah, 'Uyūn, Wa'b	water well(s)	WLL
Abraq, Barqah(t), Burq, Ḥajm, Ḥazm, Jabal, Khashm, Naṣlah(t), Nuhayd, Qarīn, Qarn, Qilālah(t), Qurayn, Radm, Ra's, Rujm, Ṭi's, Ṭiwār, Ṭuwayyir	hill	HLL
Awqāb, Daḥl, Duḥaylīyah(t), Duḥaylīyāt, Fayḍah(t), Ḥufayrah(t), Jarr, Jaww, Maqārīn, Maqrūn, Qarī, Radīf, Rawḍ, Rawḍah(t), Riyāḍ, Ruwayḍ, Ruwayḍah(t), Ruwayḍāt, Şin', Sīq, Suḥq, Wajbah(t), Waqbah(t)	depression(s)	DPR
Baladīyah(t)	first-order administrative division	ADM1
Bilād	region	RGN
Birak, Birkah(t)	salt pond(s)	PNDN
Dawḥah, Khawr	bay(s)	BAY
Dawlah(t)	independent political entity	PCLI
Farīq	section of populated place	PPLX
Farsh, Furūsh, Masāṭīḥ, Misṭāḥ, Wa'b, Wa'bān, Wu'ayb, Wu'aybān	plain(s)	PLN
Fasht, Ḥālah(t), Qit'ah(t)	reef(s)	RF
Fasht, Qarn, Ruqq	shoal(s)	SHOL
Furḍah(t)	jetty	JTY
Ghār	cave(s)	CAVE
Ḥadabah(t), Lahd, Luhūd	plateau	PLAT
Ḥālah(t)	rocks	RKS
Ḥālah(t), Jazīrah(t)	island	ISL
Ḥazm, Naqā, Niqyān, Qīzān, Ramlah, Ṭi's	dune(s)	DUNE
Ḥazm, Ṭiwār	ridge(s)	RDGE
Ḥuzūm, Jibāl, Jubaylāt, Nuhaydāt, Qulay'āt, Qurūn	hills	HLLS
Istād, Mal'ab	stadium	STDM
Jāmi'ah	college	SCHC
Jarayān, Jarī, Maqārīn, Maqrūn, Qarayān, Qarī, Qarīyāt, Radīf, Waqbah(t)	waterhole(s)	WTRH
Jarī, Wādī	stream(s)	STM
Jaww	slope(s)	SLP

Generic	Feature Designation	Designation Code
Jisrah(t)	levee	LEV
Juzur	islands	ISLS
Kassārah(t)	quarry(-ies)	MNQR
Khalīj	gulf	GULF
Khawr	lagoon(s)	LGN
Maḥaţţat Idhāʻah(t)	radio station	STNR
Mamlaḥah	salt area	SALT
Manārah(t)	lighthouse	LTHSE
Maqţaʻ	canal	CNL
Markaz, Markaz Shurţah(t)	police post	PP
Maskar	fishing area	FISH
Maydān	oilfield	OILF
Mazraʻah(t), Zarʻ	farm(s)	FRM
Mīnāʼ	harbor(s)	HBR
Muʻaskar	military installation	INSM
Qabr	tomb(s)	TMB
Raʼs	cape	CAPE
Raʼs	point(s)	PT
Sāḥil	coast	CST
Shāţiʼ	beach(es)	BCH
Shibh Jazīrah(t)	peninsula	PEN
Thanīyah(t)	pass	PASS
Wādī, Widyān	wadi(s)	WAD
Zarʻ, Zarʻah(t)	cultivated area	CULT