British Indian Ocean Territory

(dependent territory of the UK)

Geography

Location: Southern Asia, archipelago in the Indian Ocean, about
one-half the way from Africa to Indonesia

Map references: World

Area:
total area: 60 sq km
land area: 60 sq km
comparative area: about 0.3 times the size of Washington, DC
note: includes the island of Diego Garcia

Land boundaries: 0 km

Coastline: 698 km

Maritime claims:
exclusive fishing zone: 200 nm
territorial sea: 3 nm

Climate: tropical marine; hot, humid, moderated by trade winds

Terrain: flat and low (up to 4 meters in elevation)

Natural resources: coconuts, fish

Land use:
arable land: 0%
permanent crops: 0%
meadows and pastures: 0%
forest and woodland: 0%
other: 100%

Irrigated land: 0 sq km

Note: archipelago of 2,300 islands; Diego Garcia, largest and southernmost island, occupies strategic location in central Indian Ocean; island is site of joint US-UK military facility

People

Population: no indigenous inhabitants
note: there are UK-US military personnel; civilian inhabitants, known as the Ilois, evacuated to Mauritius before construction of UK-US military facilities

Names:
conventional long form: British Indian Ocean Territory
conventional short form: none

Type: dependent territory of the UK

Capital: none

Independence: none (dependent territory of the UK)

Flag: white with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant and six blue wavy horizontal stripes bearing a palm tree and yellow crown centered on the outer half of the flag

Economy

Overview: All economic activity is concentrated on the largest island of Diego Garcia, where joint UK-US defense facilities are located.

Construction projects and various services needed to support the military installations are done by military and contract employees from the UK, Mauritius, the Philippines, and the US. There are no industrial or agricultural activities on the islands.

Electricity: provided by the US military

Ports: Diego Garcia

Airports:
total: 1