



POLICE TRAINING

Communication to the National Assembly's Committee on
Finance, the General Economy and Budget Oversight

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Executive summary

The system for training the National Police must address a number of priorities

The National Police had just over 126,000 active employees in 2020, including 9,200 commissioners and officers, 107,600 patrol officers and 10,300 ancillary police officers. The initial and on-going training of these people is particularly important, because of the prerogatives associated with internal security missions. When law enforcement is authorized and the powers of the judicial police are exercised, this occurs within a strict regulatory and ethical framework, and requires a comprehensive knowledge of specialized information and techniques.

The training system is subject to stresses from several quarters. Because it is a mass training system, it is significantly disrupted by the fluctuating recruitment that has been a feature of the police service since 2005: a period of declining numbers was followed by an increase in recruitments after the attacks in 2015, so that the number of students entering initial training varied by a factor of four. The low point, reached in 2012 when 2,500 student patrol officers, ancillary police officers and cadets entered the school, was followed by a high in 2016 with 9,300 entries. In 2021, there were 6,200 new students. The plan to create 7,500 additional police jobs between 2018 and 2022 and the rise in retirements over the next ten years will continue to exert pressure on schools. This pressure will be exacerbated because the study time for patrol officers and ancillary police officers will be extended.

The training must also adapt to an increasing number of priorities to enable the service to deal with new threats (terrorism, cybercrime and violent protests) and meet citizens' expectations (continuous security policing, countering domestic violence).

Since 2017, the French Central Directorate for the recruitment and training of the National Police (DCRFPN) has been responsible for directing the initial and on-going training strategy for the entire police force. The supervision of the Higher National Police Academy (ENSP), a public agency responsible for training commissioners and officers, was transferred to it in January 2020. The DCRFPN now has 2,550 officers. It manages, via four Sub-Directorates and seven Zonal Directorates, a network comprising a Higher Police Academy¹, eight National Police Academies (ENP), a "police training centre" acting as a National Police Academy, five national training centres and 15 regional training units and centres. Its budget is approximately €32 million, although this does not reflect the real investment in training. The ENSP, active Directorates and the Paris police headquarters actually employ approximately 1,700 trainers. Operating expenditure and the costs of payroll, real estate and equipment are divided between a number of budget lines managed by different departments.

The increase in numbers recruited has adversely affected the duration and quality of the initial training

Student commissioners receive classroom training for two years, officers for 18 months, patrol officers for eight months, ancillary police officers for three months and cadets for twelve months, alternating with high-school courses.

¹ The Higher National School for the National Police (ENSAPN).

Eight years after the merger of ENSP and ENSOP², attempts have been made to bring the initial training of officers closer to that of commissioners, although they take place at two geographically-separated sites. Both students and their line managers consider that the commissioner training at the Saint-Cyr-au-Mont d'Or site near Lyon is satisfactory. Officers trained at the site at Cannes-Écluse in Seine-et-Marne, which is in poor condition, have rather more mixed views. The increase in the size of officer intakes, which will rise from an average of 70 students over the period 2015-2019 to 400 students in September 2022, could jeopardize the quality of training. For instance, for the 24th intake, comprising 70 students, 53% of teaching was in groups of 15 or fewer students. For the 26th intake of 370 students who entered the School in September 2021, only 20% of teaching was in small groups. To counter this, the School will have to recruit a large number of trainers.

The initial training of patrol officers is the most vulnerable to variations in recruitment. Until 2021, the training system met the objectives defined for entries, although the duration of the courses was often changed and the examination pass levels were lowered. The new training programme introduced in June 2020 was based on classroom training reduced to eight months, supplemented by 16 months of internship in the first job. The results were disappointing. It was considered advisable to extend training in the school to 12 months, and this will be effective in May 2022. The integration of the preparatory training for qualification as a judicial police officer ("OPJ training") with the initial training for patrol officers, announced in September 2021, requires choices that have not yet been made.

Introducing professional-development modules at the end of the School course is an appropriate response to the variety of jobs the patrol officers take on leaving the School. The design of these modules still considers the employing department, rather than the different types of job. The number of patrol officers assigned to investigative work after leaving the School should be assessed more accurately in order better to meet the needs. The current work on recruitment diversification could usefully be associated with better ways to identify rare skills (e.g. languages, IT or economics/finance) that are held by students and sought by specialist departments.

Continuing education struggles to transcend the diversity of specialities and structures

The annual number of days of continuing education per officer has remained stable since 2015, at the low level of between 4.8 and 5.3 days taking all parties together. Continuing education brings together different types of training, reflecting the excessive number of priorities in the Ministry of the Interior's 2021 training plan. No fewer than 96 short and extended training courses identified as priorities are relevant to active police personnel.

An annual training plan based on local plans has been produced under the DCRFPN's direction, and this has improved the requirements analysis. The training offering is prolific but needs to be better structured. There is a gap between priority training courses that do not always find an audience, such as those in management and ethics, and sectors under stress.

Continuing education in "techniques and safety in intervention" (TSI) is mandatory. It must guarantee that law enforcement is controlled, including the use of arms, intervention techniques, defence and arrest techniques and first aid during an intervention. The minimum time allowance is twelve hours per year, including in particular three sessions on the use of an individual firearm able to fire 90 cartridges. The greater arming of the police and the use of mass integrated training to counter terrorism have led to a high demand for internships. With 27,000 active personnel representing just over 20% of the national workforce, the Police Prefecture is in a particularly critical situation, lacking trainers in intervention techniques and

² The role of the ENSP, formerly specifically for training commissioners, was extended to officer training in 2013, by incorporating the Higher National School for Police Officers (ENSOP).

safety (FTSI) and being poorly equipped in terms of infrastructure. These capacity problems are aggravated by a high proportion of “empty seats” at training courses and difficulties experienced by operational departments in prioritizing their requests.

These annual training obligations are not being fulfilled: in 2019³, the percentage of active personnel who had completed three shooting sessions using individual firearms was 62% nationally; and the proportion completing the twelve hours of annual regulatory training was only 24% for the DGP and 14% for the Police Prefecture. In the face of operational pressure, compliance with mandatory training can only be ensured by ring-fencing the time allotted to it and actively encouraging department heads to report on their monitoring of it. It is clear from the Court investigation in the field that it is essential to stop focusing on shooting, and to return to full scenarios that require the mastery of arms, intervention techniques and the teaching of the related legal and ethical framework.

Two other sectors under stress were specifically reviewed: OPJ training and training in maintaining order for non-specialized units. The DCRFPN has recently made efforts in these two areas to increase the offering, in collaboration with the active Directorates and the Police Prefecture. Conversely, management courses are an example of priority training which generates few spontaneous individual requests, despite useful initiatives.

It appears that changes are necessary to improve the quality of training, including better-coordinated development of e-training between the DCRFPN and the ENSP, a genuine desire for sharing between the three police forces and with the gendarmerie, and a greater openness to trainers outside the police.

Finally, senior national police executives should give more weight to the continuing education of their subordinates than they do today, and achieving the training objectives should be included among their assessment criteria.

The budgetary and human resources must match the very ambitious objectives resulting from the security consultation, “*Beauvau de la sécurité*”

The announcements made in September 2021 by the President of the Republic in his closing speech at the *Beauvau de la sécurité* – extending patrol officers’ formal training to 12 months and including in it “OPJ training”; creating a “Police Academy” in the Montpellier conurbation; increasing continuing education time by 50%; creating regional centres for specialized training; and creating a centre for training in maintaining order in the Paris region – will have a significant impact on training expenditure. Implementing these presidential announcements will generate significant additional costs from 2023, the first year they are fully applied, at a time when recruitment is increasing as active staff leave to retire. However, since 2015, the budgets allocated to the DCRFPN have been restricted. Expenditure on property maintenance and educational expenditure on continuing education are in fact variables that are used to balance the books.

Furthermore, the DCRFPN’s current budget structure, which is very fragmented, does not allow for a real management dialogue and leaves Zonal Directorates without accountability. In terms of hierarchy, these Directorates are – at best – a point of synthesis, and do not have the power to make choices about the allocation of resources to training structures in their zones. The full cost of initial and on-going training is not known, making it difficult to evaluate these resources equitably. Finally, the DCRFPN’s ability to manage the activity has since 2019 been hampered by malfunctions in the “training” infocentre of the National Police’s HR information system: these malfunctions must be resolved quickly.

³ The last year for which consolidated data is available.

As regards real estate, the network of DCRFPN training structures was reduced between 2009 and 2013: eight vocational training centres and six Police Academies were closed, as was also the National Centre For Study and Training at Gif-sur-Yvette. During its previous review⁴, the Court had noted that this restructuring, which aimed to simplify a network with too many centres badly located across the territory, had not been based on an analysis either of costs or needs. Today, faced with the imperatives of renovating existing structures and the lack of infrastructure in some areas, particularly Île-de-France, a national training-building master plan must be established, feeding into a physical and financial programme that will make up the delay in property maintenance and increase reception capacity. Approximately €12 million per year has been ring-fenced since 2018 as commitment appropriations (AE), but this is not enough to cover the needs given the age and dilapidation of several Schools. Furthermore, little of the credit is actually used, evidence of the postponement, and sometimes cancellation, of works.

The governance of training must evolve so it is more consistent with a unified “human resources” function of the National Police

The governance of training reflects the aim, never fully achieved, of reaching a unified strategy by breaking down the partitions between the three police forces and between the employing departments. Creating the DCRFPN has made it possible to improve coordination with the active departments and to normalize relations with the Police Prefecture in Paris. The standardization of the National Police’s Departmental Directorates (DDPN) should, however, prompt a review at territorial level both of the organization of the training services of the active Directorates, and also of the role of the DCRFPN and its Zonal Directorates.

If the lack of attractiveness of the job of trainers, generalists and FTSl poses a recruitment problem, their positioning also remains a matter of concern, as operational Departments wish to have their own trainers to address their specific requirements. The DCRFPN accounts for the majority of the generalist trainers, whereas most of the FTSl are employed by active Departments. The participation of the FTSl in the Departments’ operational missions appears to be a factor increasing the attractiveness and credibility of this technical role. Most of the FTSl at the Paris Police Prefecture have been incorporated into the training sub-Directorate. The difficult situation at the Prefecture raises questions about the right balance between pooled management of training resources and the usefulness of placing the FTSl as close as possible to the officers they train.

Keeping trainers in active Directorates does not exclude a stronger coordination role for the DCRFPN. A unified mapping of trainers at national level appears necessary in order to define a job allocation strategy. The growing needs for TSI courses require the rapid implementation of solutions aimed at promoting the recruitment of trainers and diversifying the types of trainers likely to deliver the training, including the use of trainers external to the police, outside the core TSI work.

The supervision of the ENSP by the DCRFPN improved in 2021 as regards budget, but remains to be finalized as regards job sectors. The National Police Resources and Skills Department (DRCPN) continues in practice to make decisions on the grant to the School, and it alone also has decision-making power for mortgages. As regards professional supervision, the DCRFPN plays only a minor role in defining the principles and guidelines for commissioners’ and officers’ initial and on-going training, and the ENSP itself collects information from the active Directorates about their continuing education needs.

⁴ Court of Accounts, *Recruitment and training in the Gendarmerie and National Police*, final submissions, February 2015.

Having a Directorate specifically for training, as distinct from the DRCPN⁵ (the Human-Resources Directorate), makes the National Police an unusual organization and contributes to the fragmentation of its HR strategy. Added to these is the “Police Academy”, whose area of intervention has not yet been defined.

Whatever form and positioning are chosen for the future Academy, it appears that changes must be made to training governance so that those responsible can both exercise full supervision over the ENSP and also have a consolidated and forward-looking view of the training needs and resources of the National Police, set within the framework of a global human resources policy. This more unified central organization should be rolled out at local level via the future National-Police Zonal Directorates (DZPN), whose support missions should include continuing education.

⁵ National Police Resources and Skills Directorate.

Recommendations

For training organization and resources

1. Unify training governance within the framework of an overall human-resources strategy for the National Police (*DGPN*).
2. Evaluate the annual cost of reorganizing the training and use it to define a sustainable multi-year budget trajectory (*DRCPN, DCRFPN*).
3. Give the Zonal Directorate a position in the hierarchy where it can distribute and manage credits allocated to the training structures in the zone (*DRCPN, DCRFPN*).
4. Draw up a national real-estate master plan for the training structures, shared between the various stakeholders, and translate it into a physical and financial programme that will make up the delay in property maintenance and increase reception capacity (*DEPAFI, DRCPN, DCRFPN, Police Prefecture*).
5. Determine the cost of initial and on-going police training and include it in the annual performance report for programme 176 and the DGPN social report (*DRCPN, DCRFPN*).

For initial training

6. Ensure student patrol officers take a “first-job induction module” for the first job to which they will be assigned, irrespective of their employing department, especially for investigation (*DCRFPN, DCSP, Police Prefecture*).

For continuing education

7. Develop joint training for gendarmes and police officers on maintaining order (*DGPN, DGGN, Police Prefecture*).
8. Implement an emergency action plan to correct the malfunctions observed in the organization of continuing education in TSI at the Police Prefecture; define the current authorization requirements for each Directorate; and ensure the resources are sufficient for the requirements (*Police Prefecture*).
9. Strengthen the requirements relating to the training and evaluation of trainers from the ENSP, active Directorates and the Police Prefecture and integrate more effectively the functions of trainer into the career paths for the National Police (*DRCPN, DCRFPN, Police Prefecture*).
10. Assign to the central Directorate in charge of managing training the task of creating a mapping of generalist, IT and TSI trainers. Ensure that the management targets for operational departments carrying out similar work are harmonized (*DRCPN, DCRFPN*).
11. Increase the number of trainers who can provide first-level training in shooting or practical know-how as close as possible to the Departments. Include the use of external trainers for training outside the core TSI work (*DRCPN, DCRFPN, Police Prefecture*).
12. Define by government order the minimum number of days of continuing education, including mandatory training, to be included in the departmental schedule for each officer (*DGPN*).
13. Make the achievement of their subordinates’ training objectives a criterion for assessing managers at all hierarchical levels, and, where applicable, a criterion for allocating the variable part of their allowance scheme (*DGPN*).