


PANAMA



Population	4,528,000 inhabitants
Territorial Extension	75,320 km²
GDP (in US\$)	87,350,000,000
GDP per capita (US\$)	19,291
Security Forces Personnel*	27,721
Security Budget (US\$)	946,109,041

* Dependents of the Ministry of Public Security.

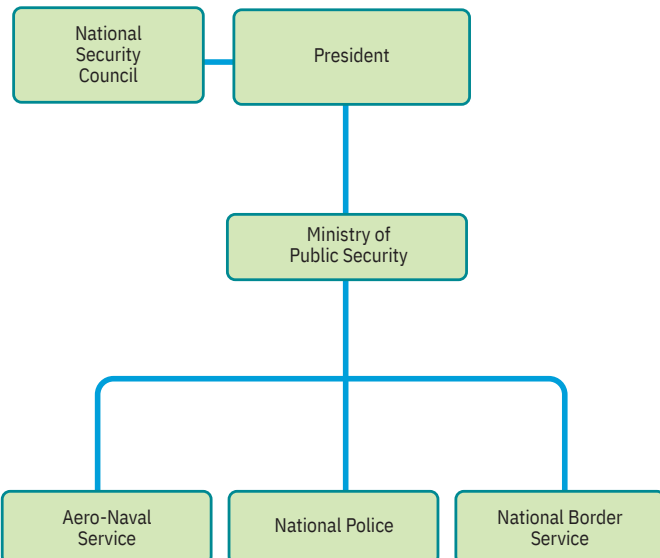
The Ministry of Public Security was created in 2010.

The Legal Framework

National Legislation

Law on drug-related issues (N° 23 - 1986/12/30).
 Organic law of the National Police (N° 18 - 1997/03/06. Last amendment: N° 74 - 2010/10/29).
 Protection of victims of crime law (N° 31 - 1998/05/28).
 Equal opportunities for women law (N° 4 - 1999/01/29).
 Special criminal liability for adolescents law (N° 40 - 1999/08/28).
 Organic law of the Institutional Protection Service (N° 2 - 1999/07/10. Last amendment: Executive order N° 6 - 2008/08/18).
 Law that adopts the Judicial Code (N° 1 - 2001/09/10).
 Law reorganizing the penitentiary system (N° 55 - 2003/08/01).
 Law covering crimes against sexual liberty and integrity, and amends and adds sections to the Criminal and Judicial codes (N° 16 - 2004/03/31).
 Law that defines crimes of pandillerismo (gangs) and the possession and trade of prohibited weapons, and that adopts measures for protecting the identity of witnesses (N° 48 - 2004/08/31).
 Law that reorganizes the National Civil Protection System (N° 7 - 2005/02/14).
 Law adopting the Criminal Code (N° 14 - 2007/05/22).
 Law on the Emergency Management System (N° 44 - 2007/11/01).
 Law creating the Directorate of Judicial Investigation within the National Police and that ascribes Forensic Services to the Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences (N° 69 - 2007/12/28).
 Decree-Law creating the National Immigration Service (N° 3 - 2008/02/26).
 Decree-Law creating the National Border Service (N° 8 - 2008/08/22).
 Law adopting the Criminal Procedure Law (N° 63 - 2008/08/29).
 Law repealing the law that reorganizes the Public Security Council and National Defence and creates the National Intelligence and Security Service (N° 11 - 2010/03/18).
 Decree creating the National Security Council (Executive order N°. 263 - 2010/03/19).
 Law creating the Ministry of Public Security (N° 15 - 2010/04/14).
 Law reorganizing the Ministry of Public Security (N° 19 - 2010/05/03).
 Law on human trafficking and related activities (N° 79 - 2011/11/09).
 Law regulating private security services (N° 56 - 2011/05/30).
 General law on firearms, ammunition and related materials (N° 57 - 2011/05/30).
 Law that reorganizes the National Aero-Naval Service (N° 93 - 2013/11/07).
 Law that creates the regional humanitarian logistics assistance center (N° 80 - 2017/12/15).

Public Security System



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graph TD
    NSC[National Security Council] --- P[President]
    P --- MPS[Ministry of Public Security]
    MPS --- ANS[Aero-Naval Service]
    MPS --- NP[National Police]
    MPS --- NBS[National Border Service]
    
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Command relationship

The National Security Council is the highest advisory and consultative body to the President of the Republic on matters of public security and national defence. It recommends, formulates, and evaluates policies and strategies in this area. It is composed of the President, who also serves as Chair, and the Minister of the Presidency.

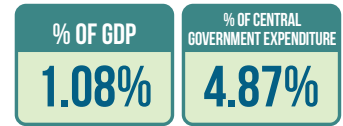
At the operational level, the Ministry of Public Security comprises public security services: the National Police, the Air and Naval Service, the National Border Service, and the National Migration Service.

Source: Compilation based on the Political Constitution; Law creating the Ministry of Public Security (N° 15 - 2010/05/03); and Decree creating the National Security Council (Executive order N° 263 - 2010/03/19).

The Budget

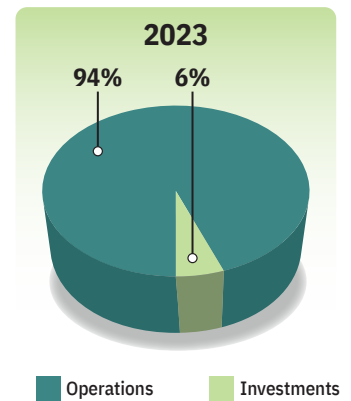
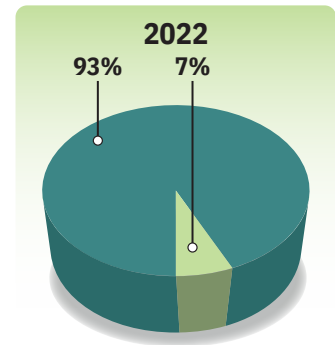
Budget of the Ministry of Public Security (US\$)

Program and Subprogram	2022		2023	
	Modified Budget	%	Modified Budget	%
OPERATIONS	826,459,859	-	865,642,805	-
General Management and Administration	42,421,864	-	43,037,228	-
Senior Management	38,592,619	4.32%	39,349,534	4.26%
Administrative and Financial Services	3,829,245	0.43%	3,687,694	0.40%
National Public Security	689,821,334	-	712,764,378	-
National Police Service	442,276,810	49.53%	451,525,422	48.84%
National Border Service	100,120,907	11.21%	103,967,246	11.25%
Aero-Naval Service	102,325,398	11.46%	100,469,712	10.87%
National Migration Service	45,098,219	5.05%	56,801,998	6.14%
Miscellaneous Transfers	94,216,661	-	109,841,199	-
Pensions and Retirement	85,317,861	9.55%	97,841,199	10.58%
Private Institutions	8,898,800	1.00%	12,000,000	1.30%
INVESTMENTS	66,560,339	-	58,880,114	-
Construction, Repair and Extension of Infrastructure	51,097,616	-	50,240,766	-
National Aero-Naval Service	14,274,294	1.60%	27,745,891	3.00%
Aero-Naval Service	11,921,324	1.33%	8,054,921	0.87%
National Border Service	3,102,562	0.35%	2,252,074	0.24%
General Management and Administration - HQ	21,799,436	2.44%	12,187,880	1.32%
Equipment and Development	1,615,189	-	2,304,056	-
General Management and Administration - HQ	108,246	0.01%	598,814	0.06%
National Police	553,913	0.06%	317,883	0.03%
National Border Service	910,103	0.10%	1,127,047	0.12%
National Aero-Naval Service	42,927	0.00%	260,312	0.03%
Logistical Support	10,717,784	-	6,335,292	-
Strengthening Logistical Support	4,174,328	0.47%	1,847,389	0.20%
National Aero-Naval Service	3,163,025	0.35%	1,041,950	0.11%
National Border Service	3,380,431	0.38%	3,246,953	0.35%
General Management and Administration - HQ	-	-	199,000	0.02%
Strengthening the Integrated System	3,129,750	-	-	-
Integral System of Public Security - COR-Colon	3,129,750	0.35%	-	-
Total Ministry of Public Security	893,020,198	-	924,522,919	-



Budget 2024

Modified Budget 2022 and 2023, Operations and Investments

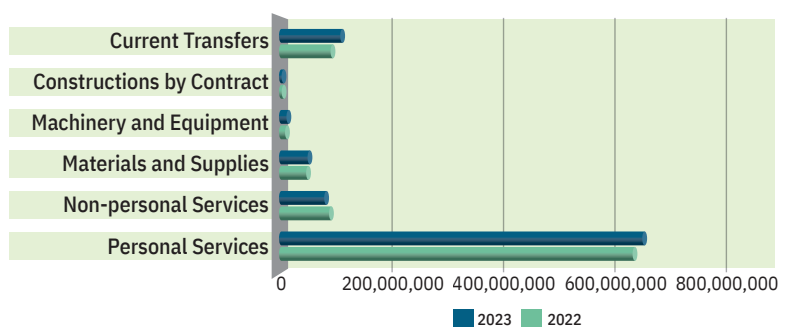


Operations Investments

Budget by Expenditure Item, US\$

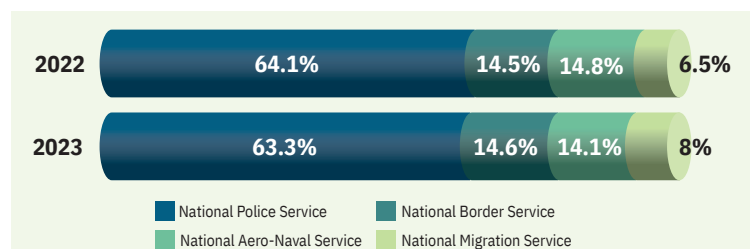
Expenditure Item	2022	2023
	Annual modified budget	Annual modified budget
Personal Services	634,526,509	652,965,611
Non-personal Services	93,114,907	84,404,190
Materials and Supplies	50,184,605	52,643,757
Machinery and Equipment	12,252,703	14,653,107
Constructions by Contract	7,085,228	7,873,695
Current Transfers	95,399,609	111,542,559
Global Allocations	456,637	440,000
Total Ministry of Public Security	893,020,198	924,522,919

Budget by Expenditure Item



Distribution by Public Security Services, US\$

Services	2022	2023
TOTAL	689,821,334	712,764,378
National Police Service	442,276,810	451,525,422
National Border Service	100,120,907	103,967,246
National Aero-Naval Service	102,325,398	100,469,712
National Migration Service	45,098,219	56,801,998

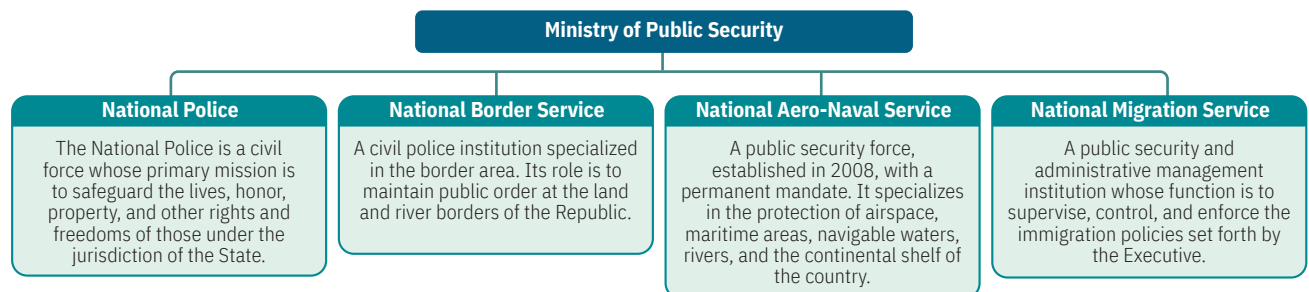
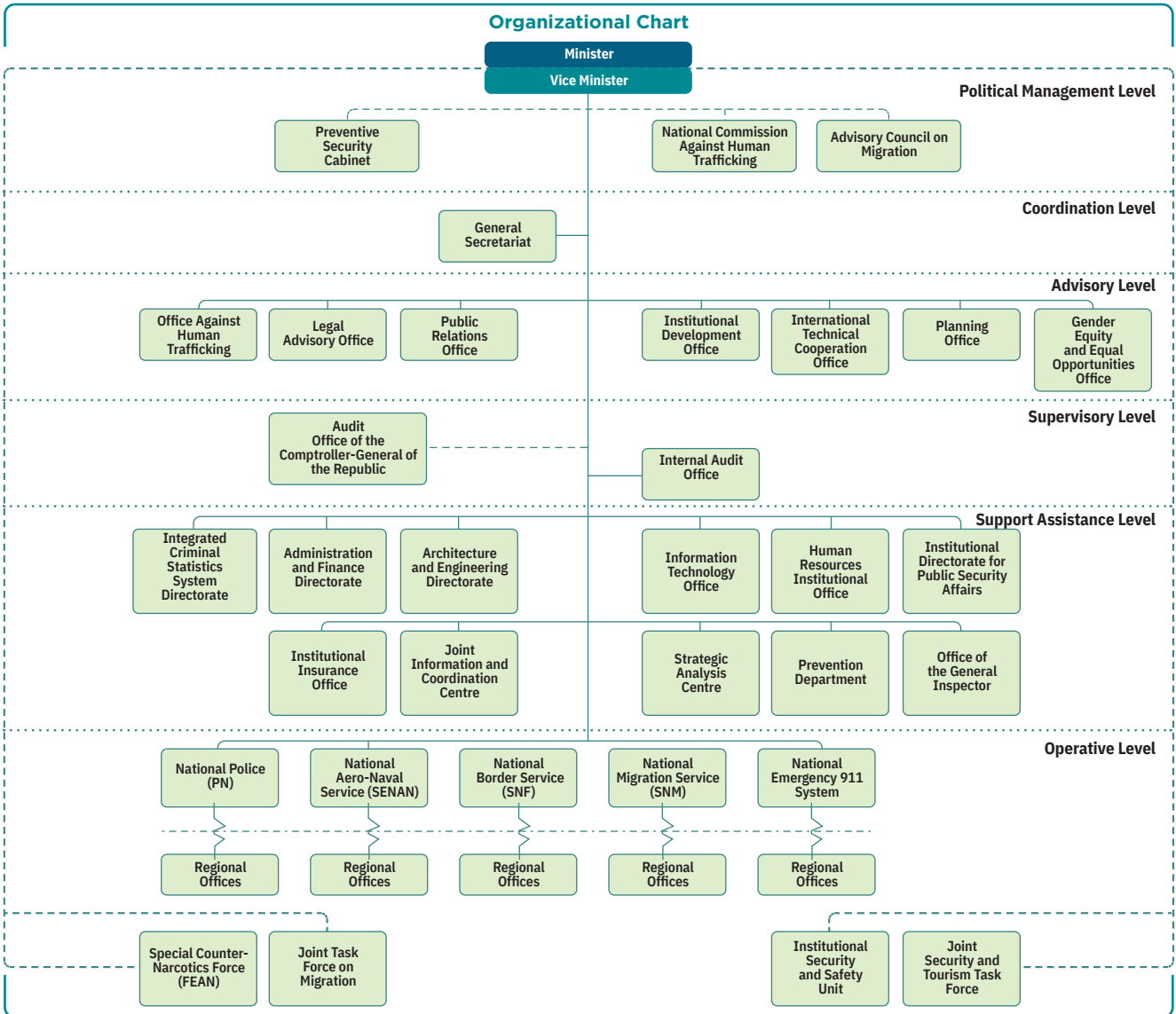


Source: Compilation based on the *Ley 418 que dicta el Presupuesto General del Estado para la vigencia fiscal de 2024* (2023/12/29); Ministry of Public Security, Administration and Finance Directorate, Budget Implementation (reports considered: December 2022 and 2023); GDP: IMF, World Economic Outlook Database. Exchange rate: 1 US\$ = 1 Balboa.

The Ministry of Public Security

YEAR OF CREATION*	MISSION	MANDATES
2010	The Ministry of Public Security has the mission of determining the country's security policies as well as planning, coordinating, controlling, and supporting the efforts of the security and intelligence agencies falling under its control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and defending national sovereignty. • Coordinating public security services, as well as information and intelligence agencies within its entities, in ongoing coordination with the National Security Council. • Ensuring security, peace, and public order in the country. • Promoting policies and actions for crime prevention. • Establishing policies and actions for the protection and security of those within the national territory.
Average tenure in office for Ministers: 2 YEARS AND 4 MONTHS		

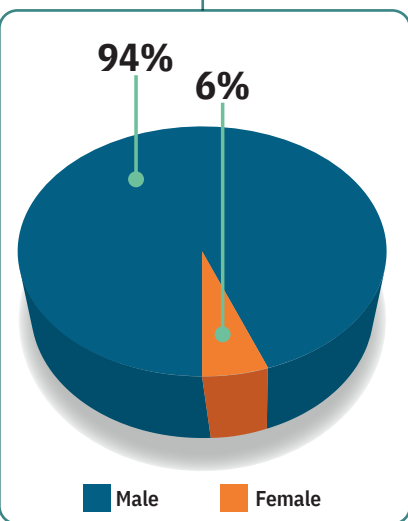
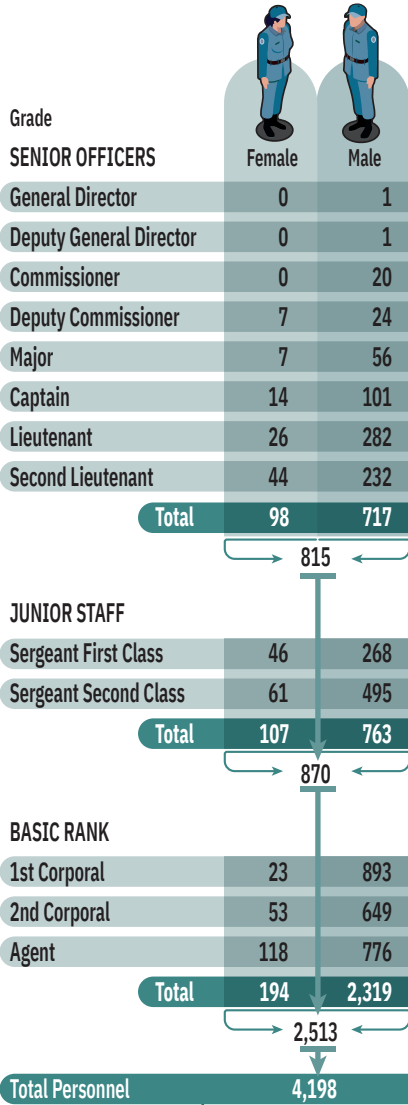
*The year of creation corresponds to the date when it was designated as the Ministry of Public Security.



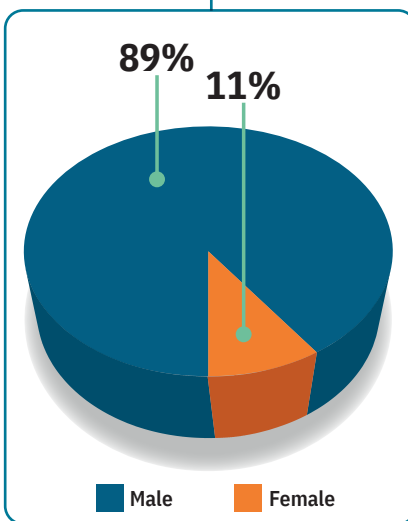
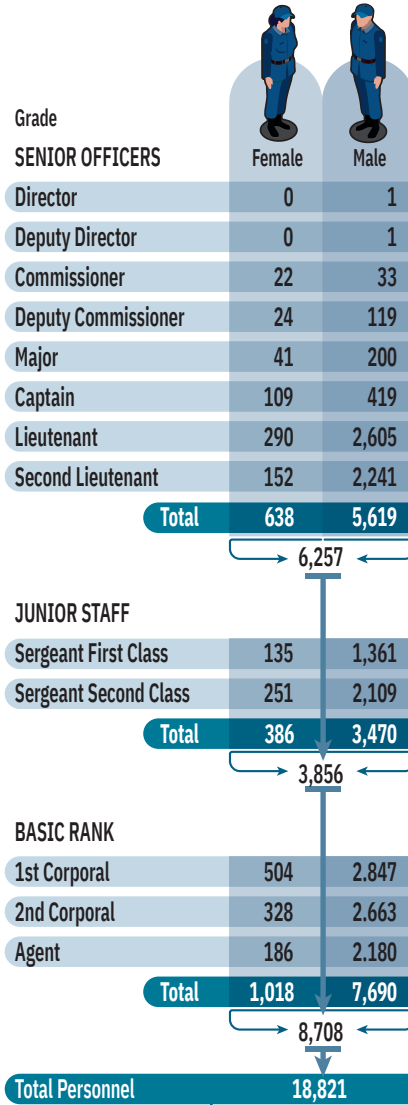
Source: Compilation based on information gathered from the official website of the Ministry of Public Security; *Ley que crea el Ministerio de Seguridad Pública* (N° 15 – 2010/04/14); *Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional* (N° 18 – 1997/03/06); *Decreto Ley que crea el Servicio Nacional de Migración* (N° 3 – 2008/02/26); *Decreto Ley que crea el Servicio Nacional de Fronteras* (N° 8 – 2008/08/22); *Ley que reorganiza el Servicio Nacional Aeronaval* (N° 93 – 2013/11/07).

Public Security Forces

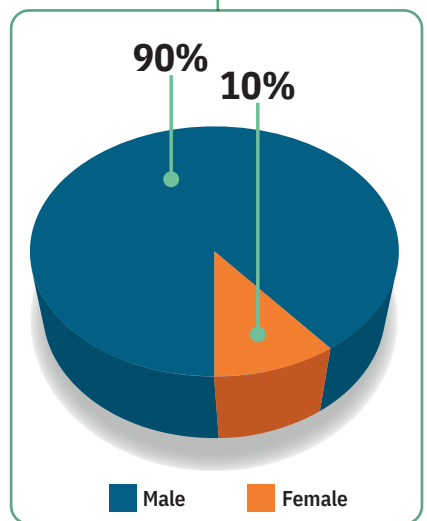
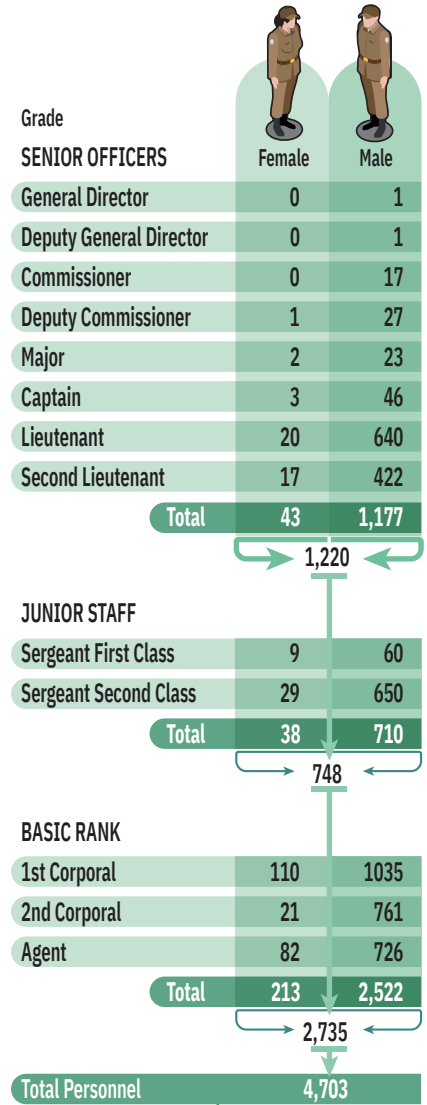
NATIONAL AERO-NAVAL SERVICE (SENAN)



NATIONAL POLICE (PN)



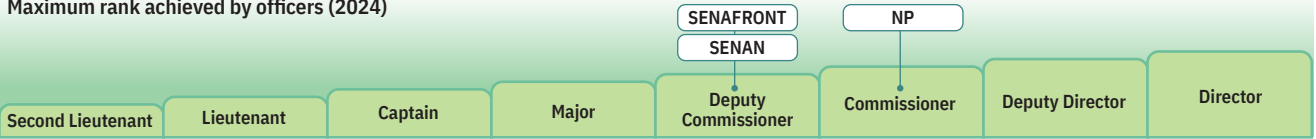
NATIONAL BORDER SERVICE (SENAFRONT)



Source: Compilation based on information gathered from the Transparency Monitoring Platform of the Republic of Panama. Number of personnel as of May 2024.

Women in Public Security Forces

Maximum rank achieved by officers (2024)



Maximum rank achieved in the non-commissioned officers and basic scale rank (2024)



OUT OF THE TOTAL AGENTS

11% of the total National Police are women.
6% of the total National Border Service are women.
10% of the total National Aero-Naval Service are women.

Education

The Aero-Naval Service (SENAN)

Training School

- COD-001 Special Boats and Small Vessels Operator Course.
- Course for Patrol Boat Crew and Commanders.
- Basic Seamanship Courses. COD-007 Naval Induction Course.
- Basic Maritime Firefighting Course.
- Equipment and Boarding Officer Course.
- Ship and Port Facility Security Course.

Superior Aero-Naval Institute

The National Border Service (SENAFRONT)

The School for Training Agents

Cadets pass through a 6-month basic course. They then complete two months of specialization and afterwards they are placed on a two-year trial period.

The School of Special Forces

National Police (PN)

Dr. Justo Aerosemena School of Police Officers

Superior Police Institute

The program lasts 12 months: 8 months of basic training, 2 months of specialized training, and 2 months of professional practice.

Police Training and Specialization Center

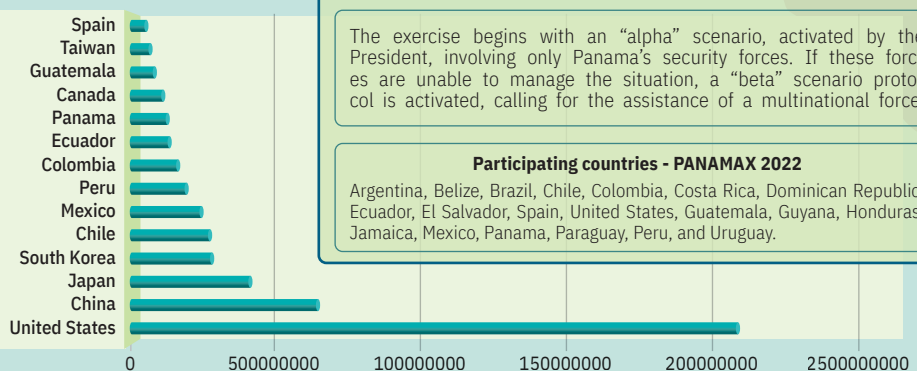
The Panama Canal as a strategic point



The Panama Canal, inaugurated in 1914, is an inter-oceanic canal with an 8-kilometer exclusive zone on each side. It is managed by the Panama Canal Authority, an autonomous entity of the Panamanian state with its own security. In 2016, the Expanded Canal was inaugurated, which has allowed for increased ship traffic and reduced environmental impact.

Main Canal Users, by cargo flow (in long tons) - 2023

Country	Total
United States	208,799,369
China	643,562,57
Japan	41,264,733
South Korea	27,875,420
Chile	27,477,861
Mexico	24,396,782
Peru	19,731,883
Colombia	16,859,238
Ecuador	13,958,353
Panama	12,730,778
Canada	11,559,921
Guatemala	8,828,360
Taiwan	6,783,013
Spain	5,294,735



PANAMAX Exercise

PANAMAX is a multinational exercise involving the Armed Forces of the region, sponsored by the United States Southern Command. It focuses on training to ensure the defence and continuous neutrality of the Panama Canal, as well as strengthening multinational defence ties.

The exercise begins with an "alpha" scenario, activated by the President, involving only Panama's security forces. If these forces are unable to manage the situation, a "beta" scenario protocol is activated, calling for the assistance of a multinational force.

Participating countries - PANAMAX 2022

Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, United States, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

Source: Compilation based on the information gathered from the official websites of the Panama Canal Authority, SENAFRONT, SENAN, and the National Police.

The National Aero-Naval Service (SENAN)

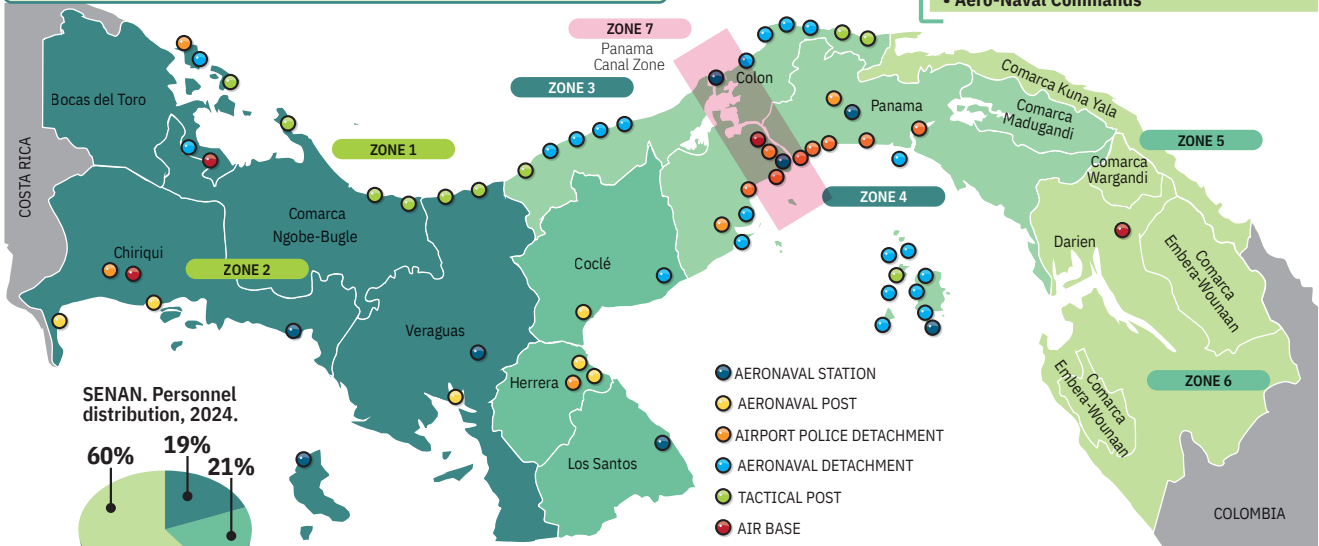
The National Aero-Naval Service (SENAN, Spanish acronym) performs maritime, aviation, port and airport police functions. It is part of the Public Force and has both a permanent and civilian nature

It was created in 2008, when the existing National Air and National Maritime Services were unified.

The staff is divided between personnel under oath and not under oath. Personnel under oath carry out the National Aero-Naval Service Career, while those not under oath perform purely administrative and technical functions (non-uniformed, carrying no weapons or institutional badges).

It has different Operation Groups:

- Air Command
 - Fixed Wing Aircraft Squadron
 - Helicopter Squadron
 - Air Training Squadron
- Navy Command
- Aero-Naval Infantry
- Aero-Naval Commands



Coordination with other bodies

The National Aero-Naval Service assists the SENAFRONT by providing transportation along borders or offshore islands, while also engaging in joint operations. The National Police works in conjunction with the anti-drug operations unit and the Directorate of Judicial Investigation Police in operations, raids and arrests.

The National Border Service (SENAFRONT)

The National Border Service is a police force specialized in the border area activities. It is part of the Public Force and reports to the Ministry of Public Security. It is a permanent institution of a civilian nature.

It was created in 2008 through Decree Law N° 8, 2008/08/22.

It is composed of both personnel under oath and not under oath. Those members under oath are part of the National Border Service Career and those who are not, fulfill administrative and technical roles.

First Brigade - Eastern

Pinogana District, Sub-district of Metetí, Punuloso community, Darién Province.

The 1st Eastern Brigade is dedicated to carrying out operations for the protection and control of the Darién province, addressing issues such as common crime, narco-terrorist groups, and transnational organized crime.

Second Brigade - Caribbean

Puerto Obaldía community, Special Sub-district of the Guna Yala region.

Protection and defence of the Caribbean bordering area.

Third Brigade - East Panama

Flor de Laguna, east of Panama Province, approximately 57 kilometers from Panama City.

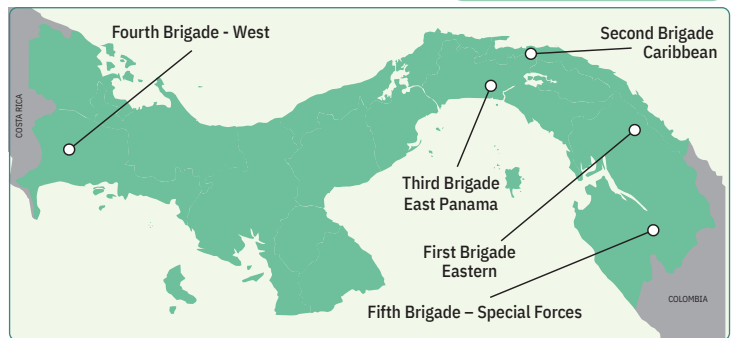
Responsible for the control, restoration of order, and security of the area extending from Tanara to the PSII-CN of Agua Fria.

Fourth Brigade - West

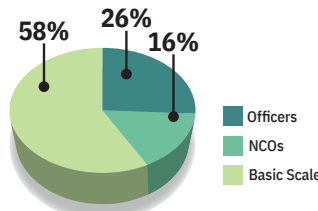
Control, order and security of the strip along the border with Costa Rica.

Fifth Brigade - Special Forces

Its mission is to mitigate the threat posed by armed groups, FARC dissidents, and other criminal gangs operating in Darién and the Guna Yala region.



SENAFRONT. Personnel distribution, 2024



SENAFRONT provides an Environmental and Ecological Protection Unit.

Source: Decreto Ley que crea el Servicio Nacional de Fronteras (N° 8 – 2008/08/22); Ley que reorganiza el Servicio Nacional Aeronaval (N° 93 – 2013/07/11), and websites of the National Border Service and the National Aero-Naval Service. Personnel data as of May 2024.

Community Support and Public Security

The so-called Darien Gap is located on the border between Panama and Colombia and is a crucial passage into Central America. It is estimated that in 2023, half a million people from countries including Venezuela, Colombia, Haiti, Ecuador, Chile, Brazil, and China crossed this region, representing a continuous migratory flow.

In 2023, women accounted for 26% and children for 22% of the total irregular migration across the Darien border.

Darien is not a route, it is a jungle.

The Ministry of Public Security, the National Border Service, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched an international campaign to raise awareness about the dangers of Darien as a migration route, as a result of its perilous nature. At the same time, the campaign aims to mitigate environmental impact by ensuring the protection and integrity of natural resources in the territory.

Cañas Blancas

Cañas Blancas is an area located 3 km away from the border between Colombia and Panama. The Ministry of Public Security conducts daily visits to this inhospitable area to support and assist those who travel across the Darien.

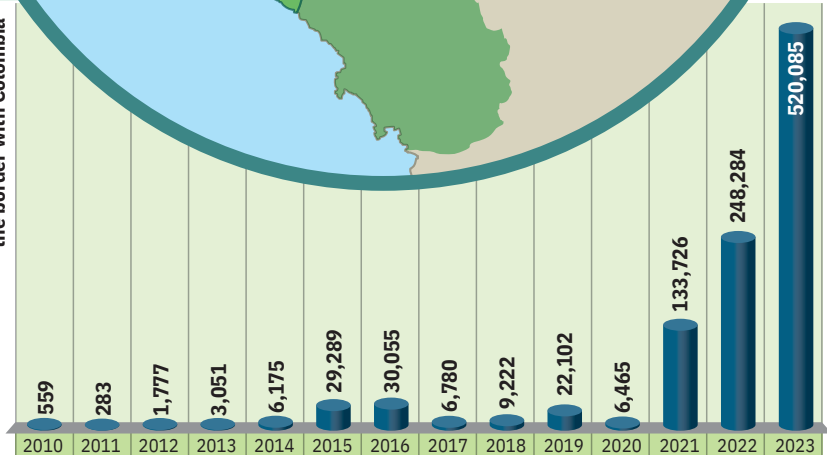


An Environmental and Ecological Protection Unit was created within SENAFRONT.

The **5th Special Forces Brigade of SENAFRONT** conducts constant surveillance of the Darien area, particularly the regions near the border with Colombia and Costa Rica.

In 2023, efforts continued to close irregular border crossings, ensure the safety and security of individuals, and enhance patrolling effectiveness.

Irregular transit of foreigners across the border with Colombia



The Joint Migratory Task Force

The Joint Migratory Task Force, established by Executive Order N° 193 of June 5, 2018, and composed of units from SENAFRONT, SENAN, the National Police, and the National Migration Service, aims to coordinate and cooperate on migratory flow issues in the border area with Colombia and Costa Rica. In 2023, 16 operations were conducted in the provinces of Panama, Colón, Darién, and Coclé.

Campaña Escudo | Operation Choco

This is an annual campaign conducted jointly by SENAFRONT, SENAN, and the National Migration Service, aiming to increase territorial control of the borders, curb transnational crime, and protect the environment. Operation Chocó is executed as part of this campaign. Some results from Operation I in 2023 were:

- 585 criminals arrested
- 730 migrants rescued
- Seizure of:
 - 2,633 drug packages
 - 147 weapons
 - 5,480 rounds of ammunition
 - 85 vehicles and vessels

Mercurio Humanitarian Exercises

This exercise was conducted by the Ministry of Public Security with the cooperation of the Ministry of Government and the Joint Task Force-Bravo of the U.S. Southern Command, the Ministry of Public Security, and the Ministry of Government.

These efforts aim to provide health-care, medical supplies, and construction materials to the hard-to-reach areas of the Darien province and the Ngãbe Buglé *Comarca*.



Exercise Mercurio VI provided:

- Humanitarian assistance to 23 communities.
- 519,733 pounds of construction materials.
- 27 modular structures for classrooms to be deployed in the communities.
- 8 health rounds, including primary care, vaccination, and nutritional services.

Source: Compilation based on *Memoria 2023*, Ministry of Public Security; Migration Movement Reports from the National Migration Service and the official website of the Ministry of Public Security.

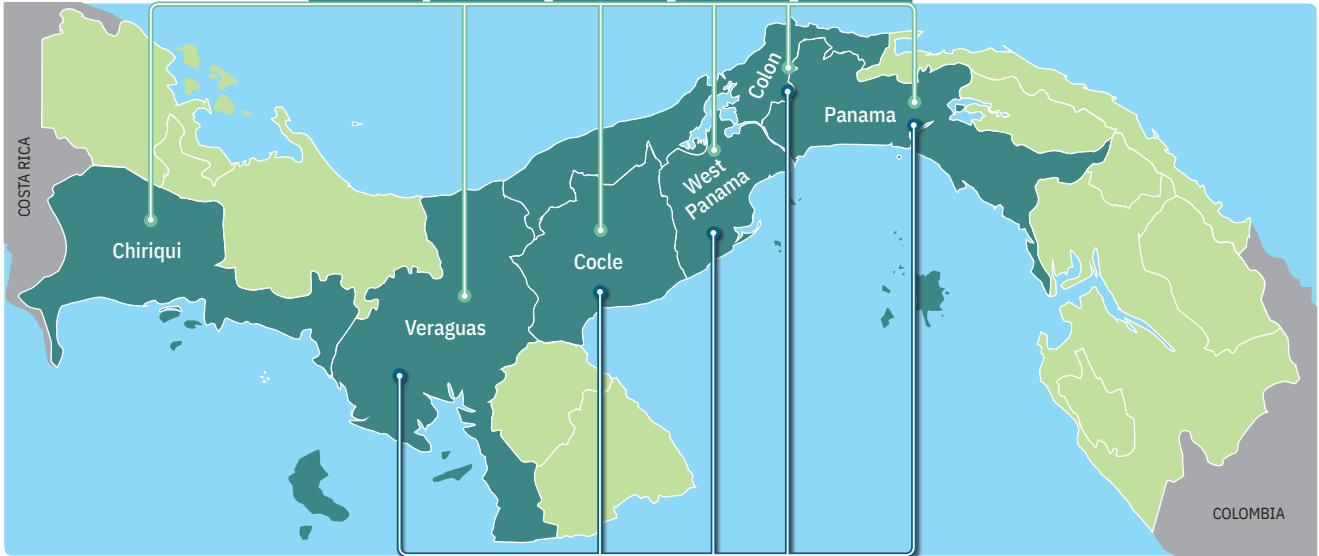
Security Operations

Pacifying My Neighborhood, Building the Future Program

This is an inter-agency cooperation and technical assistance agreement between the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Government, aimed at recovering and removing firearms, ammunition, and explosive devices from the streets to prevent crimes, by exchanging them for vouchers and coupons redeemable for food in local stores.

The Program is being implemented in the provinces of Panamá, Panamá Oeste, Colón, Coclé, Veraguas, and Chiriquí, in cooperation with local authorities. The achievements of the Program include:

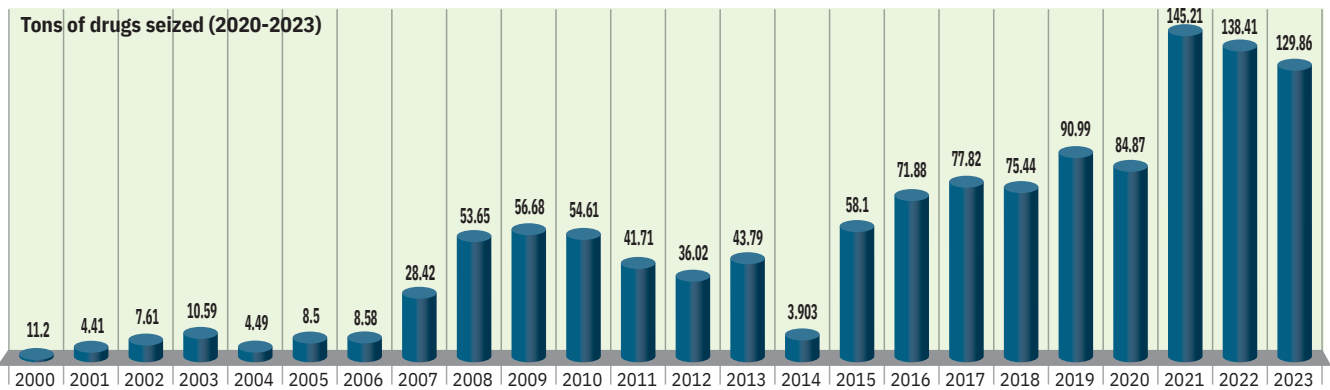
1,504 firearms recovered
 91,748 ammunitions recovered
 1,132 suppliers identified
 413 accessories recovered
 929 explosive devices and others, recovered



Joining Forces against Crime Program

It is a community-based social prevention program by the National Police, targeting at-risk communities in the provinces of Panamá, Colón, Panamá Oeste, Coclé, and Veraguas. The Program aims to intervene in community, school, and family socialization processes to reduce risk factors. In 2023, approximately 68,000 people participated in the Program, which included the following activities:

2,570 training sessions in useful-for-life skills
 464 cultural activities
 891 social actions
 908 school visits



Rescue Missions

The National Aero-Naval Service (SENAN) carries out rescue missions in cases of drifting vessels, aviation incidents, shipwrecks, and body recovery.

In 2023, 336 missions were carried out, rescuing 124 people. Together with the Ministry of Health, 286 people were evacuated.

Support Tasks

The National Police carried out support tasks following the fire in the Wala Indigenous Community, in the Wargandí region. During this, they distributed food, water, and food kits.

It has a **National Directorate of Environmental, Rural, and Tourist Police**, which conducts operations against illegal mining to protect rivers and natural resources.

“Panamá Solidario” Program

This Program was developed in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, aiming to mitigate the rise in poverty and inequality among the population. Through the Ministry of Public Security, in 2023, some 751 custody vehicles were provided to transport 826,257 food bags and ensure security at the Atlapa Distribution Center.

Source: Compilation based on data published by the Ministry of Public Security, *Memoria 2023*; *Informe de Estadísticas de Incautaciones de Drogas* (January 2024); and the official website of the Ministry of Public Security.