

Law Enforcement Agencies

Throughout the ages society has had to regulate the anti-social behavior of individuals and groups. Governments provide legal protections to society by defining crimes and setting-up organizations that enforce laws. There are many jurisdictional levels of law enforcement, each with its own unique geographical boundary, missions, entrance requirements, training, rank structure and procedures. Most jurisdictions (i.e., town, city, county, state, nation, planet, sub-sector, sector, quadrant or the Third Imperium) are composed of a combination of uniformed enforcers, as well as plain-clothes investigators.

Although, both the [military](#) and the police carry weapons and maintain order, their mission, equipment, training and tactics are very different. Police agencies attempt to use the minimal amount of force necessary to maintain the peace and quell disorder. The military, on the other hand, is trained to defeat the enemy using destructive weapons and tactics and is therefore unconcerned about potential [collateral damage](#) to innocent civilians or property. Military units consider police work to be a distraction from their primary goal, and when they attempt to operate as a police force, usually alienate the population that they serve. Conversely, police units function poorly in military roles.

Towns and rural farming communities are the least populated areas. They generally appoint or elect a chief of police, sheriff or marshal to maintain local law and order. These agencies may hire dozens of patrol officers to perform general police duties such as patrolling and traffic enforcement. Due of budget constraints smaller departments do not have the resources available to larger agencies, such as trained investigators, a crime laboratory or a SWAT team. Therefore, they depend upon the county or state government to provide such services as needed.

Keep in mind that the larger an agency becomes the more complex it is. Agencies have to recruit, train, supervise, promote, discipline, terminate and retire personnel over time, which requires some level of bureaucratic structure and budget. Policies, regulations, procedures and directives must be in place to do this successfully. This requires a civil service bureaucracy, irregardless of the form of government in place. The top layers of governmental offices may be elected or appointed, but the vast majority of enforcement and investigative personnel will fall under a civil service personnel system.

Listed below are the primary law enforcement agencies in my Traveller universe. They're listed in the order of size (city, county, state, nation, planet, sector and Imperium):

Town Watch (Lawman)

A small city, town or village is the lowest level of law enforcement. This could include a sheriff, constable, marshal, police unit or some form of citizens' patrol or crime watch. These offices can range from a single officer to several dozen with limited funding, equipment and training. For cases involving serious crimes expertise must be requested from county or state law enforcement agencies. Officers are recruited from other police agencies or trained at the county police academy. Standard police duties include general patrol, traffic enforcement, jail operations and displaying a presence.

Metropolitan Police Force (MPF)

The MPF is the primary law enforcement agency for a large city. Depending on the population size it may employ hundreds to tens of thousands of full-time uniformed patrol officers and plain-clothes detectives enforcing and investigating violations of city codes and state laws. The top leadership is either appointed by the city council or mayor, or elected by the citizenry, and therefore, often influenced by political considerations. It operates only within city limits unless it is in hot pursuit of a felon. It's organized into precincts station houses that report to a district or divisional headquarters (i.e., harbor district, metro division) who further reports to a centralized command complex (i.e., "one police plaza"). Such forces are further organized into specialized units such as aviation (helicopter or grav-craft), harbor (police boats and scuba teams), transit patrol, canine units, bomb squads, SWAT teams, internal affairs, crime scene investigation (CSI) units, detective squads and criminal intelligence units. Its' personnel are trained at the city police academy. The best examples are the New York City Police Department, Los Angeles Police Departments and the London Metropolitan Police Force.

County Sheriff's Department (CSD)

Counties (also sometimes referred to as parishes, boroughs or shires) are geographical, political and administrative sub-divisions of state governments receiving their budget from those coffers. Sheriffs departments operate only within the boundaries of their respective counties but provide overlapping law enforcement coverage to cities within their domain, along with unincorporated townships, rural farming and ranching communities and undeveloped wilderness areas such as county parks or nature reserves. The sheriff is generally an elected official, and therefore a politician who's often influenced by local politics. Depending upon the county's population, the department may employ hundreds to tens of thousands of full-time uniformed deputies and plain-clothes investigators enforcing and investigating violations of county codes and state laws. Its' mandate generally includes the management of the county jail system (providing jail services, not only to the county, but also to other law enforcement agencies on a fee basis), court security (the bailiff corps), judicial enforcement (county constables serving summons and confiscating property based upon a court order), crowd or riot control, civil disaster response, a mounted horse posse with dog teams which conduct manhunts for escaped convicts, perform wilderness search and rescue operations for lost hikers or missing children, as well as performing in a variety of ceremonial duties (sheriff' honor guard or posse). Its personnel are trained at either the county Sheriffs Academy or a state-run Law Enforcement Academy. Because the city police and sheriff departments have overlapping territorial boundaries, jurisdictional conflicts and even competition sometimes occurs. This can appear within the game as an on-going turf war or can become an obstruction to an investigation. The best examples are the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Dallas County Sheriff's Office.

State Highway Patrol (SHP) / State Constabulary

The state constabulary is the primary state police agency which employs tens to hundreds of thousands of full-time uniformed troopers and plain-clothed examiners enforcing state laws. It's organized into various departments including public safety (highway patrol and motor vehicle licensing offices), criminal investigations (state examiners), corrections (prison guard corps), fish & game (park or game wardens), and technical services (state crime lab). In frontier societies it may take the form of a horse-mounted roaming posse ('Texas Rangers' or the 'Royal Canadian Mounted Police') providing wilderness peacekeeping, along with tracking and apprehending wanted fugitives or escaped convicts. Its personnel are trained at the state's Law Enforcement Academy. The best examples include the Virginia State Police, the California Highway Patrol,

the Arizona Department of Public Safety, the Texas Department of Corrections or the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

National Marshal Service (NMS)

The NMS is the primary law enforcement agency of a national government. It may employ tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of full-time uniformed deputy marshals enforcing national laws and criminal court judgments. Marshals are primarily enforcers, not investigators. Their mandate includes the apprehension of wanted and escaped national fugitives, prisoner custody and transportation (i.e., “ConAir”), prison security, a counter-insurgency strike force (a large SWAT team) or hostage rescue teams, a national arson and explosives laboratory, judicial enforcement/asset forfeiture (court-ordered search & seizures), protection of the national courts along with its witnesses and juries, the protection of senior government officials, as well as control of national borders including customs and immigration enforcement. Its’ personnel are trained at the National Marshals Academy. The best examples are the US Marshal Service, the US Customs Service, the US Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS) (recently renamed Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE)), the US Parks Service, the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (ATF), the US Border Patrol, the US Bureau of Prisons, the US Transportation Security Administration, the US Coast Guard or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

National Criminal Investigative Agency (NCIA)

NCIA is the primary investigative agency of a nation. It employs tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of full-time plain-clothes agents charged with investigating crimes against national laws and treaties. Its primary mandate is the investigation of criminal activities by means of joint criminal taskforces including violent crimes (assassination of government officials, the murder of federal employees), narcotics (drug trafficking, narco-terrorism), computer crimes (cyber-fraud or child porn), treasury crimes (forgery or counterfeiting of federal documents or currency), organized crimes (racketeering or money laundering) and civil rights crimes (slavery, alien smuggling or labor-teering). It may operate a variety of specialized units such as covert surveillance teams, counter-intelligence teams, counter-terrorist units, legal attaché (assigned to overseas embassies and consulates), a behavioral science analysis unit, along with a national criminal forensics laboratory and federal law enforcement computer network with an extensive criminal database. Its agents are required to have a bachelor degree or higher and are trained at the NCIA Academy. The best examples are the US FBI, US Secret Service and the UK New Scotland Yard.

Planetary Defense Force (PDF) or United Nations Peacekeeping Force (UNPF)

The PPF employs tens to hundreds of thousands of full-time uniformed peacekeepers providing planetary defense duties as well as enforcing international laws and treaties. It has the responsibility of general peacekeeping, emergency disaster response, executive protection of government officials, counter-terrorism, inspection and monitoring of arms control agreements, conducting raids against hostile insurgence forces, as well as patrolling international borders to control smuggling. This is a large para-military force employing heavy weapons and armored vehicles. The spaceborne element may consist of a fleet of system defense boats, starfighters and orbital weapons facilities. Its personnel are trained at the Planetary Peacekeeper’s Academy with its officer corps educated at colleges, universities and military service academies. The best examples are the French Foreign Legion, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force, colonial warriors of *Battlestar Galactica* and Earth Force of *Babylon 5*.

International Criminal Intelligence Service (ICIS)

The ICIS employs thousands to hundreds of thousands of full-time plain-clothes inspectors providing criminal intelligence and technical surveillance support to the international community. It also coordinates planetary law enforcement efforts regarding counter-terrorism, drug enforcement and human rights violations spanning national borders. Its personnel are required to have a bachelor degree and are referred to as inspectors. It recruits from other law enforcement agencies but operates an ICID Academy. The best examples include INTERPOL (International Police Organization) and the United Nations Humans Rights Investigative Agency.

Colonial Star Patrol (CSP) & Colonial Guard (CG)

The CSP and CG are the primary enforcement arm of the Colonial Authority and employs tens of thousands to millions of uniformed personnel stationed on member worlds. They operate as a military organization stationed through out the Imperium. They're charged with patrolling, not only orbital and inter-system space, but the interstellar trade routes between member planets. They're organized into military battalions or squadrons functioning similar to a National Guard or State Militia. They enforce planet, system, subsector, sector and Imperial laws and treaties at the bequest of the Imperial Representative (IR). The CSP maintains a strike force (a battalion-sized special operations unit) for raids against the organized crime strongholds, referred to as "the Cartel", and various terrorist and insurgency groups. They operate the colonial prison system and maintain a fleet of armed system defense boats, corvettes and frigates along with a network of orbital weapons platforms and planet-based defensive weapons sites. Their mission includes the inspection of inbound merchant shipping, the prevention of piracy, curtailing of smuggling and tech-running, maintaining space navigation and communication systems, conducting safety-related vessel inspections, quelling interplanetary disputes and providing search and rescue services (in essence, they function much as a space-based "coast guard"). Its' personnel are trained at the Colonial Service Academy. The best example includes the colonial warriors of *Battlestar Galactica* or Earth Force of *Babylon 5*.

Colonial Police Authority (CPA)

Imperial Rangers

Imperial Ministry of Justice (IMoJ)

The IMoJ is organized into several distinct branches: civil branch, criminal branch, corporate (anti-trust) branch, Echo branch, Inspectorate branch, judicial branch and the special branch. They employ millions of plain-clothes Imperial investigators called "Sentinels" operating on Imperial planets charged with enforcing Imperial laws and treaties. Special branch's primary mandate is to prevent counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency directed against the Imperium. The Inspectorate is responsible for investigating the abuses and wrong doings of the Imperial nobility by employing sentinels who are themselves high level nobles with a decree from the Emperor giving them authority to arrest nobles if evidence of their abuses or corruption comes to light. There's also a "Psi Corps", as in *Babylon 5*, which is referred to as "Echo" branch. The Imperial sentinels work closely with Imperial "Guardians" (Imperial prosecutors) in bringing criminals and terrorist to justice. Sentinels require a bachelor degree or higher and are trained at the Imperial Academy of Justice. The best examples are the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the US National Security Agency (NSA).

The Imperial Guard

The Imperial Guard is a unique service within the Imperium with many internal security roles (and some law enforcement ones), including the protection of the Emperor (and the Royal Family), security of the Imperial Senate, along with the rest of the Imperial government (including the various Ministries, Courts, Agencies and Prisons). They also operate a unique group of “Imperial Marshals” who work in small teams patrolling Imperial restricted worlds, Imperial research outpost and wilderness preserves. They enforce Imperial laws against illegal mining, poaching and other forms of resource plundering, track down Imperial fugitives, and during times of war, act as both planet watchers and pathfinders for the military forces. The Imperial Guard is reported to be divided into two major branches: the White Guard and the Black Guard. The White Guard is the public face providing security and performing ceremonial functions. The Black Guard, on the other hand, is a purely military force with a much more sinister role. Its’ reported million man force provides the Emperor with the ultimate hammer which he uses to defeat his military and political enemies.