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Francopol

Alain Tousignant, Chief Superintendent, Acting Chief Learning Officer, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; and Vice President, Americas-Francopol

In times of globalization, increased partnership at the international level is essential to successful law enforcement. On this basis, the Sûreté du Québec (SQ), the École nationale de police du Québec (ÉNPQ), and the Police nationale française together have laid the foundation for the international police training network, Francopol.

Sharing French as a common language, the global network extends membership to some 350,000 police officers interested in exchanging knowledge and information to assist in the development of new trends in police training.

Francopol's mission is to promote the sharing of best practices, research, and ideas on police training and expertise. The network officially launched in September 2008 at the Museum of Civilization in Quebec, Canada, during an international conference held at the ÉNPQ. Close to 200 representatives from Canada, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Monaco, Benin, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Romania, Haiti, Ivory Coast, and Chad attended the conference.

"Through the creation of networks, modern police organizations can adapt more effectively to the evolution of crime and, thus, better serve the citizens. Francopol allows francophone police officers and research workers to interact with international experts in their own language and to discover innovative methods developed in la Francophonie," said Claude Levac, Secretary-General of Francopol.¹

The Foundation

Francopol's 13 founding members all have committed to promoting the network within their borders. They include the Académie de Police Emilien Vaes, Belgium; Académie de Police de Savatan, Switzerland; the Canadian Police College (CPC), Canada; ÉNPQ, Canada; Institut suisse de police, Switzerland; Gendarmerie nationale, France; Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada; Police cantonale neuchâteloise et écoles romandes de police, Switzerland; Police fédérale, Belgium; Police Grand-Ducale, Luxembourg; Police nationale, France; Sûreté publique de Monaco, Monaco; and SQ, Canada.

The network's executive committee, also elected during the inaugural conference, includes Émile Pérez, President (Police nationale, France); Thierry Dierick, Vice President for Europe (Police fédérale, Belgium); Assistant Commissioner Pierre Ménard, Vice President of the Americas (RCMP);² Alain Bauer, Vice President of the Associations (Observatoire national de la délinquance, France); Inspector Claude Levac, Secretary General (SQ); and Pierre St-Antoine, Treasurer (ÉNPQ).

Francopol is paving the way for greater communication and cooperation at both the international and national levels. Since Francopol's creation, there has been extensive cooperation among the founding members and a genuine desire to leverage collective training expertise and knowledge at a global level.

All French-speaking police officers and organizations in the Americas are encouraged to help further define and expand Francopol's success. The potential benefits and opportunities gained through participation in this network can result in more effective policing in respective communities and countries.

Global Collaborators

Through volunteer cooperation, the newly formed police training network serves as a center of excellence for the sharing and the emergence of new trends in policing, based on best practices. To realize its mission, Francopol relies on collaboration with the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).

Present at the September 2008 launch was Hugo Sada, the OIF's delegate for peace, democracy, and human rights. According to Mr. Sada, the Francopol network will contribute to the deployment of OIF programs in the areas of international development, conflict prevention, and peace consolidation. Thanks to the OIF's support, Francopol is one of La Francophonie's international networks working to consolidate the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Building a Network of Success

Francopol Canada is a national component of the international network and works to improve Canadian police practices through exchanges between the research and practice communities. Representatives from SQ, ÉNPQ, CPC, RCMP, Ontario Provincial Police, and New Brunswick Public Safety compose Francopol Canada.

During the Quebec conference in 2008, the CPC in Ottawa, Ontario, agreed to take the lead for Francopol Canada.

Under the direction of the CPC's Inspector Raymond Duquette, the goals of Francopol Canada are to facilitate virtual exchanges, increase cooperation, foster networking during gatherings, and increase research and monitoring activities in the French language. "The great thing about Francopol is that the fruits of all activities—regional, national and international—are made available to the entire policing community via the Carrefour Francopol de l'Information et du Savoir, a site to which all member organizations will have access," said Inspector Duquette.³

Francopol Canada's first national conference was held at the CPC in October 2009. Experts from the fields of policing and academia, as well as representatives from ethno-cultural communities, shared their perspectives on the theme Police Services in a Multicultural Society, as well as on other topics including Diversity in Canada: A Picture and Demographic Trends; Cultural Communities and Police: Diverse Perspectives; Response from the Field of Policing: Strategies; and Police Workforce: Questions on the Management of Diversity.

The conference hosted the francophone and francophiles working in the field of public security, including police officers and managers who have an interest in the topic, institutions offering a training program to police officers and future police officers, research centers, institutions, police associations, government departments, and other public organizations working closely with the police community.

The level of interest of Canadian police officers toward Francopol provides momentum for Francopol Canada to pursue its efforts in developing and expanding the international network. In 2010, the plan is to offer a number of activities and projects of interest to the national and international francophone and francophile police community.

For more information about Francopol, please visit www.francopol.org. □

Notes:

¹Francopol Canada, "Francopol Canada Holds First National Conference: October 13-15, 2009," press release, October 8, 2009, http://www.cpc.gc.ca/francopol/media_en.html (accessed February 10, 2010).

²Former Vice President of the Americas, A/Commr. Pierre Ménard, retired from the RCMP in August 2009. His replacement as VP of the Americas for Francopol is Chief Superintendent Alain Tousignant of the RCMP.

³Inspector Raymond Duquette, Interview for in-house articles submitted to different police magazines, Canadian Police College, Ontario, Canada, March 26, 2009.

Please cite as:

Alain Tousignant, "Francopol," *The Police Chief* 77 (March 2010): 18, http://policechiefmagazine.org/magazine/index.cfm?fuseaction=display&article_id=2034&issue_id=32010 (insert access date).

[Top](#)

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[Return to Article](#)

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The official publication of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The online version of the Police Chief Magazine is possible through a grant from the IACP Foundation. To learn more about the IACP Foundation, click here.

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