



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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25 October 2007

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Mexico: The Federal Investigation Agency (Agencia Federal de Investigacion, AFI); its function and duties; whether AFI agents use identified uniforms and vehicles; whether AFI agents still wear uniforms and use vehicles that sport the markings of the now-defunct Federal Judicial Police (Policia Judicial Federal, PJF)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Established on 1 November 2001, the Federal Investigation Agency (Agencia Federal de Investigacion, AFI) replaced the "notoriously corrupt" Federal Judicial Police (Policia Judicial Federal, PJF) (Reames 2007, 119) as the federal police force responsible for investigations of federal crimes such as kidnapping and drug-trafficking (DDHS 24 Sept. 2007). As stipulated in Article 21 of the Mexican Constitution, judicial police officers assist the Federal Office of the Public Prosecutor (Ministerio Publico Federal) in their investigations (ibid.; Professor 11 Sept. 2007).

Positioned within the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic (Procuraduria General de la Republica, PGR), the AFI is organized into six divisions: law enforcement planning (*planeacion policial*), regional law enforcement deployment (*despliegue regional policial*), law enforcement investigation (*investigacion policial*), tactical analysis (*analisis tactico*), special operations (*operaciones especiales*), and INTERPOL Mexico (*World Police Encyclopedia* 9 Dec. 2005, 555; Mexico n.d.). As well, AFI has three support sections: administration and services (*administracion y servicios*), legal affairs (*asuntos juridicos*), and technical services (*servicios tecnicos*) (ibid.; *World Police Encyclopedia* 9 Dec. 2005, 555).

Statistics from 2004 noted that the AFI had a budget of 2.62 billion Mexican pesos [240,018,200 Canadian dollars (Canada 3 Oct. 2007)], which amounted to approximately 33 percent of the total PGR budget (Reames 2007, 124). According to Mexican law enforcement expert Ben Reames, in 2004, "the AFI's forces consisted of more than 5,000 judicial police officers, 1,600 investigators, and 450 specialists" (ibid.).

Regarding AFI uniforms and vehicles, in 11 September 2007 correspondence, a professor and researcher working on law enforcement issues for a national research institute based in Mexico City, noted that AFI agents, depending on their assignment, may or may not wear uniforms. For example, agents involved in [translated] "undercover" (*secretas*) investigations generally do not wear uniforms (Professor 11 Sept. 2007). Uniforms are military-style outfits in black, grey or navy blue and black boots (ibid.). AFI vehicles are identified with a specific number and with the words "Agencia Federal de Investigacion," "AFI,"

or "Policia Federal" (Federal Police) (ibid. 20 Sept. 2007). A representative from the academic-led research organization Democracy, Human Rights and Security (Democracia, Derechos Humanos y Seguridad, DDHS) based in Mexico City and specializing in police and public security issues in Mexico also noted that AFI uniforms and vehicles are identified with the AFI insignia and the letters AFI; in some cases uniforms bear only the letters AFI (DDHS 24 Sept. 2007).

In September 2007 correspondence, three sources specializing in law enforcement in Mexico all noted that, to their knowledge, AFI agents do not wear uniforms or use vehicles that sport the markings of the now-defunct Federal Judicial Police (Policia Judicial Federal, PJF) (ibid.; INSYDE 20 Sept. 2007; Professor 20 Sept. 2007). Nevertheless, the Professor commented that imitation police uniforms are sold in established shops and that it is the common practice of drug-traffickers and other criminals to use fake police uniforms (ibid.). In addition, a United States (US) government travel advisory for Mexico warns travellers to be "wary of persons representing themselves as police officers or other officials," and cites cases of crimes committed in northern cities by individuals wearing police uniforms (13 Sept. 2007).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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