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## BELIZE

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*Area:* 22,963 sq. km

*Population:* 145,353

*Capital:* Belmopan

*Governor-General:* Dame Elmira Minita Gordon

*Minister of Home Affairs:* Carl L. B. Rogers

*Emergency Services:* 90

Belize is divided into six provinces (chief cities in brackets):

Belize (Belize City)	Orange Walk (Orange Walk)
Cayo (San Ignacio)	Stann Creek (Stann Creek)
Corozal (Corozal)	Toledo (Punta Gorda)

### INTRODUCTION

In 1886 a British Honduras Constabulary Force was formed becoming the British Honduras Police Force in 1902. When the territory achieved independence as Belize, the name of the force was changed accordingly.

### ORGANIZATION

Controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs and headed by a Commissioner of Police, the Belize Police Force consists of three territorial divisions: Eastern (including the Belmopan and Belize City urban areas), Central and Western. Police headquarters is at the former capital, Belize City, although the Commissioner lives at Belmopan. Personnel strength is about 500.

The Police has three major operational branches: General Duties, Crime Investigation and Special. The latter is the country's internal security organ. The former Police Special Force became the Belize Defence Force in January 1978.

Police Headquarters, Queen Street, Belize City (2222)

### OPERATIONS AND EQUIPMENT

Half of the population of Belize is Creole, and there are significant black, Indian, Chinese and European minorities. The lack of racial homogeneity and the subsequent social problems, high cost of living, an outstanding territorial claim by Guatemala and widespread drug trafficking and poverty, add up to high crime rates, which the police are unable to cope with. Thefts and drug offences are most common, but violent crimes are by no means rare, particularly in Belize City.