

Crime Fighting in ARABIA



• *Detective Constable Kathy Ward, of Southern Region, spent most of 1990 in Dubai where her husband was on a short-term United Nations appointment with the Dubai Government. She took the opportunity to find out what life is like for a police officer there.*

DUBAI is one of seven emirates forming the United Arab Emirates (UAE), an alliance formed in 1971 which has since become a successful liaison of Arab states.

It is a thriving multicultural metropolis, although only 30 per cent of the population is actually nationals. The remainder comprises mainly Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, Filipinos and Western nationalities.

The country has progressed remarkably in the years since federation and has a police force of about 5,000 members.

My telephone inquiries led me to an appointment with "Kanil Jemma" at the Dubai Police College, situated in the seaside area of Jumeirah where most of the expatriates live in luxurious villas.

The guards were reluctant to allow me through the college gates. After all, what would a Westerner, and a woman at that, want with "Kanil Jemma"?

It was only after being ushered into an enormous office and receiving his card that I realised my appointment was with (Lieutenant) Colonel Juma, the director of the college.

Such an occurrence is fairly common in the Arab way of life. There are no restrictions on anyone who feels justified in calling on the appropriate official at any time to put forward a point of view or complaint. It is considered quite acceptable behaviour.

I spent a very interesting morning with Colonel Juma and the Dean of the college, Dr Elwi Amgad Aly,

both of whom were very helpful and informative.

The College

The college, the pride of the UAE, was officially opened on 1 April 1989. Although each emirate has its own police force, their members are all trained at this central college and may transfer readily between emirates.

The college has more of a military emphasis than we are used to in Australia. All recruits wear a uniform while in the college and on graduation they wear the dress appropriate to the duties performed. "Plainclothes" may be a suit, the Arabian white robe and headdress, the Pakistani pyjama-type suit or other Western-style attire.

College facilities, in addition to classrooms, include restaurants and dormitories, a mosque, a supermarket, a library-cum-auditorium, conference hall, swimming pool, cafeteria and medical clinic.

There are four levels of entry for a budding police officer — officer cadet, non-commissioned officer, constable and specialist.

All applicants must have successfully completed secondary education and usually specialists will be expected to have some form of tertiary qualifications. With the exception of the specialists, they must be Muslims, having embraced the Islamic religion and way of life.

Before being accepted, applicants are subjected to medical, physical, intellectual, educational and psychological assessment, as well as a comprehensive interview.

Women are eligible to join and

make up about 5 per cent of the total membership. It was difficult to ascertain whether they just don't recruit as many women as men, or simply that women do not consider it a particularly attractive occupation.

Generally, women undergo the same training as, and with, the men — something unusual for this part of the world. They do however, have specific physical training.

They are represented in all categories and all ranks. Promotion prospects for them are the same as for men.

The usual eligible age of entry for all applicants is 18-24 but this is flexible for specialists and varies with their skills.

All police officers, whether commissioned or not, receive a very attractive salary package, which starts at 1,000 dirhams (about \$A370) per month for a constable. Normal shifts are eight hours, six days a week.

Although they don't get shift allowances, they do receive generous skills and qualifications allowances. Housing is free, either in a provided house or through a housing allowance. They also receive health and medical benefits and dependants' allowances.

Cadet Officers

The officer cadet category is open only to UAE nationals. They are given a four-year live-in training course and on completion, are qualified both as commissioned police officers and lawyers. The course covers police studies, including the usual physical, firearms, first aid, drill, swimming and cav-



Lieutenant - Colonel Juman Aman,
Director of the Dubai Police College.



The architectural splendour of the Dubai Police College

ally training, Islamic studies, English language, with an emphasis on English legal terminology, personal status of non-Muslims, both Christians and Jews (strange since you can't even get an entry visa if you've been to a Jewish country in the past 10 years), sociology, criminal investigation, public relations, psychiatric studies, police operations, narcotics, traffic and accidents, computer training, evidence, report-writing and communication skills, national security and personnel administration as well as the normal tertiary legal degree subjects.

An interesting thing about traffic is that anyone involved in a car accident, no matter how minor, is required to stay put, leave the cars where they are and await police attendance. This usually doesn't take long as police patrols are everywhere. In any event, Arabs driving past in their imported cars use their mobile car phones to report the accident. The flow of traffic suffers severely, but no one seems to care.

Drink-driving is prohibited and even the smell of alcohol on your breath can lead to prosecution.

The law practised is common law, constitutional law and the law of the Koran (Qu'ran).

There are about 200 officer cadets currently at the college. Each is under an obligation to serve for at least five years on completion of the training.

An officer is entitled to two months' annual leave, and promotions would normally occur every three years on successful completion of the appropriate course.

NCO level

Applicants for non-commissioned officer level also must be UAE nationals. They do a six-month condensed version of the officer cadets' course, without the law degree. It is similar to that covered on joining the AFP. There are currently about 800 such recruits in the college.

They are obliged to serve at least three years on completion of training.

NCOs are entitled to 40 days' recreation leave per year. Promotion is by way of further courses at the college and only those who are considered to be working satisfactorily will be nominated for such courses.

Constable level

Nationals of Gulf Co-operation Council countries - UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and Yemen - are eligible for the general enlistment/constable entry level.

These recruits do a course similar to that of NCOs, the only real difference being that, not being UAE nationals, they will not be allowed to progress beyond constable level. There are currently about 300 recruits at the college in this category.

They also are obliged to serve at least three years on completion of training. They are entitled to 30 days' recreation leave per year.

Specialist training

The specialist entry category is for any person who has a skill or profession that is useful to the police force, such as experienced members of international police

forces, forensic experts, handwriting experts and photographers.

These 'recruits' train for one year, three days a week at the college and three days on the job. After that, they may return to the college perhaps three days a month for ongoing training.

Currently there are 33 recruits undergoing such training.

There is no real distinction with regard to detective status. If you are working in the criminal investigation area, then your responsibilities reflect the training you have undergone.

All members can be retired by the government after 15 years of service, but a member may stay up to a total period of 25 years by mutual agreement.



Recruits hard at study.