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PREMIER CONGRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES EN MATIÈRE DE
PRÉVENTION DU CRIME ET DE TRAITEMENT DES DÉLINQUANTS
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PERSONNEL

LE RECRUTEMENT, LA FORMATION ET LE STATUT
DU PERSONNEL PÉNITENTIAIRE EN BELGIQUE

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NATIONS UNIES

Summary

A. — CATEGORIES OF INSTITUTIONAL STAFF AND FUNCTIONS OF EACH

Institutional staff is divided into five categories, according to the functions performed:

- 1° supervisory staff : warders, senior warders and chief warders ;
- 2° technical staff responsible for organizing the work of the persons under detention : engineers and technicians ;
- 3° specialist staff : teachers, instructors, social assistants, physicians, nursing orderlies and chaplains ;
- 4° administrative staff : registrars, accountants, clerks and general office staff ;
- 5° superintendent staff : directors, assistant directors and house masters.

B. — STATUS OF STAFF

1° General

The institutional staff members are civilians and enjoy civil service status under a system comprising four grades of staff.

The conditions for advancement to the next grade are satisfactory service and the passing of the required tests. A special examination is held for staff members who having served in one grade for four years, wish to advance to the next higher grade.

2° Remuneration

The salary level corresponds to that of other civil servants with equivalent training and qualifications. Directors, assistant directors and house masters receive free lodging, heat and light. Chief warders receive free lodging.

The retirement age for institutional staff is sixty-five, and the amount of the pension depends on the length of service.

3° Organization of the service

The working week is 41-1/2 hours for the administrative staff and 48 hours for the supervisory staff. Day duty is from 6 a. m. to 2 p. m. and from 2 p. m. to 10 p. m. Night duty runs from 10 p. m. to 6 a. m. The night shift is worked by the same category of staff as the day shift.

The amount of annual leave varies according to seniority and grade. The minimum is fifteen days and the maximum thirty days.

4° Disciplinary action

Cautionary penalties (warning, reprimand and severe reprimand) are imposed by the immediate superior; other penalties (withholding of salary,

transfer, suspension, reduction in salary, demotion, forced resignation and dismissal) are imposed by the Minister or by the King. The staff member must first be heard or invited to explain; he may be assisted by counsel and may appeal against any penalty exceeding a severe reprimand.

5° Protection of professional interests

Staff members may form trade unions and are represented on joint consultation committees. There is a special sub-committee for the Penal Administration which gives its opinion on all matters concerning the staff.

C. — RECRUTEMENT

State civil servants are recruited by a central board which holds the prescribed tests.

The principal conditions which a candidate must satisfy are the following:

- 1° age : under thirty or thirty-five years ;
- 2° health : declared fit for the duties to be performed ;
- 3° due compliance with laws concerning military service ;
- 4° good character ;
- 5° possession of an educational diploma, as follows :
 - first category : higher education ;
 - second category : higher secondary education ;
 - third category : lower secondary education ;
 - fourth category : elementary education ;
- 6° Belgian nationality and possession of full civic and political rights ;
- 7° passing of the entrance tests ; satisfactory service during the probationary period (1 to 3 years) ; passing of the final entrance examination held at the end of the probationary period.

D. — PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

The professional training of a staff member does not begin until he has passed the final entrance examination. Theoretical courses in the history of penology, the principles of criminal and constitutional law, the judicial system, general prison organization and prison labour have been organized for warders. Those courses have been followed by a ten-day internship in a specialized institution.

Days of study are in addition organized in the special institutions, especially for the superintendent staff.

The Penal Administration is hopeful that theoretical and practical courses to supplement the training of all staff and prepare candidates for promotion tests can be organized in the near future.

This archiving project is a collaborative effort between United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and American Society of Criminology, Division of International Criminology. Any comments or questions should be directed to Cindy J. Smith at CJSmithphd@comcast.net or Emil Wandzilak at emil.wandzilak@unodc.org.