

Topic V: Expanding the Recruitment and Promotion of Female Police Officers

As the utilization of competent female police officers is essential to the maintenance of public safety, it is important to expand their recruitment and promotion.

As the birth rate in society continues to decline, there are concerns about the possibility of a decrease in the number of applicants of police recruitment exams. In order to maintain the quality of police officers and invigorate the police organization by securing opportunities for female police officers to fully apply their abilities, police are actively expanding the level of recruitment and promotion of capable and competent female police officers.

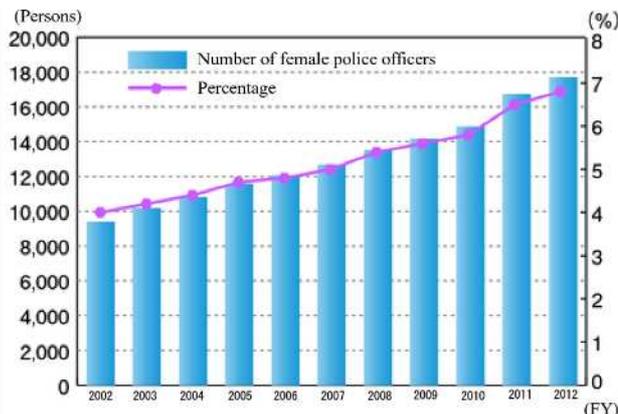
(1) Status of Female Police Officers

1) Expanding Recruitment

Police are actively engaged in the recruitment of female police officers. Over 1,000 female police officers have been recruited every year since 2002, and the number of female police officers is increasing yearly. About 1,200 were recruited in 2011 (10.9% of total newly recruited officers), and as of April 1, 2012, there were 17,700 active female police officers⁸ in the prefectural police forces nationwide, accounting for 6.8% of all police officers⁹.

In order to recruit motivated and capable women, all prefectural police are actively engaged in recruitment activities targeting women, such as sending female police officers to career fairs. In addition, the NPA is supporting the activities of the prefectural police by creating recruitment pamphlets for female police officers and other efforts..

Trend in the number of female police officers in prefectural police and percentage of total police officers



Note 1: Figures shown are as of April 1 of each fiscal year.
 Note 2: From FY2011 onwards, officers on maternity leave have been included.



Female police officer recruitment pamphlet

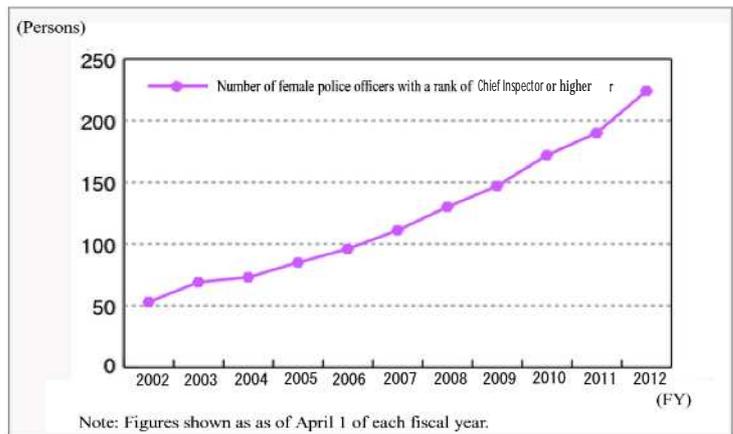
⁸: Includes officers on maternity leave
⁹: As of April 1, 2012, other than police officers, there were 26,700 general personnel employed in prefectural police nationwide, of which about 12,000 were female personnel.

2) Expanding Promotion

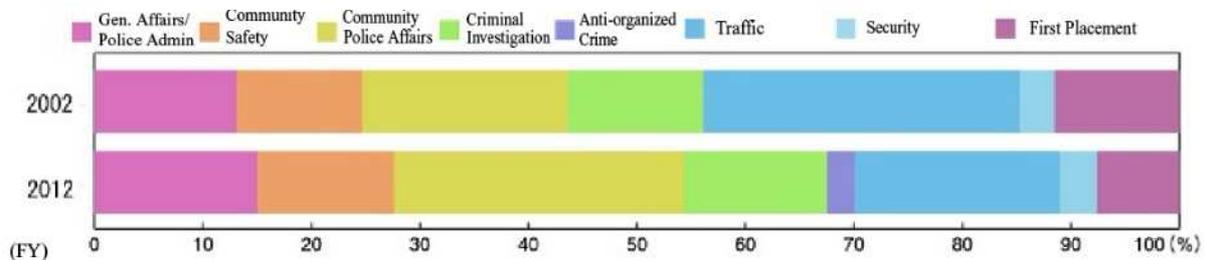
Progress is being made in the promotion of female police officers to senior ranks. As of April 1, 2012, the number of female police officers recruited by the prefectural police and promoted to the rank of Chief Inspector or higher was 224¹⁰, with some officers appointed as Chief of Police Station and Chief of Criminal Investigation Sections of police stations.

Regarding the range of job categories, many female officers in the past were assigned to the traffic sections. However, the percentage of female officers assigned to other fields has been increasing. In addition, as well as utilizing the capabilities and characteristics of female police officers in investigations and

Trend in the number of female police officers employed by the prefectural police with a rank of Chief Inspector or higher (2002-2012)(FY)



Status of placement of female police officers by department in prefectural police



victim support for cases in which women fall victim to sexual offenses or spousal violence, appointments for female officers are expanding into all areas such as measures against organized crime groups (Boryokudan) and police escorts.

3) Creating a Comfortable Working Environment for Female Police Officers

Along with the expansion of recruitment and promotion of female police officers, police are also working to create comfortable working environments for female police officers by providing sleeping quarters for women in Police Boxes (Koban) and introducing subsidies for officers who are in need of baby-sitters.

(2) Efforts to Expand the Level of Recruitment and Promotion

In February 2011, in the interests of ensuring police officer quality and working towards a gender-equal society, the NPA instructed the prefectural police forces to draft plans for the expansion of recruitment and promotion of female police officers. Following these instructions, by

December 2011, all the prefectural police had drafted plans that incorporated targets to raise the overall percentage of female police officers up to 10% by April 2023 (nationwide average).

Other than working towards expanding recruitment, the plans also incorporated specific approaches in relation to:

- Efforts to expand opportunities for promotion such as expansion of assignment to include Police Boxes (Koban).
- Efforts to secure enforcement capabilities, such as the enhancement of knowledge in relation to tasks frequently undertaken by female police officers, such as investigating sexual offense and handling female detainees
- Efforts to create comfortable working environments for female police officers such as the development of materials/equipment and facilities that are easy for female police officers to use

In the future, each prefectural police force will press ahead with the recruitment and promotion of female police officers in accordance with the

¹⁰: Of which 35 have been promoted to Superintendent

plans they have drafted, conduct reviews of progress status, and revise plans as necessary.

Column: A sense of pride as a police officer

Superintendent, Yuko Osafune, Chief of Bibai Police Station, Sapporo area, Hokkaido

The employment situation for women back when I was first appointed seemed to be that, with the exception of some job types, most women would work for a short number of years and employment generally ended with marriage. Around this time, the Hokkaido police began recruiting female police officers, and having grown up watching my father, who was also a police officer, I thought to myself, “Now that’s a lifetime career that a woman can pursue. I want to fight dishonesty and evil, and protect people from crime and accidents.” I applied without any doubts. 35 years have passed since my appointment and I can still clearly recall the joy I felt the first time I put my arms through the sleeves of my uniform. 35 years ago, the areas that female police officers could work in were certainly limited, but now, female police officers are active in many departments and senior female officers are not uncommon. Although the duties of the Chief of Police Station, the highest position of responsibility in maintaining public safety within one’s own jurisdiction, is a heavy responsibility, the creation of a community where people can live in peace, free from crime and accidents is a mission my colleagues and I will apply our full efforts to fulfill.

