



The National Commissioner of Police



# THE ICELANDIC POLICE

## A historical sketch

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# 200 YEARS OF THE POLICE IN ICELAND

## *Foreword by the National Commissioner*

It was 200 years ago this month that the first uniformed policeman was seen in Iceland, and the anniversary is being marked in various ways. Of course, law enforcement in Iceland goes back much further, as the regional administrative officers (the sheriffs, later district commissioners, assisted by the directors of the parishes) exercised what were essentially police functions from early times.

A commemorative coin and a special postage stamp have been issued to mark the bicentenary, and an exhibition has been mounted surveying the history of the police in Iceland. Local Police Commissioners and police officers all over the country are taking part in the celebrations in one way or another.



*Photo: Ragnar Axelsson*

This booklet presents a short account of the origins, development and structure of the Icelandic police, in words and pictures. Naturally, in the space available it is only possible to trace the main features.

I should like to send my best wishes to all the police commissioners and other members of the force on the occasion of this bicentenary, and also to thank all those involved for their contribution to the preparations for the celebrations.

Finally I should like to thank the Government of Iceland for its support.

April 2003

Haraldur Johannessen