COLOMBIA

GENERAL

Area . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1,283,000 sq. km.
Population (estimation xi-1928) . 7,968,000
Density per sq. km. . . . . . . . . . . 6.2
Length of railway system (xii-1928) . 2,470 km.

I.
Army.

A. SUPREME MILITARY AUTHORITY AND ITS ORGANS

The supreme command of the Army is vested in the President of the Republic, who may delegate his powers as provided by the Constitution and the laws of the country.

I. MINISTRY OF WAR.

1. The Ministry of War consists of the following branches, which are directly under the Minister:

A. Minister's Secretariat.

B. No. 1 Department : Secretariat and four Sections (Personnel, Pensions, Justice, Chaplains).

The Personnel Section has charge of the Army archives.

C. No. 2 Department : General Staff, which includes the 5 following sections:


The Staff College is under this Department.

D. No. 3 Department : General Inspectorate of the Army, which includes 5 Sections : Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers and Aviation.

Under this Department are the military schools, viz : cadet school, flying school, N. C. O's school.
E. No. 4 Department: Material, which includes 3 sections; armaments and munitions, clothing, equipment and barrack stores, quarters and buildings.

Under this Department are placed the ammunition factory, the Army workshops, the clothing factories of the Ministry of War, the armament and ammunition depots, and the clothing and equipment depots.

F. No. 5 Department: Health Services, consisting of 2 sections: medical and food supplies; remount and veterinary service, and forage.

G. Independent Section: Accountancy and Treasury.

H. Independent Section: River flotilla.

J. Two Frontier Commands.

2. Inspectorate-General of the Army.

The following are attached to the Central Department of the Ministry of War: The Inspectorate-General of the Army and the various military schools, namely, the Staff College, the Military School for Cadets, the Military School of Aviation and three Non-Commissioned Officers’ Schools. This Department is also responsible for the river fleet.

The Inspector-General has the rank of general commanding division. He supervises the execution of orders emanating from the Legislature, the Government, or the Ministry of War. He must inspect every command, military institution and army unit at least once a year.

3. Higher Commands.

The divisional commands are responsible for the training of officers and men. They direct the administrative services of the divisional troops and are charged with the maintenance of barracks, arms, etc. These commands constitute the recruiting centres of the military areas under them. A divisional command is organised in 5 sections.

Section I is responsible for the direction of military training in the division and, in general, for all work dealt with by a divisional staff, such as preparations for mobilisation, the concentration of troops, etc.

Section II deals with all questions not specifically allotted to any other section.

Section III deals with matters connected with military justice in the division.

Section IV is responsible for the inspection and direction of the administrative services of the division and everything connected with barracks, equipment, etc.

Section V deals with recruiting in the military area of the division.

B. Territorial Military Districts

The country is divided into five military zones corresponding to the five divisions constituting the army. These zones are divided into as many recruiting areas as there are units, and these areas are subdivided into military districts, each of which includes a certain number of municipalities.
The five divisions and their headquarters are stationed at Bogotá, Barranquilla, Cali, Medellin and Bucaramanga respectively. The headquarters of the cavalry brigade are at Bogotá.

C. COMPOSITION OF THE ARMY

The Army is composed of 5 Divisions:

The First Division includes:
1 Divisional headquarters’ staff, 3 infantry battalions, 1 group of cavalry, 1 group of artillery, 1 railway battalion and 1 medical company.

The Second Division includes:
1 Divisional headquarters’ staff, 3 battalions of infantry and 1 railway battalion.

The Third Division includes:
1 Divisional headquarters’ staff, 3 battalions of infantry, 1 group of cavalry, 1 group of artillery and 1 railway battalion.

The Fourth Division includes:
1 Divisional headquarters, 3 battalions of infantry and 1 battalion of sappers.

The Fifth Division includes:
1 Divisional headquarters’ staff, 3 battalions of infantry, 1 squadron of cavalry, the headquarters’ staff of the Northern Frontier and the headquarters’ staff of the Southern Frontier.

A battalion of infantry consists of 1 headquarters, 3 rifle companies and 1 heavy machine-gun company with 4 machine-guns.
1 battalion also includes 1 company of garrison infantry.
A group of cavalry consists of 1 headquarters and 2 cavalry squadrons.
A group of artillery consists of 1 headquarters and 24-gun batteries.
A battalion of sappers consists of 1 headquarters and 2 companies of sappers.
A railway battalion consists of 1 headquarters and 2 traffic companies.

In addition to the above, there is a battalion of infantry forming the Guard of Honour; it consists of 1 headquarters, 3 rifle companies and 1 troop of cavalry. As regards duties, it is under the President of the Republic, and, as regards organisation, training, and administration, under the Minister of War.

The total strength, therefore, is:
16 infantry battalions (including the Guard of Honour),
4 artillery batteries,
5 cavalry squadrons,
1 engineer battalion,
3 railway battalions,
1 medical company.
D. RECRUITING SYSTEM

Every Colombian citizen between the ages of 21 and 45 is liable to serve in the active army and in the reserve or militia.

The recruiting is effected by drawing lots each year. The men selected serve for three years.

Compulsory military service has been in existence in Colombia for the last eighteen years, during which time some 60,000 Colombians have served with the colours; if, from this figure, we deduct 20% for disablement, death, absence, etc., we are left with a total of 48,000 men who have received military training. These effectives could serve as a basis for the formation of an army of 300,000 men which it would be possible for Colombia to raise in the event of war.

Men who are not exempted or excluded from service by the law serve in the First Line Army from the age of 21 to the age of 30; in the National Guard from 31 to 40; in the Territorial Guard from 41 to 45, after which age they are no longer subject to any military obligations.

The men belonging to the First Line Army, the National Guard or the Territorial Guard, who are not performing active service, constitute the reserve of each of the above groups. Reservists are placed in the first class, if they have undergone full military training; otherwise in the second class.

The Government may call up reservists in time of peace for periods of training, exercises and manoeuvres.

The Territorial Service consists of a military staff, dealing with the mobilisation and supply services of the Army.

It comprises the following personnel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant-Colonels or Colonels</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majors or Captains</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.C.O.s</td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>270</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Military Tax.

Persons who have not been drawn by lot to serve with the colours pay a single tax in lieu of military service. This tax may not exceed 100 pesos and may not be less than 5 pesos, according to the income of the individual. For this purpose citizens are divided into six classes.

The payment of the military tax or service with the colours for three years in the case of men drawn by lot dispenses them from all other service for life except in case of national or external disorders. In the latter case, all men between 21 and 45 years of age who form part of the national militia may be called up for active service.

Exemptions.

The following persons are exempt from military service in all circumstances: Catholic clergy and seminarists, members of religious educational communities,
disabled persons, and persons unfit for service as a result of disease or infirmity.

Certain supporters of families are exempt from service in peace time.

Persons engaged in certain duties, young men studying for the liberal professions (up to the end of their studies) and persons whose presence in the army would be harmful to the morale of the troops are temporarily exempted from military service.

Voluntary Engagements.

Voluntary engagements are only permitted when the number of conscripts enrolled is not sufficient to fill existing vacancies. Voluntary engagements may only take place at the times fixed for the calling up of the contingents.

Military Education.

The military educational establishments are governed by special regulations and their personnel is appointed in accordance with the provisions of the budget. These educational establishments are under the Ministry of War; the Staff College is under the General Staff Department; and the Military School, the School of Aviation, the Non-Commissioned Officers’ Schools and other similar schools which will be created are placed under the Inspector-General of the Army.

Staff College. — The object of this college is to train field and staff officers. It is under the authority of the General Staff. It holds a supplementary course for the preparation of subalter officers and officers who have not passed through the Military School. In 1929, the number of pupils was 20.

Military Cadet School. — The course lasts for three years. Students who have successfully followed the instruction given in the military school leave with the rank of Second Lieutenant. The number of pupils is 160. A preparatory course for supernumerary cadets, organised in 1929, is attached to the School.

Schools for N.C.O.s. — In addition to the Central School for N.C.O.s there are three other schools, viz.: School for N.C.O.s No. 1 at Bogotá, for troops of the 1st Division. School for N.C.O.s No. 2 at Cali, for troops of the 3rd and 4th Divisions. School for N.C.O.s No. 3 at Bucaramanga, for troops of the 2nd and 5th Divisions.

The Staff of each of these schools consists of one Commandant (Captain) and three instructors (Lieutenants). They are directly under the Ministry of War. The duration of each course is 4 months.

Military Aviation Schools. — There are several military Aviation Schools. They are directly under the Ministry of War. One of these Schools is established in Madrid (Bogotá) and has 20 pupils.

E. EFFECTIVES.

1. ESTABLISHMENT (1929-30).

Officers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generals</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonels</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieut.-Colonels</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commandants</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captains</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenants</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-Lieutenants</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.C.O.s and other ranks: 8,000
2. **Budgetary Effectives (1929).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Military employees</th>
<th>Administrative staff</th>
<th>Other ranks</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divisional Commands</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Guard</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>5,232</td>
<td>5,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavalry</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>394</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>634</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,781</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,909</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II.

**Navy.**

**LIST OF UNITS (1929)**

**Gunboat:**

*Cercinto* (1896) 643 tons. Dimensions: $185 \times 31 \times 12$ feet.

2 River Gunboats (+ 3 ordered, August 1929):

1. *Esperanza* (1897) 400 tons. Dimensions: $140 \times 9 \times 3$ feet.
2. *General Nerino* (1895) Guns: 3 M.-G.

Miscellaneous: 10 units (coastguard vessels, motor launches, etc.).

Total tonnage (3 units) . . . . . . . . . . 1,443 tons

III.

**Budget Expenditure on National Defence.**

A. **NOTES ON BUDGET PROCEDURE.**

(1) The financial year coincides with the calendar year.

(2) The budget is gross, and the accounts of public undertakings are included in those of the administrative departments with which they are connected.

(3) Expenditure on defence is shown under the Ministry of War.
B. BUDGET EXPENDITURE ON NATIONAL DEFENCE.

I. Summary of Defence Expenditure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1926</th>
<th>1927</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of War</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed Accounts</td>
<td>4,696</td>
<td>7,452</td>
<td>7,289</td>
<td>8,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The appropriations include military pensions, amounting to 197,500 pesos for 1927 and estimated at 250,300 pesos for 1928 and 317,900 pesos for 1929.