Adapting the Norwegian Police National Emergency Resources to Contemporary Crises

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Abstract

The main objective of this thesis is to identify if the organisation and capabilities of the Norwegian police national emergency resources (NB) are well aligned to the challenges confronted by the Norwegian police in contemporary crises. NB consist of the Special intervention unit, the Bomb squad, the Helicopter unit, the Crisis and hostage negotiation unit and the newly established Tactical support unit. These units are principally deployed to respond to significant crises such as those prompted by terrorist incidents and other crises the police districts do not have the competence to manage. The study uses and develops the notion of crisis management to explore key factors that explain NB's and the Norwegian police's performance in mitigating the threats posed by such serious incidents.

The core of the thesis focuses on the case of the terror attacks on 22 July 2011 to explore NBs capabilities and analyse the changes this incident has triggered in the Norwegian police. Public evaluations of this incident have highlighted room for improvement for the police and NB. The 22 July attacks have catalysed reform, leading to the colocation of NB units in a single centre (PNB) and investments that developed capabilities – from new helicopters to communication equipment and training arrangements, all of which are expected to better align the police to the complex nature of contemporary crises. Recent crises tend to cross boundaries and require various societal actors to cooperate. Recent reforms and training have empowered the police districts to tackle most crises, including through PNB training and support. Yet, districts continue to require assistance from NB when facing particularly demanding crises that they do not have the special competencies or resources to handle themselves.

The thesis highlights how connectivity between NB and local partners has become the most central element in responding to contemporary crises. Occasional misalignments between police organisation and capabilities on the one hand and societal needs on the other are inevitable. They become increasingly apparent through major crises, which shed light on points of failure and insecurity. The story of NB in the last decade shows that the Norwegian authorities have actively sought and managed to identify and confront various lacunae in the police emergency system. The thesis argues that, despite some shortfalls, NB's role has effectively adapted to societal needs in the last decade, mostly through greater connectivity between NB and local police districts.

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Writing an MPhil thesis is not easy, especially after a few years since I went to school. I quickly realised that time was a big challenge when I also had to work full time and take care of my family, consisting of three children and a wife. Prioritization became an essential part of my everyday life. It would not have been possible for me to do this if my family had not supported me in this. Special thanks to my wife, Therese. Without you, it would not be possible.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

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_____ JOHNNY LIAN_

Signature Name in capitals

Acronyms

AUF	Workers' youth league
BG	The Bomb squad
BT	The Special intervention unit
CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear
DELTA	Callsign of the Special intervention unit
DSB	Directorate for social security and emergency preparedness
EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal
ESR	Explosive search and clearance group
FNB	Joint unit for national emergency resources
HT	The Helicopter unit
ICT	Information and communications technology
IED	An improvised explosive device
IEDD	Improvised explosive device disposal
IP3	Emergency personnel category 3 ('SWAT' level)
KGF	The crisis and hostage negotiation unit
K-9	The dog handler unit
KRIPOS	National criminal investigation service
Meld. St.	White papers
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NB	The Police national emergency resources
NOU	Official Norwegian report
PBS	Police emergency preparedness system
PHS	Police university college
PLIVO	Ongoing life-threatening violence
PNB	The National police emergency centre
POD	The police directorate
SA	Situational awareness
STS	The section for tactical support
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
UEH	Local emergency units (SWAT)
VIP	Very important person
UP	The central mobile police service

Introduction

This dissertation aims to fill a gap in the academic literature and the public debate on the Police national emergency resources (NB), a group of special units the Norwegian police deploys to manage complex crises. NB consist of the Special intervention unit (BT), the Bomb squad (BG), the Helicopter unit (HT) and the Crisis and hostage negotiation unit (KGF) (Politidirektoratet, 2020). Since 2020, all these units have been co-located at the police emergency centre (PNB), near Norway's capital. A fifth section, the Tactical support section (STS), was created within NB after 2020. STS is a support unit for the operational units. This unit will not be discussed further in detail as it is new and still under development (2022).

Many publicly available documents describe parts of NB, but there is no dedicated study of NB's support to the Norwegian police in a crisis. This thesis aims to fill this knowledge gap by investigating the following central research question: To what extent are the organisation and capabilities of NB well-aligned with the challenges confronted by Norwegian police in contemporary crises? Several questions follow from this central question. What are the characteristics and requirements of contemporary crises? Do NB's units have the capacity to support the rest of the police? How are NB organised, and which resources do they have to help the rest of the police? How effectively does NB liaise with partners within the police and beyond? When answering these questions, this study will shed light on whether NB support is sufficiently aligned with the current threat picture and general needs of the Norwegian police and society.

The research focuses on a specific timeframe, starting with the period of development and adaptation that marked the Norwegian police in the early 2000s. The main emphasis is on the terrorist incident of 22 July 2011 and its aftermath. Earlier developments are only briefly considered to contextualise the role and place of the Norwegian police in the twenty-first century. Two significant reforms (in 2000 and 2015) affected the organisation of NB and the broader Norwegian police apparatus during that period, generating a considerable amount of government reports (Meld. St. 21, 2013; NOU 1999:10, 1999; NOU 2013:5, 2013; NOU 2013:9, 2013; Politidirektoratet, 2011; Prop. 61 LS, 2015; St.meld.nr.17, 2002; St.meld.nr.22, 2001; St.meld.nr.42, 2005). These reforms form the background for the development of the Norwegian police as it appears today (2022).

Literature review

There is a fair amount of publicly available information on the Norwegian police and its national emergency resources (NB) (Aune, 2019; Bjørgum & Aaram, 2016; Bonde, 1994; Christensen et al., 2018; Glomseth, 2002; Glomseth & Aarset, 2020; Halle, 2012; Jenssæter & Strøm-Norman, 1998; Kvikne, 2001; Larsson et al., 2016; Meld. St. 13, 2016; Meld. St. 29, 2020; Myhrer, 2015; NOU 1981:35, 1981; NOU 1987:27, 1987; NOU 1988:39, 1988; NOU 1999:10, 1999; NOU 2013:9, 2013; NOU 2017:11, 2017; NOU 2017: 9, 2017; Olsen & Myra, 2006; Politidirektoratet, 2017a, 2017b, 2020; Politihøgskolen, 2014, 2015; Politiinstruksen, 2015; Prop. 61 LS, 2015; St.meld.nr.22, 2001; St.meld.nr.42, 2005; St.meld.nr.51, 2001; Stensønes, 2018; Trædal, 2016; Zeiner, 2018; Østgaard, 2015). NB are therefore well known among the Norwegian police and the broader public, and its units are often referred to in news pieces covering smaller and larger criminal cases. Anytime these unique capacities are needed, usually for national security reasons, some public coverage is likely to follow (Hægeland et al., 2020; Myrvang et al., 2020; Walnum, 2019).

The thesis deals with the role of the police, and especially NB, in Norwegian crisis management (CM). The research examines the *organisation* and *capabilities* of NB in the context of the challenges Norwegian police face in contemporary crises. The concept of *organisation* is central to this research. It is construed both as the internal organisation of NB, which should ideally be efficient and robust to support NB's role in crises, and its external organisation. The external organisation refers to both NB's place within the broader police and government ecosystem and the physical location of the units in Norway. This external level emphasises NB's ability to liaise with a range of partners. An adequate organisation – both internally and externally – is essential in making the best possible use of NB's capabilities (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013). *Capabilities* in this context mean NB's ability to provide professional services in several areas and over time. Capabilities include different resources that NB use to fulfil its missions. These include human resources and specialised skills such as bomb disposal, equipment and technology, all of which are enabled by financial resources.

While much has been written about crisis management in the Norwegian police (Aune, 2019; Bjørgum & Aaram, 2016; Christensen et al., 2017, 2018; Glomseth & Aarset, 2020; Gundersen, 2020; Larsson et al., 2016; Meld. St. 13, 2016; Meld. St. 29, 2020; Norsk Telegrambyrå (NTB), 2019; NOU 2017:11, 2017; NOU 2017: 9, 2017; Politidirektoratet, 2017b, 2020;

Politihøgskolen, 2015; Politiinstruksen, 2015; Prop. 61 LS, 2015; Renå, 2019; Zeiner, 2018), there is a paucity of literature on NB's role and capabilities to assist in crisis management. The thesis thus explores whether NB are appropriately adapted and accessible enough for relevant partners to use them in crisis management.

Secrecy partly explains the paucity of published research on NB as the detail of the unit's capacities, for example, remain classified. It has also been challenging for outsiders to gain access to the units, making it difficult to write about them. However, as this thesis makes clear, a fair amount of information is nevertheless available through government white papers, circulars, and some literature and news articles (Glomseth, 2002; Halle, 2012; Inderhaug, 2019; Jenssæter & Strøm-Norman, 1998; Olsen et al., 2006; Politidirektoratet, 2011; St.meld.nr.51, 2001; Stensønes, 2018; Trædal, 2016). These sources provide a reasonable basis for gaining a good overview and understanding of how the Norwegian police, and NB more specifically, are organised and function.

Methodology

The research question that drives this research lends itself to a qualitative approach based on two types of primary sources: documents and interviews. The primary sources this thesis engages with are Norwegian government and parliamentary reports on police reform, specifically on emergency management. Frameworks and guidelines on crisis management in the Norwegian police are described in several public documents. Official Norwegian Reports (NOU), parliamentary papers and white papers (Meld.St.) provide helpful evidence to inform and develop analysis. The Police emergency preparedness system (PBS) describes the police's role clearly and comprehensively. PBS includes a detailed description of, among other things, how the emergency preparedness and crisis system in the police are intended to work. The Norwegian police directorate (POD) has also published several relevant documents, including policies and frameworks to approach the performance of the police service in Norway, following guidelines from the Ministry of Justice.

Four in-depth interviews with senior police officers serving in critical roles in the police system were conducted in March 2022 to complement this body of primary sources. The selection of police officers interviewed was based on their function. All four officers have the authority to decide whether their district should request support from NB in their role. The purpose of the

interviews was to investigate how these police officers conceive of NB's role in crisis management in the Norwegian police beyond the information available in police guidance and other similar documents. The interviewees all have extensive experience in operational police work. Today, their function corresponds to either chief of staff or the chief of operations in their respective police district. The interviewees also represent different Norwegian police districts with varied geographical locations, thus ensuring diversity and representativeness in their perspectives. Given their seniority, all the interviewees also have knowledge and experience to say something about further changes and improvements of NB and whether the emergency resources are well adapted to the current needs of the Norwegian police.

The interviews followed a semi-structured approach using open-ended questions about NB and NB's role in the Norwegian police's crisis management (Tjora, 2018, p. 114). This approach was beneficial in exploring opinions and perceptions through additional questions when deemed necessary during the interviews. The interviews were combined with other sources such as white papers and other public documents to provide a more exhaustive account of the research object. Beyond the perspectives they helped to gather, the interviews complemented a strategy of triangulation that sought to corroborate different data sources and types (Van Puyvelde, 2018). The interviews were conducted remotely via video conference. The COVID pandemic has limited the ability of the police to conduct such meetings in persons. Videoconferencing was the second-best option, which allowed better interactions than a telephone interview and helped to gather some visual cues during the interviews. The video conference solution worked well, but it is essential to be aware of the limitations. For example, it is not possible to know if there are other people in the room who influence the interviewee in any way. It is also not as easy to read the interviewee's body language, which can provide valuable information with a view to asking further questions about a topic (Jacobsen, 2015; Sedgwick & Spiers, 2009; Van Puyvelde, 2018).

Secondary sources such as books, magazines, other theses, and news articles have also been consulted to shed light on the research topic. The following keywords have been used to form search queries – both in English and in Norwegian – on a range of academic databases and public repositories: NB (police's national emergency preparedness resources), Norwegian police, Norwegian police reform and organisation, threats in Norway, 22 July 2011, crisis management and emergency preparedness.

The research design uses a case study approach focused on the terrorist attack on 22 July 2011 in Norway. In case study research, a case is explored to shed light on an issue that concerns the thesis topic. Studying this specific and extreme incident – when a lone perpetrator caused 77 deaths and countless injuries in the worst attack on Norwegian soil since the Second World War – helps to shed light on NB's capacities, which were extensively used during the crisis (Cousin, 2005; Lee & Saunders, 2017; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). The incident was also a turning point in the development of NB and the Norwegian police. (Appleton, 2014; Bjørgum & Aaram, 2016; Christensen & Aars, 2017; Christensen et al., 2015; Falkheimer, 2014; Hemmingby & Bjørgo, 2015; Meld. St. 21, 2013; NOU 2012:14, 2012; Politidirektoratet, 2012; Politidistrikt, 2012; Politiet, 2011; Prop. 61 LS, 2015; Renå, 2017; Stensønes, 2018). The incident thus provides a good case for testing the connection between NB and the police's ability to resolve a significant contemporary crisis. The incident also led to criticisms and substantial changes in the Norwegian police and NB. Studying these changes sheds light on the police's effort to adapt NB to contemporary crises.

The case study approach and set of open sources consulted in the thesis do not provide a perfect window into the Norwegian police and the organisation and adaptation of its emergency resources. Secrecy considerations limited access to sources (both documents and interviewees) and the decision to focus on a single case study. A relatively short timeframe further limits the representativeness of the findings (Johannessen et al., 2021). Overall, it is fair to say that the thesis examines the Norwegian police and its emergency resources from a general point of view. Some topics have thus been deliberately left out due to prioritising. For example, the methods and capacities of each district have not been looked at in detail, even though they are essential to NB's ability to liaise with local partners to resolve crises. However, this would be too specific and extensive to be discussed.

One final point to consider here is how this research has been driven and shaped by the author's personal experience as an employee of NB for over 20 years. This experience has equipped me with a unique perspective, serving in various NB units, which is well suited to the objective of exploring and explaining the uses and limits of NB in the context of Norwegian police's crisis management. It also puts me in an ideal position to ensure that the analysis developed from open sources reflects broader realities that cannot be discussed publicly due to secrecy requirements. Professional experience and knowledge have inevitably led me to select documents which I found more accurate and nuanced. Here my background also creates a

greater risk of bias – not the least confirmation bias, which is to say, looking for information that confirms ideas I have consciously or unconsciously developed throughout my career – than for a more traditional researcher. My awareness of this risk and discussions with my supervisor, a fellow researcher working in the Norwegian police, and four interviewees have helped mitigate the risk but cannot eliminate it completely.

Thesis outline and argument

The thesis is organised into four chapters. *Chapter 1- Crisis management in the Norwegian police* contextualises the research by explaining the organisation of the Norwegian police. The first section of the chapter examines the evolution of the organisation of the Norwegian police and explains why it looks the way it does today. The second section discusses crisis management in the Norwegian police, including contemporary threats to Norwegian society and how the police districts intend to manage emerging crises. This section identifies a series of dimensions that are essential to assess NB's usefulness in the context of contemporary crisis management.

Chapter 2 narrows the focus on *the organisation and capabilities of the national emergency resources (NB).* The first section tells the story behind the units of NB, highlighting their historical trajectory in the context of societal needs. The second section explains how NB are structured and organised today. The third section continues to narrow the focus and examines NB's resources and capabilities in the contemporary context. The last section looks at NB's operational procedures and links these to its adaptability. The chapter highlights NB's development in recent years and its ability to serve as a resource for the rest of the police in crises, thanks to unique specialist capabilities in areas such as helicopter transport and surveillance, bomb disposal, negotiation and counter-terrorism enforcement.

Chapter 3 focuses on the core case study: *the terrorist attacks on 22 July 2011*. The first section describes the incident on 22 July. The second section addresses NB's role in this crisis and explains how NB's resources were used. The last part critically analyses public evaluations of the incident. The chapter shows that NB's organisation and capabilities were important for managing the terrorist incident. BT and BG were mobilised early and constituted an essential resource with their unique capabilities. However, the public evaluation stated that the perpetrator could have been arrested quicker. It was also critical that no police helicopter was

available. It is fair to say that neither NB nor the police were sufficiently prepared for the challenges that arose during the crisis that day. This conclusion highlights the need for NB and the police to constantly learn and adapt to the requirement of the security environment.

Chapter 4 discusses *learning and adaption* through the lens of a series of investigations that followed the 22 July incident. The Gjørv commission evaluation, specifically, identified several recommendations to adapt the Norwegian police. The chapter critically analyses the recommendations related to NB and evaluates how they have affected its development since then. The first section examines reform measures associated with NB in the aftermath of the 22 July attacks. The second section analyses how the measures that were implemented have affected NB. The last section opens up the discussion and considers whether further changes would be appropriate for the police, especially NB, to function optimally and provide the expected level of support to Norwegian police districts. The chapter shows that NB and the Norwegian police have developed drastically in the aftermath of the 22 July attacks. The changes that have been implemented have strengthened the Norwegian police's ability to handle crises. There are now fewer and stronger police districts. NB's units have also become more robust and assembled as one big unit, located in a separate emergency centre (PNB). This colocation and ability to liaise with the broader police ecosystem in more comprehensive ways have effectively realigned NB to the complex and interconnected nature of contemporary crises. However, the chapter also shows that there are still opportunities for further improvement, for instance, by looking at NB's organisational position in the police system and maintaining an emphasis on police presence in the streets as a part of a broader warning system.

The Norwegian police and NB’s capacities have developed over time in step with the needs of the police and society. This development has been influenced by historical legacies, political trends and preferences and catalysed by crises such as the 22 July attacks. Recent reforms have enabled police districts to become more robust in solving crises. In turn, this has given a more important function to NB as a reinforcement resource for the rest of the police districts in complex crises. NB has several specialist capacities the districts do not possess, which can be crucial in gaining control of complex situations. However, contemporary crises can occur suddenly and without warning. They can also be over quickly. Norway is too big for NBs units to be promptly present everywhere. This means the local police must be on the scene quickly to deal with the situation. Therefore, NB recently started using its expertise to train other police units in Norway. This training seeks to make the police districts better able to handle the start

of a crisis themselves until they receive support from NB. The training has also led NB and the police district officers to become better acquainted, thus improving their ability to cooperate. Knowing each other's capacities and competence makes it much easier to solve tasks together.

The analysis developed in this thesis shows that connectivity between NB and local partners has become the most central element in responding to contemporary crises. Misalignment between police organisation and capabilities on the one hand and societal needs on the other are inevitable. They become apparent when major crises shed light on failure points and societal insecurity. The story of NB in the last decade shows that the Norwegian authorities have actively sought and managed to identify and confront various lacunae in the emergency system. The thesis thus shows how, despite some shortfalls, NB's role has largely adapted to societal needs in the last decade mostly through organisational reform and improvements in material (communications technology) and human resources (specialised training). These improvements have fostered greater connectivity between NB and local police districts.

Chapter 1 - Crisis management in the Norwegian police

This chapter explores crisis management in the Norwegian police and how the police are organised to handle crises. Given the uncertain nature of crises, the police must be prepared for various assignments. Specifically, threat assessments play an essential role in being as prepared as possible for the next crisis. This study is particularly interested in special police assignments related to crises caused by significant threats such as terrorism and serious crime, which are more likely to lead police districts to require support from NB. The chapter aims to understand the Norwegian police's organisation, resources, and ability to solve assignments and crises. To do so, the discussion also considers how the police are managed and led. The notion of crisis management is used to explore key factors that can explain success or failure in these assignments. Crisis management is unpacked into a series of dimensions that are essential to look at to assess NB's value and usefulness as an organisation designed to support police districts, which is the central theme of this thesis.

The chapter is divided into three sections which provide an overview of the organisation of the Norwegian police and crisis management. The first section starts by explaining how the Norwegian police are organised. Norwegian police have developed over the years, and many far-reaching reforms have been implemented. Since the 2000s, the number of police districts has drastically reduced from 54 to 12, which has implications for the organisation of crisis management. The centralisation of the police districts seems to have led to a more limited police presence in the districts at the street level. The second section focuses on the management and leadership of the Norwegian police. Norwegian police are governed from a political level that gives instructions through a ministry to the police districts. This system maintains a strong decentralised anchoring in which police districts are sovereign within their geographical area of responsibility. They decide for themselves whether they need support from NB in crises. The third section looks at threats and the related types of crises the police can confront. A crisis can cross borders, making it more unpredictable and complicated. The increasing complexity of the tasks facing Norwegian police has fostered the development of crisis management principles. Norway's crisis management principles apply to all key societal stakeholders, from the government to individual civil servants. A major challenge in a crisis that involves several levels can be the difficulty in developing shared situation awareness across various levels and units. Good situational awareness depends on appropriate training**,** communication of key information, and a shared threat picture through good assessments. Overall, this chapter sheds

light on the organisation of the Norwegian police, how it is governed and the type of challenges they face in contemporary crises, specifically those that are likely to require NB's support. The police districts decide for themselves whether they want this support, and they often must start crisis management themselves while waiting for NB. This highlights the need for a balance between decentralised and centralised resources or between local districts and national units like NB.

1. The organisation of the Norwegian police

This section starts by examining the reforms that decreased the number of Norwegian police districts from 54 police in 2000 to 12 today and discusses the reasons for this change. The section then explains how the Norwegian police are organised and how a typical police district is organised internally. Norway has 12 police districts today, all of which are more or less equally organised and administered.

Norwegian police have a long history. Society is continually changing, and thus the debate on how Norwegian police should be organised is a recurring one. In 1981 and 1987, a two-part Official Norwegian Report produced by the government (NOU) was issued on 'The role of the police in society.' Part 1 (NOU 1981:35, 1981) of this report pointed out that public service should be given higher priority. The report noted that the police play an essential role in protecting the kingdom's security - primarily at the domestic level. The state's internal security is a joint responsibility of all state authorities. However, the police have two critical tasks: monitoring the kingdom's internal security and preparedness for combating terrorism (NOU 1981:35, 1981). A few years later, Part 2 (NOU 1987:27, 1987) recommended decentralising the police to obtain a more effective police force. In this way, the police would get closer to the population and maintain their civilian character.

In 1988 (NOU 1988:39, 1988), a new Official Norwegian Report (NOU) was released on the organisation of the police and prosecution. The allocation of responsibility in the Norwegian police is divided into a 'two track' system, the law enforcement track and the prosecution track. Law enforcement is managed by the Minister of Justice, while the Attorney General handles prosecution. The 1988 report looked at this scheme and compared Norway to other Nordic countries. The conclusion was that Norway's organisation was good enough regarding the 'two track' system and that a change was unnecessary. This scheme continues to apply today (2022).

In 1999, a new NOU (NOU 1999:10, 1999) assessed whether it was possible to improve the organisation of the Norwegian police and sheriff's office. At that time, the police consisted of 54 police districts and eight specialist police agencies with partly overlapping areas of responsibility. According to the NOU committee's assessment, the police had an unclear management structure, and its organisation was too complicated. The committee's goal was to simplify the organisation, clarify responsibilities and authority, and establish more comprehensive operational and professional management. This report concluded that there were significant gains to be made by forming fewer but larger police districts and that one could co-locate and merge joint services in the police.

Two significant reforms have taken place in Norwegian police in the last two decades. The first was in 2000 (St.meld.nr.22, 2001). The background for this reform was the recommendations in the NOUs from 1981 and 1987, and the conclusion of the 1999 NOU – all of which pointed in the direction of further centralisation. The 2000 reform thus reduced the number of police districts from 54 to 27. The main objectives were: a) a police and sheriff's agency that more effectively prevents and combats crime; b) a police and sheriff's agency that is more service and public-oriented; c) a police and sheriff's agency that works more cost-effectively. In 2005, Parliamentary report 42 (St.meld.nr.42, 2005) further examined the role and tasks of the police and the sheriff's office. Through the report, the government wanted to show how the police and sheriff's office could meet the challenges the police would face in the next 5-10 years and identify the direction in which the police should develop. The two main conclusions of this report were that the police should be the key player in civil society's preparedness for major incidents, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks. The report further noted that the police should prioritise their tasks and focus on preventive activities. This report pointed out that the police could be further streamlined through various measures, including further reorganisation.

The second reform came mainly due to the 22 July 2011 attack and the challenges the Norwegian police faced that day. This incident catalysed pre-existing trends and processes identified in this section. Following the attack, a public committee - the Gjørv commission - was appointed to evaluate how key societal actors responded (NOU 2012:14, 2012). The commission made many critical considerations. Although it did not explicitly recommend police reform, its recommendations and the exceptional nature of the attacks prompted significant changes. In November 2012, the government set up a committee to analyse the challenges confronted by Norwegian police and identified by the Gjørv commission. The

government required the analysis to suggest improvements and measures to facilitate problem-solving and more efficient use of resources in the police. The report was delivered in June 2013. The committee recommended a reform with two significant changes to be implemented in the Norwegian police: structural and qualitative change (NOU 2013:9, 2013). As a result, a new reform was implemented in 2015, reducing the number of police districts from 27 to 12. The expectation was that the police would become more robust, efficient, and independent with fewer and larger districts (Prop. 61 LS, 2015; St.meld.nr.22, 2001). The goal was that the police should be more operational, visible and accessible, with the capacity to investigate and prosecute criminal acts (Prop. 61 LS, 2015). Bjørgum, Aaram, & Antonsen's research strongly supports the need for this reform:

> The police are a key player in dealing with crises, but during the terrorist attacks, there were several shortcomings and weaknesses related to the police's handling. It is clear from reports prepared in retrospect of the terrorist acts (the Gjørv commission's report and the Police analysis) that significant changes must be made to the Norwegian police to meet better the challenges they face. A new police reform, the local police reform, was adopted and will solve several of the challenges (Bjørgum & Aaram, 2016, p. 4).

Today all police districts are organised similarly at the internal level, but minor differences subsist. In this way, there is a recognisable structure in all the districts. When external units such as the National emergency resources (NB) assist a district, they know the structure and have a similar point of contact in every district. The organisational similarity makes collaboration easier. The police's organisation also emphasises a general police service. This means that unique functions provided by NB are not found in the districts. To a greater extent, the districts should be able to handle crises themselves unless they need the support of specialist expertise. Some crises are such that ordinary police have neither the capacity nor the prerequisite to solving them. For example, there may be barricaded hostages with explosives. Unique competencies such as those from NB are then required to resolve the incident.

The Norwegian police currently consists of the Norwegian police directorate, 12 police districts, five specialist police agencies and four other underlying units. The specialist agencies are the National criminal investigation service (KRIPOS), the National police immigration service (NPIS), the Police university college (PHS), the Central mobile police service (UP), and the National Authority for investigation and prosecution of economic and environmental crime (ØKOKRIM). The four other underlying units are the Police information and communications technology services (PIT), the Norwegian police shared services (PFT), the Norwegian

commissioner for the Norwegian-Russian border and the National identification centre (NIC). The specialist police agencies have been established based on a need for national institutions with resources to assist the individual police districts in tasks they do not have the competence or capacity to solve. Recent reforms did not affect the specialist police agencies and the other underlying units; they only affected the police districts**.**

Today's organisation of police districts can best be understood by viewing a map of Norway. The first figure below (figure 1) shows Norway and where the 12 different police districts are located. The figure does not show the location of the specialist police agencies and other underlying units, most of which are located in eastern Norway, near Oslo. In connection with the reform in 2015, it was decided that all districts should be organised equally. Each police district is now divided into functional and geographical operating units (Politidirektoratet, 2017a). Minor differences were allowed, but major lines should be the same. This approach can facilitate cooperation with and between districts. The current organisation is shown in figure 2 below.

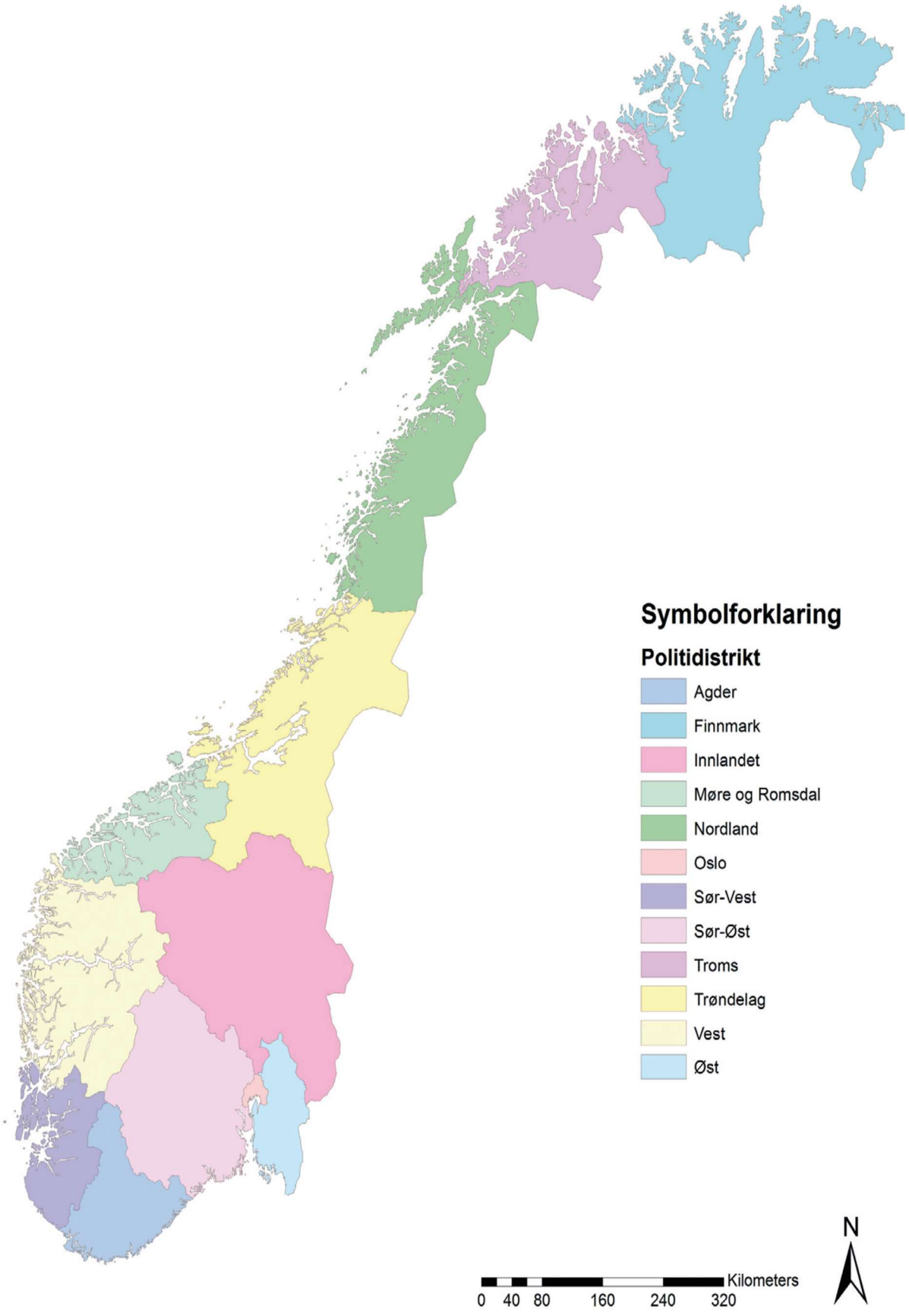

Figure 1 - Norway's 12 police districts (NOU 2017: 9, 2017)

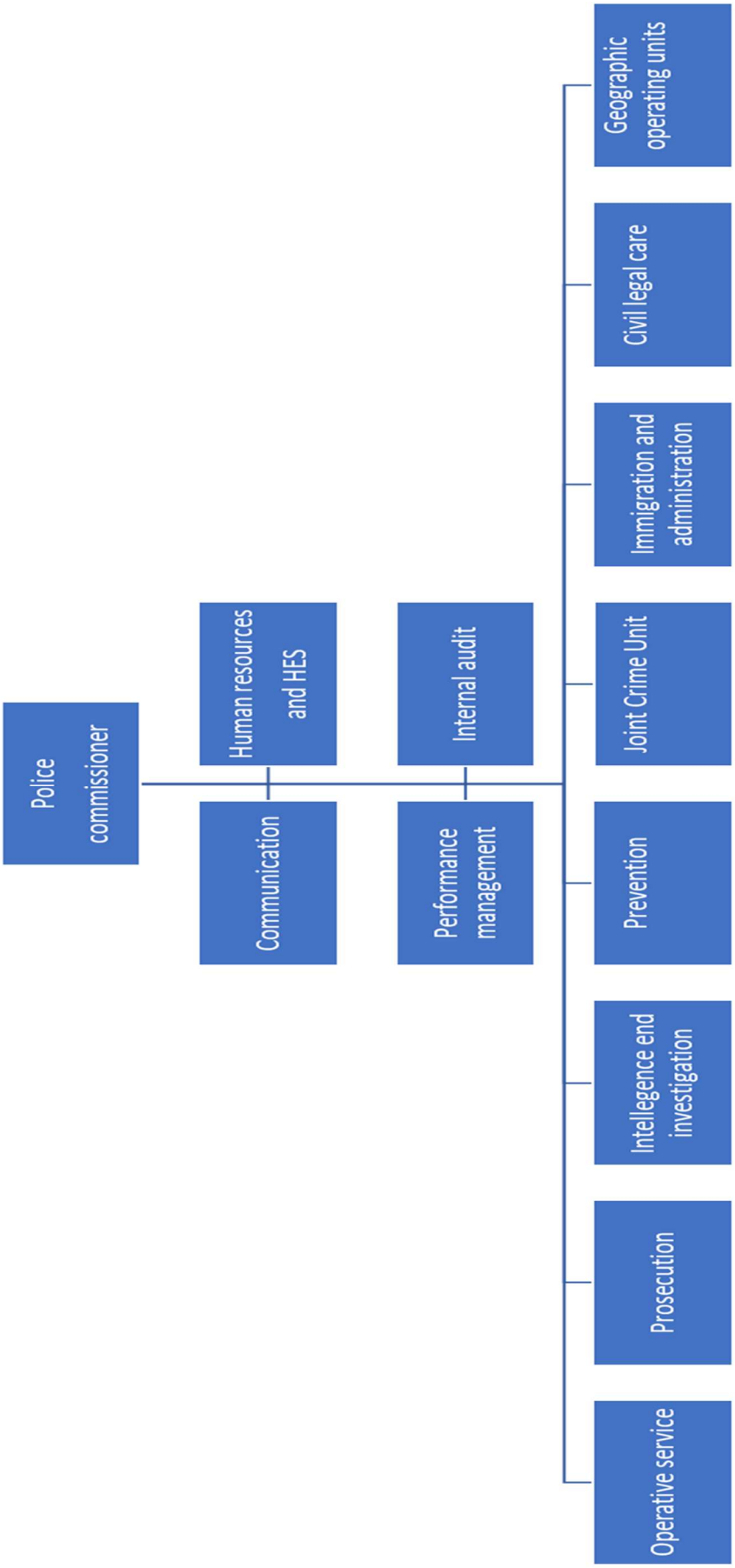

Figure 2 - General organisation of a Norwegian police district (NOU 2017:11, 2017)

In 2017, another Official Norwegian Report (NOU 2017:11, 2017) discussed the future organisation of specialist police agencies. The recommendations from this report were to merge some existing specialist police agencies and other underlying units and establish some new ones, including NB as a separate specialist police agency. These agencies would then support the intention behind the broader police reforms by offering support when needed. However, these recommendations were not implemented because the government felt the proposals were too large and invasive. The government preferred to focus on finalising the reform of 2015.

The evolving organisation of the Norwegian police can be construed as a streamlining effort. Organisational change can be seen as a necessary measure to follow the development of society. Jacobsen and Torsvik (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013) point out that organisations can be considered tools for solving tasks to achieve specific goals. Organisational theory provides a lens for understanding and explaining how organisations are structured, what resources and processes they utilise, and how they work in practice to manage crises. By reducing the number of police districts, the control span of the police directorate has become smaller. This change has also made the police districts more similar and organisationally equal. Organising the police into fewer but more robust police districts has centralised key resources at the local level. This, in turn, has reinforced professional environments at the police district level, including the role of emergency personnel and the ability to handle crises.

This section has looked at how the Norwegian police have been reduced to 12 police districts. It seems logical and natural that reducing the number makes it easier to control and lead the police districts. The newly merged districts are more robust as subject areas from different districts were brought together. By simultaneously introducing an equal organisation of the police districts, the reform has increased predictability in the structure of the districts. This makes it easier for emergency resources to cooperate with the various districts since the contact point and command structure would be the same regardless of which district receives assistance. From this perspective, recent reforms have adapted police structure and capabilities to be well aligned with the complex demands of the contemporary threat environment.

2. Management and leadership of the Police

This section addresses the general framework for how the Norwegian police are managed. The Norwegian police have a ‘two-track’ control system (NOU 2017:5, 2017). On the one hand,

concerning criminal proceedings, the chiefs of police are subject to the higher prosecuting authority of the Attorney General. The prosecuting authority is independent in the processing of individual criminal cases. This independence means that no one outside the prosecuting authority, not even political authorities, can give instructions on handling criminal cases. On the other hand, for the other parts of the police's activities like preventive activities and law enforcement, the chiefs of police are subordinate to the director of police, who reports to the Ministry of Justice. To understand how the police operate during a crisis, is it essential to understand how it is controlled and operated daily. Therefore, this section focuses on management in the law enforcement track since this is most relevant to NB's tasks in this field. The management of police law enforcement takes place at four levels: political, strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The Government represents the political level. The Ministries represent the strategic level, the Police directorate the operational level and the police districts the tactical level. Goals and performance management are the basic principles at all levels. Management emphasises steering the organisation and its workforce toward achieving overarching goals. Goals and performance management imply a clear division of roles and responsibilities between the Ministry and the underlying activities, which is based, among other things, on delegating authority to the executive level. Delegating authority gives room for manoeuvre and discretion in solving tasks. Efficiency is expected to increase when the best level knows the challenges posed by tasks they are confronted with. Following this approach, officers have the freedom to decide how to work to achieve their goals. The Ministry's management of the POD occurs through instructions to the directorate and annual allocation letters, drawn upon the basis of the annual budget proposal to the *Storting* (the Supreme legislature of Norway). The POD manages the police district, the specialist police agencies and the other underlying units through instructions and annual performance agreements based on the allocation letter from the Ministry and a multi-year business plan for the police (Politidirektoratet, 2017b).

The Chiefs of police govern the police districts and special units by following the professional priorities and performance targets set by the POD (Meld. St. 29, 2020). The chiefs of police are the highest officials in their district. They have command authority over all their employees. They govern through directives and instructions in their district. In addition, they control subordinate sections through budget allocation. Much of their management is done through delegation of authority. For example, all police districts have a control room headed by a supervisor. The Chiefs of police delegate responsibility to the supervisors to make decisions on

their behalf. The supervisors make operational decisions such as deciding if the district needs assistance, for example, from NB.

Parliamentary reports deal with the requirements and goals of the Norwegian police. Parliamentary reports relating to terrorism and other serious crime are particularly relevant to this study. In such cases, it is more natural for police districts to ask for support from NB. In 2013, parliamentary report no. 21 (Meld. St. 21, 2013) recommended several measures to prevent and deal with terrorism in Norway. These measures can be considered a response to the 22 July attacks, which showed that Norway was not well prepared for terrorist attacks. The government immediately began work on improving preparedness after the 22 July attack, leading to the publication of parliamentary report no. 21. With this parliamentary report, the government proposed new measures and an overall strategy against terrorism. At the same time, the government presented another report describing how the proposed measures were to be financed (Prop. 77 S, 2013). Some of the most important measures included strengthening the police with more officers, revising police management, and ensuring critical equipment was in place. Parliamentary report no. 21 (2012-2013) also stated the need for a national emergency response centre (PNB). The police in Norway are responsible for preventing and combating all terrorist acts on Norwegian soil that are not considered armed attacks. The 2013 report further underlined that the police's preventive efforts, preparedness and crisis management are crucial for success. Therefore, the competence of the police also had to be strengthened.

The tasks of the police are described in the Police Act (Politiloven, 1995): 'Through preventive and assistive activities, the police shall be part of society's overall efforts to promote and consolidate the legal security, security and general welfare of citizens in general'. The police's main tasks are to maintain general order, prevent criminal acts, protect citizens and their law-abiding activities, and investigate offences. It is also the responsibility of the police to implement and organise rescue efforts where people's lives or health are threatened with measures necessary to avert danger and limit harm (Politidirektoratet, 2017a). For the performance of police service, the Police Act and the Police Instructions apply to the individual police officer (Politiinstruksen, 2015; Politiloven, 1995). The Police Act (1995) provides general rules for what the police do and how. The Police Instructions (2015) are more detailed than the Police Act and state, among other things, that ‘The police's activities aim to maintain public order and security, prosecute offences, and perform other tasks determined by law or habit. The police shall be a part of society's overall efforts to promote citizens' legal security

and welfare'. Furthermore, the instructions describe the duty of a district to help another upon request. It is according to this provision that NB assists the districts.

The reduction to 12 police districts has made police districts larger and more robust, equipping them with more competencies and resources. However, the districts continue to lack specialist expertise in areas the national emergency response units (NB) focus on. Especially in crises where unique capacities and knowledge are required. In such cases, the police districts need assistance. Given its unique skillset, NB has thus naturally become an essential partner for most police districts when they confront significant crises. Police districts and NB fit within a broader government structure and are accountable to the police directorate, and in turn, to ministers. The following section will shed light on how a crisis is handled and managed by the Norwegian police.

3. Crisis management, threat assessment and requirements

This section deals with the threat picture in Norway, crises and how the Norwegian police seek to manage them. The assessment leading to a threat picture is extensive and covers many areas. This is an important part of the work, and the police need to understand the threats they confront to orient and prepare their actions. This section only looks at terrorism and serious crime threats, which are the most relevant to this study. Today's threat picture in Norway will be investigated to understand what the Norwegian police may face in a crisis. The section further highlights the importance of shared situational awareness. Everyone involved in a crisis must have the same understanding of what they are facing to resolve the problem together in the best possible way**.** The discussion is divided into three parts. The first part looks at the threats confronting Norway, and the second at crisis management. The third part discusses technology and situational awareness (SA) related to crisis management.

Threats

European and Norwegian assessments provide a reliable source of information to understand the evolution of the threats confronting Norway. The emphasis here is on serious crime and terrorism, which are key threats confronted by Norway during the period under scrutiny and types of crimes that are likely to require support from NB. The Police emergency preparedness system (PBS) defines threat assessment as the 'description and assessment of suspected threat actors and their intention and capacity (Politidirektoratet, 2020). Parliamentary report no. 21

(Meld. St. 21, 2013) also provides a helpful description of threat assessment: ‘to recognise a risk, the threat picture must be known and understood. This includes knowledge of which actors may be motivated and capable of carrying out attacks, which methods may be relevant and what goals can be revealed’. Interpreting a threat picture and predicting its evolution is difficult. From this perspective, it is easier to look at the past to identify trends that may indicate the future. However, the past does not always, if rarely, looks like the future. By corroborating various threat assessments, it is possible to obtain valuable information from past and current trends that can inform planning for the future. The results can be used to adjust and prepare measures against the types of threats and crises the police should be prepared for and respond to. Being ready and prepared can, among other things, mean having the capacity, equipment, and ability to handle a crisis.

To obtain an overview of the criminal threat picture in Norway over time, this study uses reports from reliable sources, including Europol, the Norwegian police security service (PST) and the Directorate for social security and emergency preparedness (DSB). Europol's assessments focus on risk in Europe, and PST's assessments capture the essence of Europol's reports and look at the national threat in Norway together with the armed forces intelligence service. PST's threat assessments are the most relevant for this thesis as they provide threat assessments to the police in Norway and the police follow these. DSB's threat assessments focus on catastrophic events that may affect Norwegian society. This can include pandemics or natural disasters, but also terrorism. DSB has a longer time horizon than the annual assessments of PST and Europol (DSB, 2019).

The annual threat assessment from PST reviews expected developments within the service's areas of responsibility. There is always some uncertainty with threat assessments. To reduce this, PST focuses on the main lines of the threat picture. However, isolated incidents and other unpredictable factors may affect the threat landscape and thus change the nature and level of threats that are highlighted. It is important to remember that most of these threat assessments are intended to inform the public and are therefore limited in their specificity (Politiets Sikkerhetstjeneste, 2004-2022). PST's current threat assessment assumes that extreme Islamism and right-wing extremism will continue to be the most significant terrorist threats against Norway (Politiets Sikkerhetstjeneste (PST), 2022). The report considers it possible that extreme Islamists and right-wing extremists will try to conduct terrorist acts in Norway in the coming year (2022). The threat from radical Islamists is believed to be particularly intense due to the

increased tension between freedom of expression and what many Muslims experience as violations of Islam. Some may thus be inspired to plan terror attacks. The increased radicalisation of right-wing extremism is also expected in the coming years. This is unsurprising given the previous attacks that have affected Norwegian society and discussed in this study. Either way, digital platforms are important arenas for radicalisation, where some individuals are at risk of being inspired by right-wing extremist ideology to plan terrorist attacks. The threat assessment for PST this year (2022, p.18) states:

> A right-wing extremist is likely to use firearms, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or vehicles during the execution of an attack. In attempts at targeted killings, stabbing weapons will also be a relevant means of attack. When attempting damage, PST considers that arson or IEDs will be the most appropriate attack forms.

PST's threat assessment further states that only one person will probably carry out an Islamist terrorist attack in Norway. The perpetrator will most likely try to hit crowded targets in the public space with low-security measures. The perpetrator will probably also use easily accessible means of attack such as knives or stabbing weapons and vehicles. They may also plan to conduct attacks using firearms and homemade explosive devices (IEDs) or wear a fake suicide belt. The threat assessments further emphasise:

> Averted attacks show that extreme Islamists still want to carry out attacks with explosives and firearms. In many extreme Islamist terrorist attacks, the perpetrators themselves wished to be killed by the police during the attack. Responding police personnel must therefore expect to be attacked by the perpetrator (Politiets Sikkerhetstjeneste (PST), 2022, p. 21).

This assessment indicates that the terrorist threat can be expected to a greater extent by solo terrorists or a so-called ‘lone wolf’. Therefore, it is also natural to look at this topic. Appleton (Appleton, 2014) wrote an article discussing the consequences of lone-wolf terrorism for crisis management and contingency planning. She argues that while law enforcement plays a vital role in the fight against lone wolves, the fight against terrorism must be based on democratic principles and respect for human rights. Privacy and human rights are separate topics and will not be discussed here. However, both are fundamental rights that are regulated by legislation. Legislation partially limits the authorities' ability to follow up and prevent solo terrorist acts. In other words, there is only so much the police can do to anticipate and prevent insecurity in a democratic society.

There have been two incidents in Norway where the threat from solo terrorists has been confirmed. The first happened on 22 July 2011 when a person first set off a bomb in the government quarter in Oslo and then travelled to Utøya just outside Oslo where he killed many young people at summer camp. The second happened on 10 August 2019, when a young man killed his stepsister before heading towards the Al-Noor Mosque, where he intended to kill those who were there. Coincidentally, there were almost no people there, and those there managed to overpower the perpetrator (Evalueringsutvalget, 2020). A recent incident in Kongsberg in 2021 occurred when a man killed five random people. This case was not characterised as terrorism as the perpetrator was mentally ill, and there was nothing that related the incident to terrorism. However, it shows that the threat picture of a lone wolf is valid. This incident also happened without warning and was quickly over.

Over several years, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and foreign fighters have attracted much attention in Norway. It is still possible that extreme Islamists will try to carry out terrorist acts in Norway. In recent years, there has also been an increased concern about right-wing extremist environments and individuals with right-wing extremist attitudes. Throughout 2019, several examples of attacks were carried out by people with right-wing extremist and anti-immigrant attitudes in other countries. In Norway, there was a racist murder and an attack on the Al-Noor Mosque. PST considers it likely that right-wing extremists will try to carry out terrorist acts in Norway and that extreme Islamists will do the same. Global developments are also indicative of the challenge confronted at a national and local level in Norway. For example, issues relating to foreign fighters and the attack in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 2019 (Olsen et al., 2019) illustrate the range of possible threats. Increased polarisation, xenophobia, hate speech, and public debate polarisation are challenging to most liberal democracies (Meld. St. 29, 2020).

The Norwegian defence research establishment (FFI) maintains, among other things, an overview of terrorist attacks conducted by jihadists in Western Europe. According to FFI, there has been a marked increase in the frequency of attacks in recent decades. Research teams at FFI thus claim that jihadism represents a long-term threat to Europe (Politidirektoratet, 2017a). The primary trend in Europe is an increase in brutal terrorist attacks against the civilian population. High homicide rates seem to be a success criterion for the perpetrators, and the perpetrators also often have the goal of martyrdom. The terrorist attacks of recent years have shown a trend of attacks being carried out using simple means, of which knives and stabbing weapons are used

most frequently. The use of vehicles aimed at population gatherings has increased the potential for damage to terrorist attacks committed by simple means.

Contemporary assessments expect relatively ‘simple’ attacks with great potential for damage. For example, assessments identify the risks of attacks by vehicles driving into crowds and knife attacks. The biggest problem with such attacks is that they can occur without warning. They happen quickly and are over quickly. The police are dependent on being on-site to be able to avert an attack that has begun. It is then difficult to understand, as previously described, that the number of police districts and associated presence of police service in Norway has been reduced. The reorganisation of the police aimed to free up capacity used to administer a police district by merging several districts. This reform was supposed to concentrate more resources and personnel to work in the streets. However, the actual implications of the reform have differed from this objective (Politiets fellesforbund, 2021a, 2021b). Interviewees pointed out: ‘We have not leveraged the full potential of the reform yet. There are still not more police on the streets’ (Interviewee 4, 2022) and ‘We probably have about the same resources and capacity in the streets now as we had before the reform’ (Interviewee 1, 2022).

The reason why there seems to be less police presence in the streets now than before is not apparent. This can be linked to organisational priorities and bureaucratic phenomena, not the least a specific form of inertia that has prevented resources from being redirected toward patrolling, which requires many resources. The rise of specialization and the formation of robust police districts centrally instead of locally also explains the lack of resources devoted to patrolling a routine and very localised type of police work. Regardless of the explanations, this development does not align well with the contemporary threat picture. This discrepancy raises important questions about how the Norwegian police plan and its ability to deal with threats and new crises.

Today's threat assessments indicate that attacks can be expected to occur suddenly with little available information in advance of the incident. They are likely to be performed by one or a few persons with simple weapons. These sudden and straightforward attacks require the police in the immediate vicinity to react quickly and perhaps even prevent them. It requires an emphasis on competent and trained police patrols, contrasting with the current move toward centralization. This raises further questions about how the Norwegian police plan to manage significant crises when they inevitably arise.

Crisis management in the Norwegian police

This section explores how the Norwegian crisis management system works to assess NB's role in this system. The section first examines the nature of contemporary crises, which are often complex and challenging. They emerge suddenly without warning, cross-jurisdictional borders and vary in time. Managing crises requires understanding. Proper situational awareness (SA) is crucial for making the right decisions and implementing the proper measures. Another key aspect of crisis management is resources, particularly technology, which can be used both by the police to manage crises and by threat actors. At a broader level, crisis management in Norway is based on four national crisis management principles presented in this section. These principles aim to create equality and predictability in crisis management. Recent reforms have led to further centralisation and some redistribution of competencies toward the districts that now have greater crisis management capabilities. However, the overall management of transboundary crises remains insufficiently defined.

The literature on crisis management identifies various stages in a crisis, typically: before, during and after the event. This approach is similar to the UK's 'prevent, pursue, protect and prepare' (NOU 2012:14, 2012). In Norway, the Police Emergency Preparedness System (PBS) handbook provides guidance and rules to the Norwegian police. It points out that the police's social mission is to prevent and fight crime and provide security for the population. Furthermore, it says that the police should have a broad approach to their work, and the police's duty is the same in peace, crisis and war. The police are, therefore, a key player in society's preparedness for significant incidents, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks. The police should also be prepared for incidents that may require a more massive, well-organised response (Politidirektoratet, 2020; Politidirektoratet, 2011). The current PBS says that NB will support the police districts when needed in various cases where their competence falls short (Politidirektoratet, 2020). In Norway, each police district 'owns' its crisis. This means they are responsible for solving crises themselves but can seek support from others when needed. Police districts vary in size and resources, and some need help more often than others. Crises vary in size, complexity, scope and geographic extent. These aspects impact the type and level of support required from NB in a crisis.

The research question driving this study emphasises the context of contemporary crises, which refers to a period of intense difficulty and danger in the last two decades. A crisis is defined in

the Police Emergency Preparedness System (PBS) and Parliamentary Report number ten (2016-2017) as 'an unwanted event with a high degree of uncertainty and potentially significant consequences for the person affected, whether they are individuals, organisations or society' (Meld. St. 10, 2017; Politidirektoratet, 2020). Boin and Lagadec (Boin & Lagadec, 2000) emphasise that crises have developed and changed in complexity and breadth over time. They note that a situation is defined as a crisis because something out of the ordinary happens. To understand the crisis and to be able to cope with it, organisations need to have procedures and structure. A crisis management system is essential for organisations to deal effectively with unwanted events.

Contemporary crises tend to be complex and erratic, making it particularly challenging to prepare for them. Three contextual elements emphasise the complexity of contemporary crises. First, modern crises often are transboundary. A transboundary crisis can cut through several types of borders: geographical, political, cultural, linguistic, and legal. Prototypical crises are intertwined with increasingly complex critical infrastructures and free-flowing market forces associated with globalization. They may include cyber dimensions, health insecurity, and massive migratory flows. Second, when a crisis happens in multiple police districts simultaneously, a new challenge arises in prioritising who should lead the crisis management and get the limited help and support first. Ubiquity further supports the need for cooperation in crisis management and the development of clear lines of responsibility through core management principles such as subsidiarity and responsibility. Third, crises vary widely in time – the duration of the crisis and how rapidly it unfolds. The ability of police to respond quickly to a crisis is essential to minimise the damage it causes.

Crisis management must be adapted to deal with the changing nature of crises. Therefore, one must try to understand a crisis to handle it in the best possible way. Since crises evolve quickly, relevant information about the situation must be gathered, processed and analysed constantly. This applies before and during the crisis and is essential to deliver the best possible situational awareness (SA). SA is crucial for dealing with the crisis in the best possible way. It helps develop a shared understanding of the crises, making it easier to perform a coordinated response (Boin, 2009). Both individual police officers and more senior managers need to develop a shared awareness of the threat confronting their organisation and the public. Police chiefs must ensure that their organisation receives the right intelligence and funding to follow up on the threats they can confront. Government officials need to give instructions and guidelines that

help prioritise and take action. The challenge with SA is that it can and is often different across these different levels in the hierarchy. For example, a trained police officer may understand the threat differently from a police chief or senior government official who is not police trained. Vice versa, personnel at the lowest level in the hierarchy often do not have access to the same assessments and information that one gets at higher levels. Each official has different experiences and commitments, creating further discrepancies in threat perceptions and priorities, inevitably shaping their actions. Technology has improved communication across these levels and increased situational awareness to a certain extent. However, even with technology, different levels in the hierarchy are subject to different forms of biases. There is no guarantee that everyone will understand information equally to develop a shared understanding of the threat landscape or a more specific crisis.

Modern crises often involve new information and communication technology (ICT). Technological development is increasing at a constant pace, and it interferes with an increasing part of our daily lives, creating lasting changes in numerous sectors. Technological change also affects behaviour, both at the individual and societal levels. Increased technological application and dependence create new opportunities and new vulnerabilities and challenges. Criminals are innovative and have adopted new technology early on. Digital means facilitate crime and lower the threshold for starting and running many criminal activities, with the world as a catchment area (Politidirektoratet, 2017a). Threat actors can own the latest technology, including special detection equipment and eavesdropping devices. Another example is the growing concern about drones in the domestic territory to carry out surveillance or terrorist acts. Sometimes technology also becomes part of the crisis itself, for example, when technical challenges prevent effective communication and collaboration between first responders. However, technology can also be used to deal with crises more efficiently. For example, overhead and closed-circuit television imagery can enhance threat awareness. Digital and interception-free communication devices are essential to covert operations and information security. Noise transmitters can be used to prevent the use of radio waves to trigger explosives. The downside of technology is that it is expensive and changes quickly. It is a financial challenge for the police districts to acquire and benefit from the latest technology when their budget is limited. This challenge will increase as police budgets are expected to decrease (Meld. St. 29, 2020). This context of complex challenges in an era of decreasing budgets allows NB to stand out. Considering the support NB can provide, it is natural that they have advanced and expensive equipment to fight crises, which

the police districts do not have. For example, the police districts do not have the equipment to handle explosives - only the Bomb squad (BG) possesses such equipment.

Norwegian police crisis management follows four basic principles. According to the Social Security Instructions (Samfunnssikkerhetsinstruksen, 2017), the overriding principles for crisis management and emergency preparedness are *responsibility, equality, subsidiarity* and *cooperation*. These correspond to the principles for emergency preparedness outlined in the police emergency system (Politidirektoratet, 2020). The principle of *responsibility* holds that the organisation responsible for a subject area in a normal situation – typically a police district – is also responsible for the preparedness and handling of extraordinary incidents. The principle of *equality* requires that an organisation and its command structure are as similar as possible in daily operations and crises. This principle aims to facilitate cooperation between districts as well as special agencies. The principle of *subsidiarity* dictates that crises must be handled organisationally at the lowest possible level. It means that the organisation closest to the crisis will try to solve the problem – again this tends to be the police district. The principle of *cooperation* holds that public authorities, have an independent responsibility to ensure the best possible collaboration with relevant actors and companies in prevention, emergency preparedness and crisis management. This principle was established in the wake of the terror on 22 July in Norway in 2011.

For the police, these principles state that the police districts themselves must resolve crises at the lowest possible level (the principle of subsidiarity) by relying on those who are responsible on a daily basis (the principle of responsibility) and preferably together with others when needed (the principle of cooperation). In addition, the organisation of crisis response should be as similar as possible to the daily organisation of the police (equality principle). For example, all districts now have their own emergency personnel teams (IP3). However, the districts are inevitably different in size and have varying capacities, thus additional support is often needed to deal with unexpected situations. The Police national emergency resources (NB) or some specialist police agencies can help in such cases.

When a crisis arises in one police district, it is the district's problem to solve. Crisis management tends to work well when it involves only one police district. Then the principles of crisis management and related responsibilities are clear. However, the challenge becomes more significant when a situation arises in more than one police district, and the districts need

support. Who decides and makes decisions in a crisis that spans several districts? The natural answer would be to point to the Norwegian Police Directorate (POD). However, to this day (2022), this remains unclear. This point was already emphasised in a master thesis produced by the head of the Norwegian police's national situation centre, which handles serious incidents or crises at the Police Directorate level (Zeiner, 2018). In his study Zeiner (2018) concludes that it is unclear how the POD will handle such challenges due to an unclear chain of command. Four years later, this challenge remains a blind spot that has not been addressed in any reform.

The control rooms in the police district lead the police's operational activities on a 24-hour basis and are, therefore, the hub for managing operational resources. These control rooms receive emergency calls and other inquiries and direct patrols to where they are most needed. In all districts, crises are handled by the Chief of police through the control rooms. Therefore, the control rooms also play a central role in the district's crisis management apparatus. The control rooms also have the authority to request assistance from NB on behalf of the Chief of police. Since the control rooms are essential to the police's crisis management apparatus, 'back-up' control rooms were established in 2017. If a control room is deactivated for some reason in a district, one of the 'back-up' rooms can quickly take over the function (Meld. St. 29, 2020).

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the organisation of the Norwegian Police, management of the police, threats and crisis management in the Police. Recent reforms have reduced the number of police districts to twelve. Districts are now more robust as capabilities from different districts have been brought together. However, they do not possess the capabilities NB possess. The Chief of police is the top leader in a police district and decides how the district should be operated based on guidelines from the senior level. The chief's authority is delegated to the control room, which can request NB for assistance on behalf of the Chief of police when crises are too complex to handle locally.

The latest threat assessments emphasize that it is possible to expect in 2022 that attacks will occur suddenly with little available information in advance. The police depend on being present where the incident occurs to stop it. If not, they probably will be too late. However, recent reforms have strengthened the police centrally but have not increased their presence locally. In other words, the police districts have been strengthened, but their availability to engage with

crises that inevitably tend to emerge at the street level is limited. This discrepancy appears incomprehensible, indicating that the situational awareness regarding the threat picture is not optimal due to a lack of police presence on the ground. However, this state of affairs also means that the police should be able to focus on emergency response when a crisis has arisen with much local special competence at the district level, not the least through local emergency personnel.

Norway and Norwegian police follow four crisis management principles. They state, among others, that the districts are responsible for resolving their own crises. They must be able to do this independently or with the support of other units such as NB. The significant threats posed by wicked problems such as terrorism and serious crime require special procedures and resources. It is mainly to confront these problems that NB assists. Here, NB are seen more as a 'reinforcement' resource during the local crisis and will deploy its unique capacity to normalize the situation. In summary, this indicates that NB is a crucial resource for the police districts to assist in solving complex crises they cannot solve themselves. Such crises are likely to occur based on current threat assessments. In the current system, the police district must be able to start managing emerging crises pending NB's arrival. This approach strikes a compromise between centralisation and decentralisation. The chapter further shows that the organisation, management and leadership of the police districts have improved, and that NB has an essential role in the districts' task solution in complex crises. The next chapter will take a closer look at NB and its capacities.

Chapter 2 - The organisation and capabilities of NB

This chapter examines the police national emergency resources (NB) and the history behind the formation of NBs units. The chapter sheds light on how NB is organised internally and fits within the broader Norwegian police apparatus. NB consists of several units with complementary capabilities detailed in this chapter. NB's ability to handle crises depends on collaboration with key partners to solve problems. Since police districts 'own' the crisis within their area of responsibility, they are accountable for their assignments. NB is accountable for solving a sub-assignment in a more extensive operation, at the request of the police districts, in cases where the police districts' competence becomes insufficient. The crisis is solved under the command of the police district. In this context, NB's ability to collaborate with others is essential.

The chapter consists of four sections. The first section looks at the history behind the creation of NB's units and how they have developed to this day. This history shows that the units have been formed at different times to answer a variety of needs. They have since developed to align and adapt to societal developments. The second section looks at NB's organisation and structure and shows how they are aligned to serve the broader police ecosystem. The third section deals with NB's resources and capabilities to assess whether they are adapted to the current threat picture. The fourth section focuses on NB's operational procedures and adaptability, specifically as they relate to NB's cooperation with other organisations. Overall, the chapter shows that NB has developed a lot since the establishment of its component units. This evolution has largely followed societal development, to which NB has gradually adapted. The chapter suggests that NB's current organisation, location and capabilities are well adapted to assist the Norwegian police in contemporary crises.

1. A brief history of NB

NBs units are well known among the Norwegian police and public. They are frequently discussed in news articles covering minor and major criminal cases (Hægeland et al., 2020; Myrvang et al., 2020; Walnum, 2019). Stories that capture the news media and public interest are usually of a certain gravity and tend to be sensationalist. This further highlights the unique character of NB. NBs units are unique in the Norwegian police because no one else in the police force does what these units do. They are the Norwegian police specialists in counterterrorism, bomb disposal, helicopter operations and negotiations. Due to its unique capacity, NB is vital

for Norwegian national security and crisis management in the Norwegian police. NB units can function independently or together as an essential tool for police districts that need support. The Bomb squad (BG) alone can support a police district with a specific task related to explosives, or several NB units can work together to solve a more significant task for a police district. Police districts often need help when they are in a state of crisis or facing a task they cannot solve with the help of their existing resources and expertise.

The units of NB are today organisationally located in the Oslo police district. Previously, this unit was called the 'Special section' but changed its name in 2017 to the Joint unit for national emergency resources (FNB). In 2020, the updated Police emergency preparedness system defined that the Special intervention unit (BT), the Bomb squad (BG), the Helicopter unit (HT) and the Crisis and hostage negotiation unit (KGF) should be called the Police national emergency resources (NB) (Politidirektoratet, 2020). The current organisation of NB stems from a long history. Not all units were established simultaneously and in the same context. Discussing the development of NB is essential to understand how they have developed to answer different societal needs. The section thus presents a series of short histories of NB's component units, starting with BT (established in 1976), BT (1978), HT (1997) and finally KFG (2006). In 2020, a support unit (STS) was established as part of NB in conjunction with the units moved together at the Police national emergency centre (PNB). This unit will not be covered but mentioned as part of the development and support for the other units.

The Special intervention unit

On 25 January 1975, the government decided to implement measures against terrorism and acts of sabotage and other serious crime on Norwegian soil. One of these measures was establishing the Special intervention unit (BT) in the Oslo police district (Jenssæter & Strøm-Norman, 1998; Olsen et al., 2006). The decision was made based on national and international societal and criminal developments. Criminal developments were, among other things, that students worldwide formed student circles that demonstrated against the established society during the cultural revolution that marked the late 1960s in the Western world. Some of these student circles evolved into organisations that used violence as a tool to get their message across. Terrorist organisations such as the 'Bader Meinhof' in West Germany and the 'Red Brigade' in Italy developed this way (Godbolt, 2022). Another decisive factor behind the decision was that on Christmas Eve in 1969, Phillips's petroleum found significant oil and gas deposits at the

‘Ekofisk’ oil field in the North Sea. This field is on the Norwegian continental shelf, leading to the start of oil revenues in Norway. The Norwegian government feared this would make Norway a terrorist target and therefore wanted to strengthen the police and the army with special units such as BT. The terrorist attack in Munich during the 1972 Olympics, and the murder of Ahmed Bouchikhi in Lillehammer in 1973, were also important factors behind the decision.

On 11 January 1976, BT was operational after heavy preparations. Over the years, BT has had many and varied assignments, including dealing with hijackings, hostage situations, murders, barricades, robbery, arrests, maritime operations, and more ordinary police assignments. BT's service is twofold. Half of the time goes to the police patrol service in Oslo, and the other half goes to training and developing its function as an anti-terrorism unit. The function demands training in special weapons and tactics such as breaching, maritime capacity and sniping (Bonde, 1994; Hægeland et al., 2020; Jenssæter & Strøm-Norman, 1998; Olsen & Myra, 2006).

The Bomb squad

In 1978, the Special intervention unit (BT) created a group handling explosives. Explosives were often used in terrorist attacks in the 1970s, making this competence necessary. The group was named ‘Explosive search and clearance group’ (ESR). ESR consisted of trained police officers at BT, whose main task was to penetrate buildings using explosives and clear booby traps. Another essential job added over time was to conduct bomb searches in the event of bomb threats and clear rooms and roads in advance of important person (VIP) visits and the like. The unit acquired its first bomb dogs in 1983. These were part of the ESR group during searches connected with bomb threats, findings of suspicious objects, and preliminary investigation. In 1984, His Majesty the King was evacuated from the University of Oslo after a bomb threat in connection with awarding the Nobel Peace Prize. He was unhappy with this and did not want to experience it again. The police were challenged regarding what competence was needed and which unit was to handle such a threat. It was decided that this responsibility would lay with the ESR group, but they could not do so without additional resources and an adaptation of their priorities. The authorities, therefore, decided to strengthen the group (Kvikne, 2001). In 1997, the ESR group moved from BT to the Dog service unit (K-9). In 2000, the unit's name changed to the ‘police bomb group’. The bomb group was reorganised in 2015 as a separate unit, separated from K-9 and placed in the ‘special section’ at the Oslo police district. This evolution partially reflected the development of technical means, which meant that bomb disposal could

not be fully integrated with a canine unit, whose responsibilities also went beyond bomb disposal. The Special Section was the beginning of the joint unit for national emergency resources (FNB), which later became the Police national emergency resources (NB). The bomb group was upgraded to a section in 2017 and changed its name to the police Bomb squad (BG).

The police Bomb squad consists of bomb technicians trained according to NATO standards (Holth, 2016). Its number of assignments has increased significantly over the years, and the unit assists police districts throughout Norway. A recent article from the police's magazine 'Politiforum' notes that bomb technicians must be practical, solution-oriented, and independent. They must have a remarkable ability to cooperate and absorb knowledge. Becoming a specialised bomb technician at the Bomb squad takes approximately three years from applying for admission to selection before completing their formation. The selection runs over 17 weeks before applicants can pass and be hired to start their education and training. The selection process is vital as one is dependent on the right personnel with the right attitudes and skills to perform the bomb technician profession (Ingebrigtsen, 2020).

The Crisis and hostage negotiation unit

In 1986, the Ministry of Justice decided that the Stavanger police district should train police officers as hostage negotiators (Røren, 2011). This district hosted an oil extraction facility, and the police wanted to be prepared if something happened. Two police officers were sent to England to take courses at Hendon Police College. In 1991, one of these and a police officer from Oslo travelled to the USA and Canada for further negotiation courses. They became responsible for training several new hostage negotiators in the police in 1993 in anticipation of the upcoming Winter Olympics in Lillehammer in 1994. These capabilities subsisted in the Norwegian police but were not institutionalised for another decade.

In 2004, the POD established a negotiating group with eight hostage negotiators and a leader in the Oslo police district (Røren, 2011). The Crisis and hostage negotiation unit (KGF) was established as a part of the Oslo police district two years later, in 2006. Before this, there was no organised unit. Crisis and hostage negotiators existed before the unit was formally formed and assembled. The need to pool capacity was considered sensible to professionalise the service. The newly established unit was given the role of a national response unit within police negotiations. KGF was established with a full-time head of the unit and part-time negotiators.

The negotiators were to train negotiation skills 20 per cent of their work hours. The head of KGF was also named the national negotiation coordinator. Until this point, police negotiators in Norway had existed since the early 1980s without a fixed coordinating organisation.

The terrorist attack in Oslo and at Utøya on 22 July 2011 existentially challenged the KGF asking the question, 'do negotiators have a role to play in handling incidents involving rapid mass injury?'. As a result of the attack, the KGF went through a lengthy process of analysing the unit's response and identifying steps needed to develop plausible negotiation strategies and heighten the response efficiency and quality. In the years that passed, the negotiator mindset evolved with significant changes in selection, education, training, equipment, and perspectives related to negotiation strategies. After many years with several incidents challenging the KGF's organisational model, the KGF became a full-time unit in 2016. The conclusion of the self-assessment process that started in July 2011 was that negotiators have a role in handling incidents involving mass injury. Therefore, today KGF negotiators work on active cases, patrolling, and training to better prepare. According to the current head of KGF (2022), KGF responds to 350 to 400 incidents each year.

The Helicopter unit

The Helicopter unit (HT) started as a pilot project by the Norwegian police in 1997 (Dahl, 2013). Since 1995, the Parliament has repeatedly questioned the need for helicopters in the police (St.meld.nr.51, 2001). The pilot project sought to test the effect of using helicopters in the police. A working group was appointed to assess the impact of this project. The idea was that Norway's geography, elongated with high mountains, should develop such a capacity for surveillance and transporting the police on assignment. The pilot project ended in 1999. The project's evaluation concluded that the helicopter's capacity had a very positive effect on police missions. Although the conclusion showed a need, critics wondered whether the cost was proportional to the usefulness of helicopters. Helicopter operations are expensive, and many commentators thought the money should strengthen ordinary police service instead.

Despite these criticisms, the authorities decided to establish a separate Helicopter unit in the police in September 2003 (Innst. S. nr. 155; St.meld.nr.51). Initially, the police rented two helicopters, and the agreement was to buy one of them by 2010. In the period up to 2011, the unit operated with varying financial support. HT was not given priority, which meant no

funding to keep the helicopters flying in the summer of 2011. The result of the helicopter not being available during the terrorist attack on 22 July has been widely discussed in the media, where criticism was not lacking (Dahl, 2013; Støland et al., 2012). Following the 22 July attacks, much work was done to make the Helicopter Unit more robust. In 2016, a formal decision came in from the government to acquire three new helicopters with enough personnel to operate them (Trædal, 2016). On 1 January 2020, the first new helicopter was operational. The police had one helicopter available 24 hours a day, all year, at that time. From 1 July 2020, it became possible to use two helicopters around the clock - one for observation and one for transport. The third helicopter acts as a reserve machine and can be used for training (Ingebrigtsen, 2020). HT is co-located today at the Police's national emergency centre (PNB) together with the other NB units, delivering two helicopters ready around the clock.

This section has shed light on the formation and development of NB and its component units. Each unit was established for different reasons and at different times. BT was politically determined in 1976 due to an expected threat. BG was developed as part of BT when a need for a special intervention capacity was felt more strongly. HT was formed through a political pilot project based on an assumed need in the police. KGF's formation arose due to a specific need to answer a particular purpose, which persisted. There is little publicly available information on the rationales and further development of the units. If anything, the institutionalisation and growth of these emergency resource units suggest they have proved valuable and vital in supporting police crisis management. Their publicly known history and my personal experience of belonging to NB for more than 20 years suggest that the units have become increasingly important for the police to answer pressing societal needs, which are felt more acutely in crises. Despite their importance, there is little to nothing in the public domain on the number of employees the units are expected to have, nor any degree of detail on their capabilities and organisation. Publicly available documents such as PBS only provide general guidance. The paucity of material on NB makes it challenging to determine whether the units are correctly dimensioned and have the right competence to assist the police districts in Norway. The next section seeks to fill this knowledge gap by examining how NB are organised and structured.

2. Structure and organisation of NB

This section discusses how the Police national emergency resources are organised and structured internally in NB and externally in the Norwegian police system. Discussing structure

is vital to understanding how NB units are organised to solve tasks. The organisation of the Norwegian police has changed over the years. Various reforms have reduced the number of police districts from 54 to 12 (Prop. 61 LS, 2015; St.meld.nr.22, 2001). The intention behind these reforms was, among others, to make the remaining police districts more extensive and robust. Therefore, it is interesting to look at NB's structure and organisation and assess whether this has also changed and developed toward a more centralised and robust capacity, following broader trends in the Norwegian police.

Before delving further into the structure and organisation of NB, it is worth noting that academic literature emphasises the importance of this approach. The field of organisational theory provides a specific lens for understanding and explaining crisis management (Andreassen & Bjørkelo, 2020). Here organisations are presented as tools developed to solve tasks and achieve specific goals (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2013). A key source of information about NB's structure and organisation within the broader Norwegian police ecosystem is the police emergency response system (Politidirektoratet, 2011). The police emergency response system (PBS) consists of three parts representing different decision levels, from broad guidelines for police preparedness to more specific directives at the Police Directorate (POD) and District levels. These documents provide key information that helps understand the tasks and specific goals set for the Norwegian police and its emergency resources. *PBS I – Guidelines for police preparedness* provide basic police emergency preparedness guidelines for challenges that may arise from extraordinary events and crises and are publicly available. *PBS II* are the p*olice directorate's* (POD) *management documents*. POD is responsible for the professional management, follow-up and development of the police districts, with the limitations resulting from the higher prosecution authority having the overall professional control of the criminal proceedings. POD ensures that political decisions, guidelines, and management decisions are communicated, specified, and followed (Politidirektoratet, 2020). *PBS II* form the basis for the *police districts' plans* and are not publicly available. *PBS III are the police district's planning*. The police districts' plans are based on PBS I and II guidelines and adapted to local conditions. The PBS define NB's purpose and goals: 'The national emergency preparedness resources (NB) are the police's special competence for averting and dealing with terrorist incidents and organised and other serious crime. They must assist in hazardous and complex incidents' (Politidirektoratet, 2020; Politidirektoratet, 2011). In short, NB is responsible for helping Norwegian authorities manage severe security crises.

The PBS (Politidirektoratet, 2020) stipulates that NB reports directly to the Chief of police in Oslo. They are financed and owned by the Oslo police district. The Chief of police in Oslo controls NB and lends them free of charge to other police chiefs in the districts of Norway when a local assessment finds their competence is requested. NB's expertise is too specific and expensive for it to be practically possible for all the police districts to develop similar capacities. Therefore, special units, such as NB's, were created to support police districts when their capabilities fell short. NB's units have unique expertise and resources to help the Police throughout Norway when needed. They aim to assist in hazardous and demanding assignments when the police districts' expertise is short. NB can also assist with police tactical, operational, and strategic advice in the police district. When NB conduct assignments outside the Oslo police district, its units are subject to the decisions made by the local police chief. The chief can give NB tactical control over its assigned tasks during the action phase of an assignment. This means that NB is responsible for solving a part of the mission and leveraging the resources needed to succeed (Politidirektoratet, 2020; Politidirektoratet, 2011).

Until autumn 2020, the four operational units of NB (BT, BG, HT and KGF) were in various locations around Oslo. Subsequently, they were co-located in a newly built Police National Emergency Centre (PNB). The PNB is placed at Taraldrud, about 20 km south of Oslo. This co-location resulted from a project that started in 2003-2004 to look at more appropriate locations for NBs units and became more relevant after the 22 July incidents. The 22 July incident led to significant public and political criticism of the police. A separate commission, the 'Gjørv commission', evaluated the incident and proposed, among other things, to establish PNB as a measure to increase national preparedness if a similar incident occurred again. The evaluation of NB's performance in the wake of serious incidents will be discussed in chapters 3 and 4. Regarding organisational matters, it is essential to remember that NB's units have historically been located separately. They have evolved in different places, partially limiting their interactions' frequency and depth. BT was situated at the police station in Oslo, and BG was located together with the Dog service unit (K-9) just north of Oslo. KGF was located west of Oslo, and HT was located at Gardermoen, Norway's main airport. As the history of these units made clear, they have always been autonomous and developed independently of each other.

In 2011, after the terrorist attack on 22 July, Minister of Justice Grete Faremo announced that the police's national emergency centre would be built. This was a major turning point that

tipped the organisation of NB from a decentralised to a more centralised model. Following this decision, the central government budget allocated public money to plan for PNB. In 2017, plans for the centre's appearance and the location at Taraldrud were confirmed. In the autumn of 2020, NB's units moved to the centre. The costs of the new PNB had then reached about 270 million Euros (Tekna, 2020). This development did not simply provide a haven for the unites of the Police's national emergency resources. The new centre is also available for all other police officers to use. The centre contains large garages, rooms for storing special equipment and vehicles, and separate hangars for helicopters and a runway. Externally, there are large areas with training facilities for physical exercise, shooting and tactical training. The centre also has a coordination room equipped with appropriate communications means. It provides a unique contact point where all the units can be reached and coordinated during assignments (Politiet, 2020). My personal experience suggests that co-locating NB's resources has enabled more frequent and robust interactions between each unit and its officers and promoted better situational awareness among them. This decision is the most significant development in the history of NB and remains to this day primarily perceived as a positive development.

NB's units are of different sizes, and they are all led by section leaders who have several leaders under them. The head of NB also belongs to the chief of police's management group in the Oslo police district. The head of NB has a staff that helps him manage the administration of NB. Following the co-location in the autumn of 2020, a new section was established in NB to provide tactical support (STS). STS helps the operational sections with material procurement, equipment maintenance, intelligence, and staffing of the coordination point at PNB. This section is still under construction and will not be described any further. Figure 3 (below) shows the structure of NBs organisations today (2022).

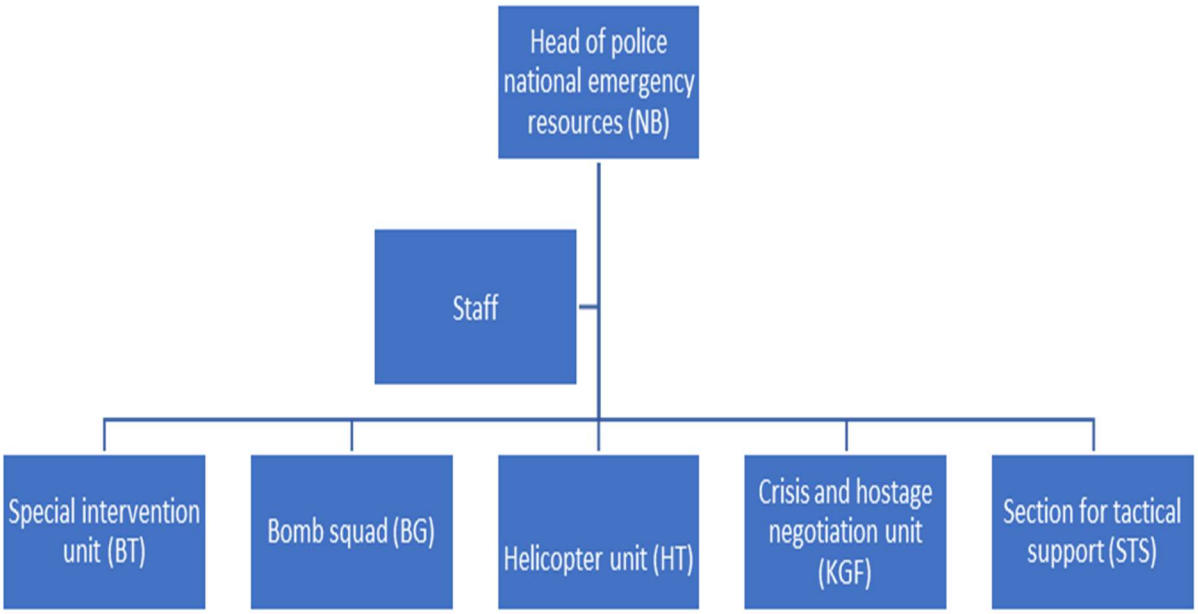

Figure 3 - NB's structure (2022)

Figure 4 (below) shows a map of Norway that helps to understand the location of the PNB more easily within the broader geography of Norwegian police districts. The arrow indicates the Police's national emergency centre (PNB), where NB's units were co-located in 2020. The map clearly shows the great distance that separates PNB from some of the northernmost regions of Norway.

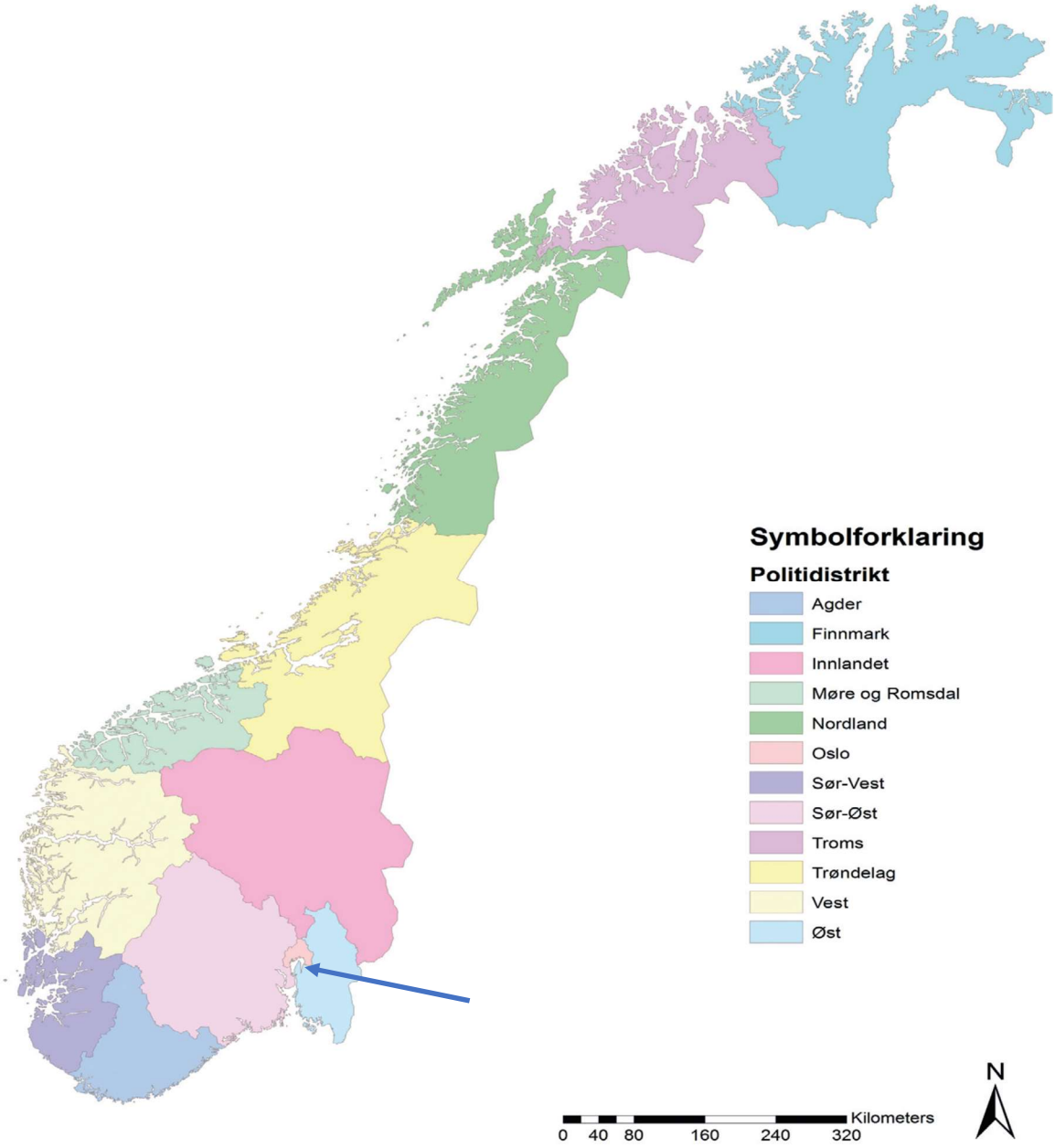

Figure 4 - NBs localisation in Norway. Source: (NOU 2017: 9, 2017)

NB is organisationally located in the Oslo police district. Each police district is organised with a Chief of police and several sections for support. Figure 5 below updates the organisational chart used earlier in this study (figure 2) to show where NB fits within the organisation of the Oslo police district. NB is added in a coloured box at the same level as other services and units.

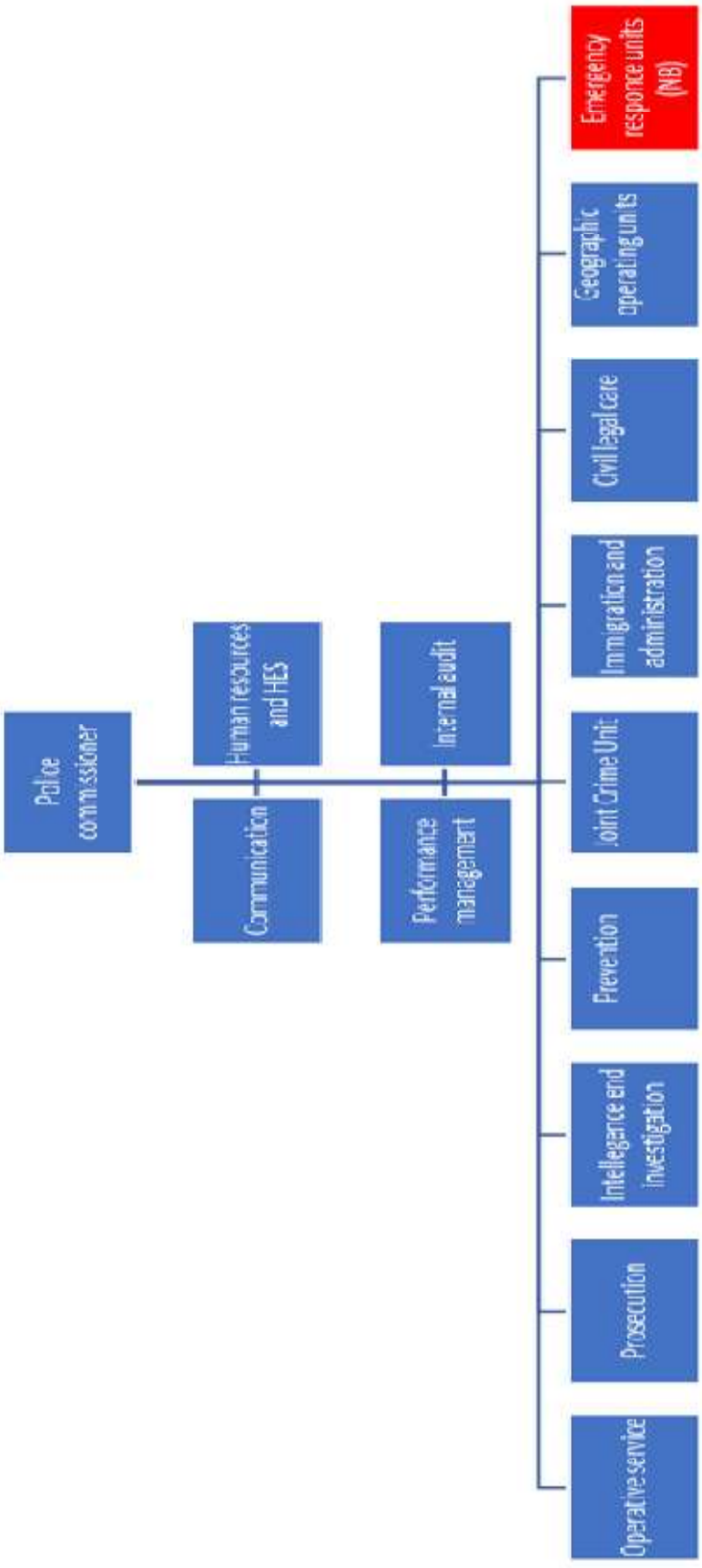

Figure 5 - NB's place in the Oslo police district. Source: Author and (NOU 2017:11, 2017).

When a police district needs assistance from NB, the Chief of police in the district, or their deputy, must contact the Chief of police in Oslo or their deputy to ask if NB's resources can assist. If this request is granted, the requesting chief of police will then 'own' the supporting team(s) from NB until the assignment is completed (Politidirektoratet, 2020). This is a time-consuming procedure. In practice, requests can come orally at a lower level first, so responses can be triggered quickly and formalised afterwards through a written request from the right level.

Effective emergency preparedness requires that sufficient competent personnel from the various sections of NB are always available to solve assignments. Assignments do not always involve deploying an entire team from NB to solve a crisis. A large part of NB's assignments requires sending individual advisers to local districts, where they will liaise between the local district and NB. This practice is vital to develop a shared situational awareness between NB and the police districts. Advising also involves explaining how NB intend to solve the task the local Chief of police has given them. The district's Chief of police must approve such plans since they are often associated with high risks. NB officers typically confront dangerous threat actors, which require weapons and sometimes explosives, thus posing increased risks of injury to officers and the local population.

This section has shown how NB are organised in the broader system of the Norwegian police. NB is co-located at the Police national emergency centre just outside Oslo. The co-location came as a measure mainly after the terrorist incident on 22 July 2011. At the same time, the police districts were reorganised into fewer but more robust districts. The goal of this reform was to provide better nationwide assistance in assignments that require it. In moving the units together, it is also important to point out that NB also organised itself differently. NB created a new section (STS) to support the operative units regarding material and intelligence and a contact point to receive questions about advice, help, and support. The location of NB in the southeast of Norway gives rise to questions. A reasonable question is whether this is a suitable location to be able to respond throughout Norway. Although NB have got new helicopters that respond to crises faster, helicopters have significant limitations related to the weather in a country where poor conditions often prevent helicopter flights. NB's capacities are extensive in personnel and equipment, which can move around Norway when the districts require their support. The following section will examine in more detail what resources and capabilities NB have to assist the police districts.

3. NB's resources and capabilities

This section discusses NB's resources and capabilities. Capabilities refer to NB's ability to provide professional services in several areas and over time. Capabilities rely upon different types of resources that NB have to fulfil missions. Resources include human resources and associated skills (specialist teams such as the Bomb Squad and snipers), technological resources (e.g., communications systems) and equipment (e.g., vehicles, weapons, protective gear) and financial resources. Focusing on resources and capabilities is crucial to understanding what is unique about NB and why their service is vital to the police districts.

NB's units are expected to function well on their own as separate units when required by their assigned assignment. However, they should also work well together in joint missions. Here, they should be complementary and mutually reinforce each other. BT leads the assignments that are tackled together by multiple units from NB. BT's commander is then the 'operational leader' of all the units, and the other unit commanders are advisers and supporters. NB can provide professional advice on its subjects of expertise to decision-makers at all levels of the police'. This typically involves proposing solutions based on NB's capacities and, at the same time, assessing risks associated with various courses of action (NOU 2017:11, 2017). As previously described, much information about NB is classified. This also applies to resources and capabilities. However, some information is available through open sources like government papers. The following paragraphs use these sources to provide an overview of what resources and capabilities NB possess.

The Special intervention unit

BT is the police's national Special intervention unit against terrorism and serious organised crime. BT can carry out efforts and act against all targets on land, sea and offshore installations (NOU 2017:11, 2017; Politidirektoratet, 2020). They also assist with police tactical advice related to armed response and counter-terrorism at the police district's tactical, operational, and strategic levels. BT has over a hundred employees. Police officers at BT are recruited from all over the country. The selection process to join BT is very demanding and lasts several weeks. The admission requirements are based on physical and mental fitness and an assessment of the ability to cooperate, as well as attitudes and other human qualities against the requirements set by BT. Applicants undergo medical and psychological tests and must be able to pass vetting for a security clearance. Due to the unit's area of responsibility, there are strict requirements for

admission, and the candidates are carefully assessed. Recruitment occurs in collaboration with the Police academy (PHS) and takes the form of an introductory course. The candidates who complete the course become employed as police officers at BT. The dropout rate is significant (Glomseth, 2002; Stensønes, 2018). BT perform daily police service in the Oslo police district, but the personnel are also required to train 50 per cent of the service time or around 900 hours annually. This training is regulated through a fixed annual program to maintain certification requirements for a special force in various disciplines related to counter-terrorism, such as close-quarters battle (CQB), explosive breaching and sniping. According to BT's figures, more than half of the annual assignments (around 140 in 2016) are within the Oslo police district.

The Bomb squad

The Bomb squad (BG) is responsible nationwide for handling police cases involving explosives. BG also assists with police tactical advice related to Explosive Ordinance Disposal/Improvised Explosive Devices Disposal (EOD/IEDD) and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) weapons to the police district's tactical, operational, and strategic levels. BG consists of bomb technicians and 'bomb dogs' trained to detect explosives. The technicians use specialised equipment to solve police tasks related to explosives and crime. Their education as bomb technicians is done in the armed forces. BG plans and conducts searches for explosives in connection with state visits and similar situations. The unit can also identify and remove suspicious items believed to be explosives and CBRN sources. BG further supports the Special intervention unit (BT) in operations where it can be expected to find IEDs or CBRN. BG's bomb technicians are recruited and selected among experienced police officers from all police districts. The Bomb squad trains for 50 per cent of their working time and is on standby and ready for emergency response within two hours. In 2011, BG consisted of 10 people. Today's number is unknown due to secrecy. However, based on the number of assignments, responsibilities and public information, it is reasonable to believe that BG is composed of around 20-30 police officers. Since 2011, BG has made significant efforts to develop a body of knowledge and practices about the IED and CBRN threat posed by a terrorist (Politidirektoratet, 2011). Figures from 2016 show that BG had about 170 assignments that year (NOU 2017:11, 2017).

The Crisis and hostage negotiation unit

The crisis and hostage negotiators (KGF) are the police's national experts in negotiations regarding terrorism, hostage and kidnapping situations. They can also assist with police tactical advice related to such negotiations at the police district's tactical, operational, and strategic levels. KGF can assist independently or in support of the Special intervention unit (BT) or other police forces during missions (Politidirektoratet, 2011)**.** The unit trains about 450 hours annually. KGF's professionalism is recognized in Norway and used by the police, the military, and the business community. Several psychologists are attached to the unit to support professional development in line with relevant scientific and medical knowledge. Recruitment takes place through a selection process. KGF also educates police officers in different police districts to function as negotiators. However, these police officers are not subject to the same approval regime and training frequency as crisis and hostage negotiators at NB. Figures from 2016 show that KGF had about 250 assignments that year (NOU 2017:11, 2017)**.** The current number of employees at KGF is secret, but it is reasonable to assume that they must be between 10-20 police officers based on public information, responsibilities and tasks.

The Helicopter unit

The main task of the Helicopter unit (HT) is to provide air support to all the police districts during various types of police assignments, mainly as an observation platform but also as a means of rapid transport. The helicopters can function as a command platform in severe incidents and armed police operations. HT can conduct surveillance on suspicion of serious crime. In addition, they conduct general searches, surveillance, vehicle pursuits and searches for missing persons. The assignments HT assists with are photo and video documented from the helicopter (Politidirektoratet, 2011). HT's operational requirements are enshrined in the Police emergency preparedness system (PBS) and indicate that the helicopter service should be ready for emergency response from the helicopter base in 15 minutes. The pilots at HT consist of both civilian and police-trained pilots. The rest of the personnel are police trained. All personnel at HT have been recruited and selected to carry out complex police operations in aircraft.

At least 200 flight hours are required annually to maintain aircraft operational status. Most of the assignments are in Oslo and the southeast part of Norway. The new helicopters can lift 750 kilograms and are certified for ten people, including the flight crew. They also have a more

extended range (Grindhein & Ingebrigtsen, 2019). Figures from 2016 show that HT had about 1100 assignments that year, thus making it the busiest unit by the number of assignments (NOU 2017:11, 2017). Even though this is a high number of assignments, it is essential to note the difference in the nature of HT and other units' assignments. HT can fly over an area and look for vehicles, people, and other items of interest, thus completing a range of assignments in a single flight. These will be recorded as separate assignments, which boosts the unit's number of assignments. In contrast, the Bomb squad can spend a day identifying, securing, and destroying a single explosive object, which will count as a single assignment.

All the NB units have appropriate modern equipment required to be professional units in their area of responsibility. This is apparent from the government reports used above and even more publicly through news media coverage of the units, which often shows photographs of special equipment, including helicopters and fast boats (Grindhein & Ingebrigtsen, 2019; Holth, 2016; Hægeland et al., 2020; Inderhaug, 2019; Ingebrigtsen, 2020; Myrvang et al., 2020; Stensønes, 2018). Beyond these material resources, NB units also have developed and maintained unique expertise in their respective field. Personnel and their skills are the most crucial resource NB have, hence the importance of personnel selection, development and training.

The funding of NB is classified information. However, given the equipment and highly specialised skills NB personnel develops, one can assume that NB are much more costly than a typical police unit. The special equipment used by the various specialist areas, from helicopters to weapons, is costly. In addition, all the specialists at NB have a significantly larger personal equipment package than what is distributed to 'ordinary police.' This applies to clothing, protective equipment, weapons, and technical equipment, which must be a large sum. In 2017, NB consisted of four units bringing together close to 200 employees (NOU 2017:11, 2017). In 2022, the addition of another unit - STS – added more personnel. The fact that most NB personnel needs to remain available 24/7, and related contingency arrangements, further add to the cost of NB. Under such arrangements, employees sell their free time, which is costly.

In 2010 Halle estimated that the Special section (previous name of NB) cost around 28 million Euros annually. 2010 was a while ago, but it is the only public information available to describe the economics associated with NB. At that time, the Dog service unit (K-9) and the Police horse unit were also part of the special section. They made up 25.4 per cent of the employees in the special section, which reportedly employed 224 personnel (Halle, 2012). 2010 is a while ago,

and it is reasonable to assume that today's budget is significantly higher, not the least following the development of the helicopter unit. The NOU (2017:11) suggests that NB consisted of 269 employees in 2017 (45 additional employees since 2012) without K-9 and the Police horse unit. This supports the notion that current expenditures are significantly higher than in 2010 since the number of employees has increased. Furthermore, this increase consists of several specialist units in costly disciplines (NOU 2017:11, 2017). The NOU (2017:11) further states that the national emergency preparedness resources are included in the general framework grant for the Oslo police district, given by the Norwegian Police Directorate. NB are, therefore, subject to annual internal priorities in the Oslo police district. Over time, this has made it challenging to assess investments and maintenance costs, thus affecting the police's ability to effectively manage and plan for emergency preparedness. Fighting for funds from year-to-year causes unpredictability and difficulty in planning and prioritising over the long term. This situation has resulted in a significant backlog of material investments. Despite this, it seems that NB have done well looking at current staffing and capacities.

This section has emphasised the uniqueness of NB in terms of resources and capabilities. NB resources range from selected and specially trained police officers to advanced equipment necessary for their unique responsibilities. NB can operate both as a large unit and as individual units when the assignments require it. NBs disciplines are unique in Norway. No one else can carry out assignments with the same competence as NB. Local SWAT teams and negotiators exist but do not have the same professionalism and experience as KGF and BT. The following section examines how NB cooperates and assists others in assignments with more traditional police units, which is an essential skill for NB to play its support role.

4. NB's operational procedures and adaptability

This section examines NB's ability to deal with crises and how NB works with others to solve crises. NB does not 'own' any crises. The police district responsible for the geographical area where the crisis emerges 'owns' it. They can ask for support from NB to solve the crisis, and NB will then assist with the requested competence to help resolve the crisis. Therefore, NB's ability to collaborate with others is crucial. Good cooperation relies on effective information sharing to develop shared situational awareness. Seeing how NB's units adjust to crises is essential to say something about NB's ability to solve the challenges they face. This applies to everyday crises that the units solve alone and significant crises that NB solves as a joint unit.

The PBS provides general guidelines related to NB and which tasks fall under the unit's primary responsibility. PBS also describes the procedures for obtaining assistance from NB. The historical procedure expected the chief of police in the requesting district to contact the chief of police in the Oslo police district to get approval to get assistance from NB. Today (2022), the head of the local police control room can contact NB's contact point directly, and NB have the authority to consider whether it will assist (Politidirektoratet, 2020). The Chief of the Oslo police district shall only be informed of the result of the request and has the authority to review this if necessary (Politidirektoratet, 2020; Politidirektoratet, 2011).

Terrorism is a serious crime that often crosses regional and international borders. In Norway, the penal code (Straffeloven, 2005) and the PBS (Politidirektoratet, 2020) define what can be considered an act of terrorism. Section 131 of the Penal Code defines terrorism as 'an offence committed with the intention of seriously disrupting a function of fundamental importance in society, such as the legislative, executive or judicial authority, energy supply, secure supply of food or water, banking and monetary affairs or health and infection control'. Terrorism is also about instilling severe fear in a population for political purposes. Conventional academic definitions similarly emphasise the role of fear and political violence. Hoffman, for example, defines terrorism as 'the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in pursuing political change' (Hoffman, 2006, p. 40). The PBS defines terrorism as the 'unlawful use of, or threat of use of, force or violence against persons or property to put pressure on the country's authorities or population or society at large to achieve political, religious or ideological goals' (Politidirektoratet, 2020, p. 238). In Norway, terrorism is considered a severe form of crime. The updated PBS of 2020 (Politidirektoratet, 2020) notes that severe crimes include violent crimes, terrorism, ongoing life-threatening violence (PLIVO), hostage situations/detention, aggravated bodily injury/murder, and bomb threats. These types of crime often prompt police districts to request support from NB.

Daily, NB units provide routine services related to their expertise. Even for NB, major transboundary crises are the exception, not the norm. On a daily basis, the helicopter unit transports people and conducts surveillance. The Bomb squad conducts searches and handles suspicious items. KGF negotiates and talks to people in difficult phases of their life. BT does ordinary police duties such as arresting people. This 'everyday' way of working provides valuable and vital training and on-the-job experience for the units. This necessarily includes collaborating with other units and stakeholders and teaching the units to adapt to the different

needs of different districts and partners. These everyday assignments help NB units develop relevant experiences and trust at the unit level and with partners, preparing them for more major incidents. When a police district call on NB for routine work, this helps both parties to develop common situational awareness and a boarder understanding of their respective tactics, techniques and procedures. From NB's perspective, this can then inform the level of support its specialists provide. NB also advises the districts on solving the crisis initially, knowing they have become more robust and can solve parts of the crises they confront. This can give NB time to travel to the relevant district to assist physically when or if the crisis escalates. When an urgent crisis emerges, NB units will provide some initial advice and move out faster with less knowledge of the situation they are tasked to assist.

The general principles of responsibility, equality, subsidiarity, and cooperation form the basis for all safety and emergency preparedness work in Norway (Politidirektoratet, 2020). NB follows these crisis management principles both internally and in collaboration with others. Internally, the *responsibility* principle applies to the various capabilities NB units develop and maintain. These specialised capabilities are unique and distinct. For example, a pilot does not have the skills to engage in an explosive ordnance mission, and a bomb technician does not have the skills to fly a helicopter. These are distinct professional responsibilities. Following the principle of *equality*, NB and its partners' structures do not vary whether its NB units deal with daily or extraordinary crises. In a crisis, NB only reinforces the original command structures. In addition, an operational leader becomes the leader of NBs joint mission. The *subsidiarity* principle also applies to NB. Its units constantly try to solve the assignments with no more personnel than necessary and with the proper capabilities. BG, for example, does not need BT to join them if they are to handle explosives that have been found but that are not related to a live threat. The principle of *cooperation* is also a fundamental principle for NB. A crisis is owned by the individual police district where the crisis occurred (Politidirektoratet, 2020). The police district can ask NB to assist in resolving the crisis. Then NB will be given a partial responsibility to solve a part of the task. Then cooperation and communication are crucial. Nevertheless, it is the police district that owns the assignment and is responsible for the assignment. When NB assists a district, either as a unified unit or with some units, NB is given an assignment from the police district that is part of a more extensive operation. It can be, for example, apprehending a person or removing explosives. The police district is responsible but uses unique expertise through NB to solve part of the assignment. Tasks such as security, guarding and investigation are handled by the police district itself. Therefore, it is crucial to

have good cooperation and communication to maintain shared situational awareness. It is easier to work towards a common goal when all involved have a mutual understanding of the problem based on the same information. A common situational understanding is a critical success factor for a good resolution of most crises (Eid & Johnsen, 2006).

Critical events like crises are experienced most intensely within the first hour (Pappas & Jore, 2017). Therefore, police districts must build a local emergency preparedness capacity in cooperation with many local partners such as fire brigades, ambulances, and the Armed Forces. Strengthening the police district's ability to cooperate with others to cope with emerging crises is also one of the missions of PNB. Besides being the location of NB, PNB also serves the rest of the Norwegian police. A large part of the Norwegian police visits PNB to train and engage in continuous professional development (Inderhaug, 2019; Inderhaug, 2020). One of the main goals of establishing PNB was that the police should have a place to train together to better deal with serious crime and crises. The centre facilitates such training to prevent, avert and deal with extraordinary incidents and crises, where the goal is to increase the population's security. The PNB offers training facilities for emergency resources, bodyguard services and emergency personnel from the 12 police districts. Some training and exchange of experience with the Armed Forces and international units are also carried out at the centre. This joint training with the NB has created an excellent arena for cooperation and joint training, which has strengthened the overall crisis management capacity of the Norwegian police (Politiet, 2020).

This part has shown that NB is dependent on cooperating and training with the police districts and a broader range of societal partners. NB and the districts need to know each other and understand their respective competencies to solve crises effectively. Frequent interactions help to form trust and solve assignments and crises better. The Norwegian crisis management principles and the PBS provide a framework for various units and districts to interact and manage crises. The training and interactions between NB and police districts suggest that both take Norwegian crisis management principles seriously. Measures such as strengthening the district's own police officers' tactical skills mean that the districts are, to a greater extent, able to start crisis management themselves. In addition, the districts will receive tactical advice from NB in the initial phase of a crisis while NB personnel prepare and travel toward the assignment. Overall, the development and centralisation of NB within PNB are well aligned with Norway's core principle of policing and crisis management.

Conclusion

NB have evolved drastically over time. Both in terms of personnel and material, and not least, competencies. The history of NB units shows that there has been a gradual increase in personnel and investment in the units. The units have evolved in step with the growing number of missions they are expected to undertake. Much of the information about NB are classified, but there are enough publicly available sources to depict NB's unique capacities and expertise. New capacities, like better helicopters, have emerged in line with societal needs. Available literature suggests that developments have mainly occurred reactively, following crises and political pressure, rather than based on medium or long-term analyses and anticipation of incidents.

Overall, these developments have significantly strengthened the NB in recent decades. NB appears as a professional and modern set of units capable of solving various assignments. The move toward centralisation has led to some efficiencies, such as facilitating access to NB and cooperation between its respective units. However, colocation also creates some problems. The fact that NB are located southeast of Oslo means that it is a real challenge to arrive on time in large parts of Norway, specifically in the Northern regions, in a reasonable time. At the same time, police reforms have created fewer and more robust police districts that are better able to handle many crises themselves. NB host and train local emergency response personnel to support this local capacity, thus empowering local districts to manage various crises. When situations require support from NB, the police districts are now better prepared to cope with the initial assignment while waiting for NB's help. This form of burden-sharing or compromise is perhaps the most significant change in the organisation of emergency resources in recent years. NB has clearly become more of a reinforcement resource that solves crises the districts have already started responding to. Though NB can still serve as a first responder in events that have been anticipated, more often than not, the police districts respond first. To assess how NB used to deal with crises, the next chapter focuses on the case of the 22 July 2011 attacks in Oslo and Utøya. The case provides insights into understanding the threat picture at the time, NB’s capacities, and how key procedures worked in practice. The incident was a turning point that explains significant changes for the Norwegian police and NB, which have already been partially discussed so far.

Chapter 3 - The 22 July 2011 attack

This chapter focuses on the case of the terror attack in Norway on 22 July 2011. On that day, one perpetrator caused 77 deaths and countless injuries in the worst terrorist attack on Norwegian soil since World War II. The incident is a good case to examine the performance of the Norwegian police, specifically that of the Police national emergency resources (NB), in a major crisis. The incident involved several police districts, special agencies, emergency services, the army and civil society. Describing all these actors' efforts is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, the chapter will focus on NB's capacities and actions. The incident was marked by chaos and great destruction, which posed demanding challenges. The case study selection thus focuses on an extreme case. While the previous chapter mostly dealt with routine procedures and everyday crises, this attack stands out as an extraordinary assignment. Therefore, it is not representative of the broader reality of NB's work but does provide a useful 'stress test' to understand crisis management in extreme circumstances. This crisis has also led to numerous evaluations, generating much public criticism of the handling of the incident and a range of recommendations. These evaluations pointed out shortfalls in the Norwegian police and provided much material to develop a detailed study and contribute to broader debates on the Norwegian police, government, and society.

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part develops a narrative that sheds light on the incident in central Oslo and Utøya, just outside Oslo. The second part zooms in on the role of the police and NB in handling the incident. The last part evaluates NB's handling of the incident and what the Gjørv commission identified as 'points of failure.' The chapter is mainly based on evaluations of the Gjørv commission, the Sønderland commission, and the Oslo and Southern Buskerud police districts. The Gjørv commission report is the biggest and most well-known of these four public reports. It was a government-appointed commission, and the evaluation became an official Norwegian public investigation (NOU).

1. The terrorist attack on 22 July 2011

This section deals with the events in the government quarter in central Oslo and at Utøya. It summarises the attacks that provide a background for understanding the evaluations discussed later in the chapter. The summary is based on official evaluations from the Gjørv commission, the Sønderland commission, and the evaluations from the Oslo and Southern Buskerud police districts. (NOU2012:14, 2012; Politidirektoratet, 2012; Politidistrikt, 2012). Although these

evaluations are slightly different, the course of events is largely concordant and presented here. Parts of the narrative put a specific emphasis on NB.

Government quarter

At 15:25 on Friday, 22 July 2011, a 950-kilo bomb placed in a van exploded in the government quarter in Oslo. Eight people were killed instantly, and ten were hospitalised with severe or life-threatening injuries. In addition, many suffered minor injuries and mental illness and stress of various kinds. The perpetrator put approximately 325 people in and around the government quarter's buildings in acute danger of death by detonating the bomb. The explosion caused massive damage. The government quarter and the surrounding streets were turned into what looked like a war zone. The political power apparatus had been hit harder than ever since the German attack on 9 April 1940. The same afternoon, the operations centre at the police stations in Oslo, Hønefoss (Northern Buskerud) and Drammen (Southern Buskerud) received alarming messages from young people gathered at a political summer camp on Utøya in the Hole municipality. The message was that a man in a police uniform walked around the island, shooting at young people. Several had already been killed. A horrific mass murder was happening. A total of 69 people, mostly young people, were killed in this massacre. About half as many suffered severe or life-threatening gunshot wounds.

A few hours earlier, at 12:03, the 32-year-old Anders Behring Breivik had parked a silver-coloured Fiat on Hammersborg square in Oslo. He intended to use the vehicle as a getaway car after the planned attack. After parking, Breivik took a taxi home to his mother's apartment in Hoffsveien on the western side of Oslo. The rental car he had equipped with a bomb was parked there. Breivik had spent several weeks producing the bomb. It consisted of a stack of plastic bags filled with finely ground fertiliser, aluminium powder, and diesel. In the middle of the pile, Breivik had placed a homemade detonator. It was connected to a fuse with a burning time of about seven minutes that could be ignited from the cabin of the large van he had rented. Just before 15:00, Breivik set his car with his homemade bomb in motion.

At 15:17, the car arrived at Einar Gerhardsen's square, in front of a high-rise block which housed the Ministry of Justice and the Prime Minister's office. Breivik parked the car close to the building, at the entrance. After about 20 seconds, he stepped out of the car and locked the driver's seat door. Breivik had then set fire to the fuse. He walked quickly up Grubbegata in the

direction of Hammersborg square with a pistol in his hand, a helmet with a visor pulled down and wearing a police-like uniform. It took approximately seven minutes from when Breivik left the car until the bomb went off. In that time, about 70 people passed the incorrectly parked van. None of the passers-by were police or security guards. The bomb explosion killed eight people. They died instantly or quickly from pervasive blasting damage (NOU 2012:14, 2012). Figure 6 below shows a rough timeline of the incident in the government quarter. The following figure 7 shows a map section of central Oslo with the buildings in the government quarter. The red dot indicates where Breivik parked the van with the bomb.

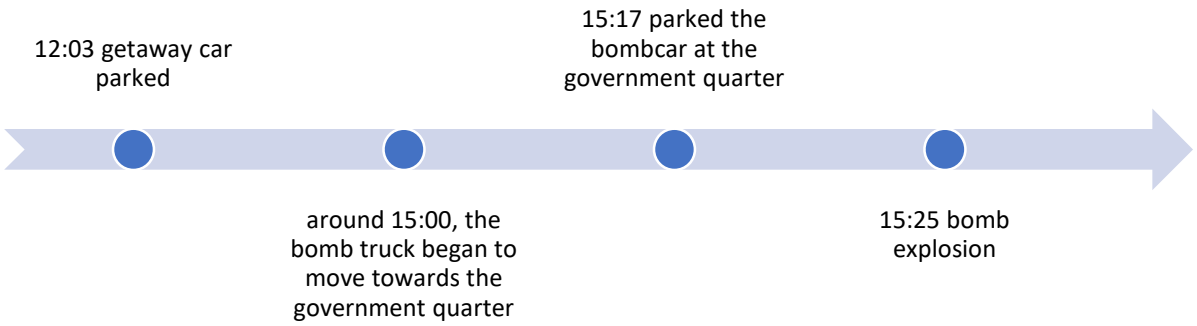

Figure 6 - Timeline of the bombing of the government quarter 22.7.2011

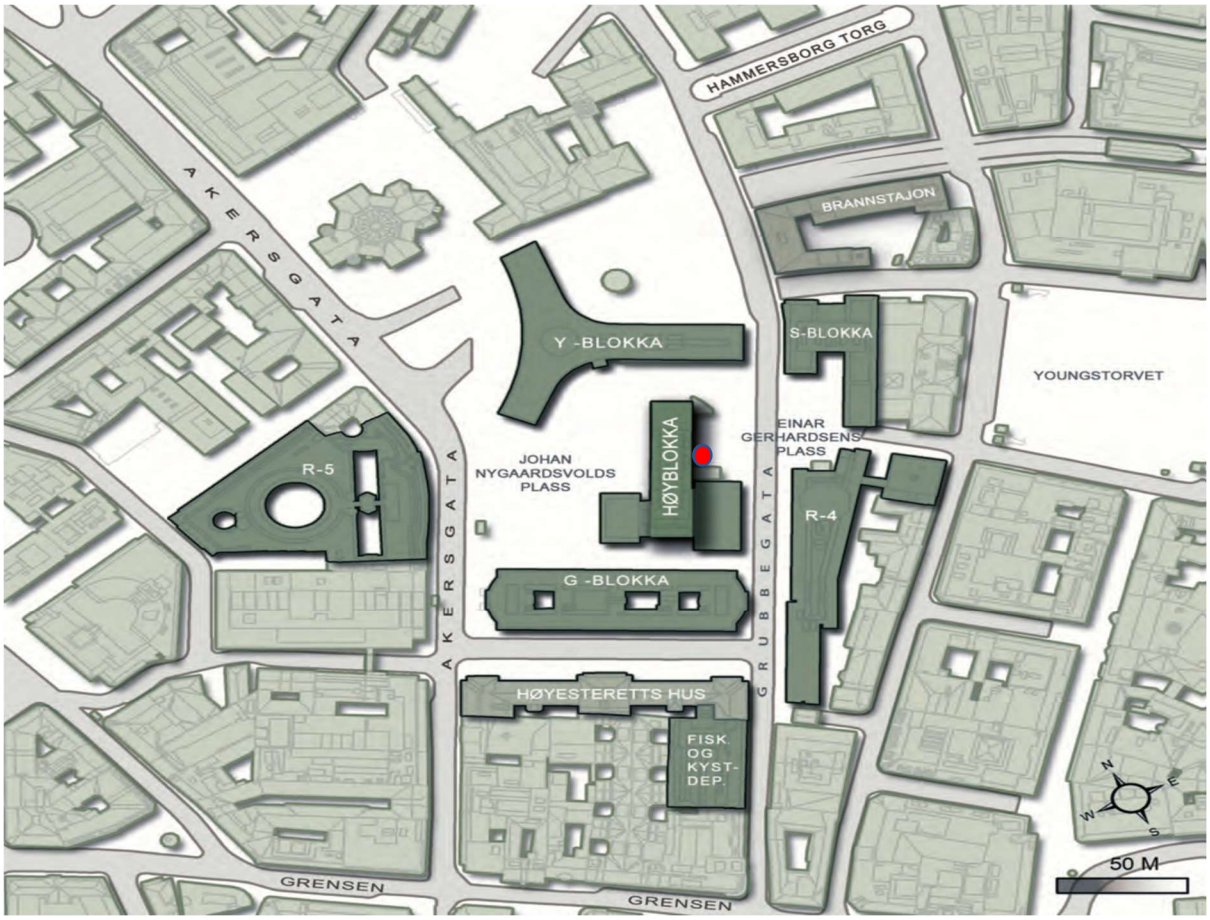

Figure 7 - Map of the government quarter in Oslo and the surrounding area. Red dot marks where the bomb car was parked. Source: The 22 July Commission (NOU 2012:14, 2012)

Utøya

While there was chaos in the centre of Oslo and a large-scale rescue operation was underway, the perpetrator came out of Oslo unhindered. He had set his course toward his next target, the Workers' Youth League (AUF) summer camp on the island of Utøya. The 12,000 square meter island in Tyrifjorden has been a gathering point for the AUF for several decades. On 22 July 2011, approximately 560 people stayed on the island. Figure 8 (below) shows the perpetrator's itinerary from the government quarter to Utøya.

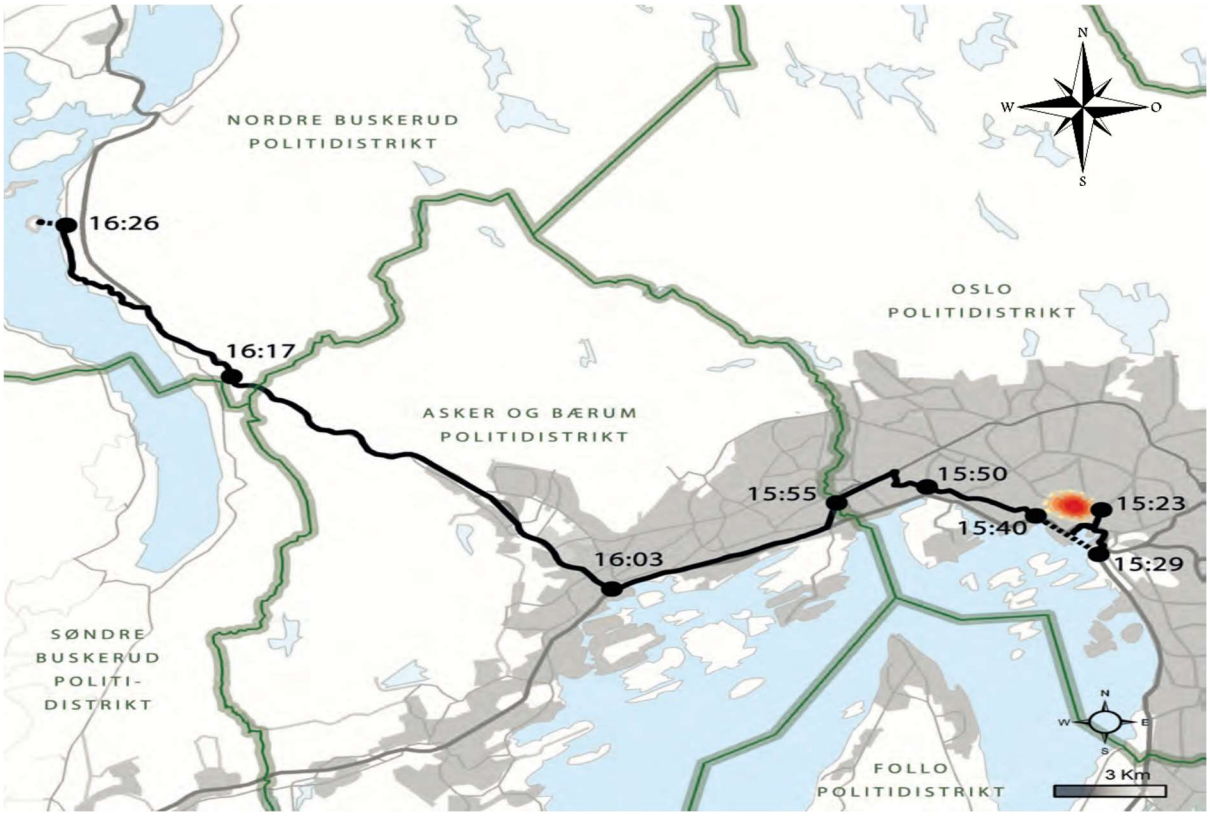

Figure 8 - The perpetrator's itinerary from Oslo to Utøya. Source: 22 July Commission (NOU 2012:14, 2012)

Breivik arrived on the landside east of Utøya at about 16:30. He stayed in the car for more than half an hour before driving to Utøya pier. On the shore, there was a small boat pier and a quay for the ferry 'MS Thorbjørn', an old military landing craft that AUF had acquired in 1997. One of the AUF guards went over and greeted Breivik. Breivik stated that he came from the police security service (PST) to carry out a routine security check on the island after the bomb blast in Oslo. He was wearing a fake police uniform which consisted of dark trousers with fastened reflective straps, a vest and a wetsuit-like shirt with a police badge made of plastic on his shoulders. Around his neck, Breivik had a false police identification card, which he presented to the guard on request. He said that he was sent to secure the young people on Utøya after the bomb explosion that had taken place in central Oslo. The ferry MS Thorbjørn was requisitioned to transport Breivik over to Utøya. The other passengers on board were the general manager of AUF's activities on Utøya, Monica Bøsei, the skipper of MS Thorbjørn and a sailor. At the ferry quay, Bøsei and the skipper talked to Breivik. After a short exchange of words, he began to carry some equipment from the car to the ferry. There was heavy equipment in boxes and weapons, both a rifle and a pistol on his thigh. The gun was equipped with binoculars and a bayonet. At the request of Bøsei, Breivik agreed to pack the gun in a pair of black garbage bags.

She did not want the police visit to scare the young people. Onboard the ferry, the perpetrator put white earplugs in his ears. Utøya was only 625 meters away, and the crossing lasted 7-8 minutes. Arriving on the island, the skipper offered to pick up a van and drive Breivik's heavy equipment up to the main house.

At time 17:17, Breivik and the other passengers went ashore on Utøya, where Trond Berntsen met them. Berntsen was a police officer but now worked as a volunteer guard at Utøya in his spare time. After greeting them, he, Bøsei and Breivik went up the hill to the white-painted main house. At the same time, the skipper drove Breivik's equipment up to the back of the house. As the skipper rounded the corner of the house, the first shots were fired. Monica Bøsei and Trond Berntsen were shot at close range from behind. It was the start of a massacre that would eventually claim 69 lives. In addition, a further 33 people suffered severe or life-threatening physical injuries. Hundreds of young people were exposed to a mental strain almost impossible for others to imagine.

Police estimate that the first shots were fired at 17:21 (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 26). Breivik continued up the hill towards the cafe building after the murders of Bøsei and Berntsen. Along the way, he shot and killed a person near the gravel road. Other people who were on the ground fled towards the cafe building. When Breivik came up to the cafe building at approximately 17:23, he shot and killed three people on the gravel site in front of the main entrance. Breivik then systematically crossed the island and killed those who crossed his path. He often called the young people to him by posing as a police officer and then gathering them before executing them. At 17:59, the northern Buskerud police district control room received a short and confusing phone call from a hidden number. The caller introduced himself as 'commander Anders Behring Breivik in the Norwegian anti-communist resistance movement' (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 27). He stated that he was on Utøya and wanted to surrender. Neither Breivik nor the control room operator had time to say much more before the call was interrupted. Breivik's first conversation with the police occurred while walking through the forest from the café building. Breivik probably had no strong desire to surrender at this time. Shortly after the conversation was interrupted, he resumed the massacre by killing many more young people. Breivik's next phone call to the police took place at 18:24. This time the call was connected to the control room in the Southern Buskerud police district. Again, he presented himself with his full name and stated that he was the commander of the Norwegian resistance movement against the Islamization of Europe and Norway. He added that he had carried out 'an operation on

behalf of the Knights Templar' and that it was now 'acceptable to surrender to Delta' (Delta is the callsign of the Special intervention unit - BT) (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 27). The call was interrupted without the operator being allowed to call back. Breivik arrived at the southern tip of the island at about 18:30. There he came across many young people hiding at the water's edge. He shot and killed five of them and shot and injured another five or six. Afterwards, Breivik went up into the forest on the island's southern tip.

The first warning about what happened on Utøya came to Buskerud municipal emergency medical communication centre (AMK) in Drammen. The alert was registered at 17:24. It was the skipper of MS Thorbjørn who called a few minutes after he had witnessed the first killings outside the main house. The operator, who quickly understood the seriousness of the incident, notified the police control room in Hønefoss. The skipper said that a man with an automatic weapon disguised as a police officer walked around and shot people at Utøya. The Oslo police district was still receiving calls regarding the explosion in the government quarter when its control room started receiving reports of shootings on Utøya at approximately 17:26. The control room in Oslo immediately contacted the northern Buskerud police district and received confirmation that they knew about the shooting. At 17:29, one of the staff members at the Oslo police district received a phone call from his daughter, who was attending the AUF camp on Utøya. The father handed over the phone to a Special intervention unit (BT) representative. At 17:33, the first BT patrol car was sent towards Utøya, and many followed shortly after.

The first unit from BT went ashore on Utøya at approximately 18:27. Some young people shouted that the perpetrator was on the island's north side. The first four BT operators, therefore, advanced in that direction. A minute later, the next boat arrived with two men from northern Buskerud and another four from BT on board. They heard shots from the island's Southern tip as they went ashore and started advancing there. They first walked along the water's edge before finding a path leading them to the island's south end, about 270 meters from the pier. As the police officers moved towards the south end, they saw something moving about 50 meters away in the forest. They moved towards the bush from two sides. The perpetrator was called but disappeared for a moment into the woods. When he appeared again, he held out his hands to the side. The police officers noticed a pistol in his thigh holster. He also had a large belt around his stomach and wires on his chest. There and then, several of the police officers suspected that the terrorist had a bomb belt around his waist, and they were ready to shoot if he made the

slightest sign of wanting to detonate the bomb. After a few seconds, they realised that Breivik was not wearing an explosive belt. At about 18.34, Breivik was arrested without defending himself (NOU 2012:14, 2012). Figure 9 below shows a basic timeline for the incident on Utøya.

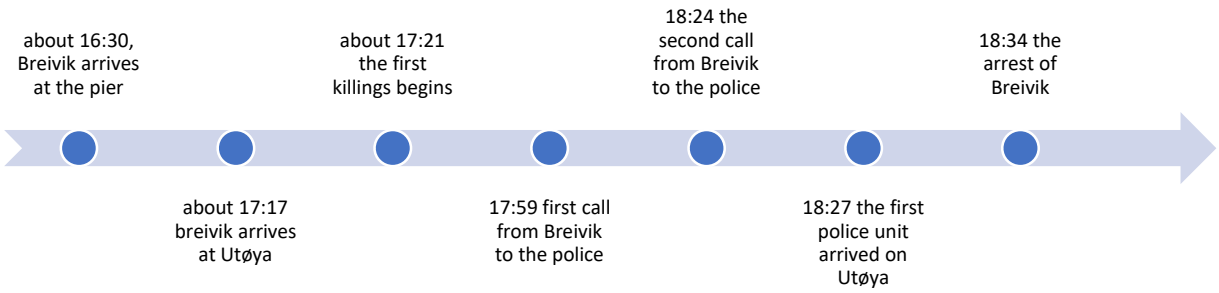

Figure 9 - Timeline of the incident at Utøya on 22.07.2011

The first police unit went north from the pier, and the second unit went south towards the arrest. Figure 10 below shows a sketch of Breivik's movements and murder scenes on Utøya. The red dotted line illustrates the police's movements, and the columns at the bottom of the figure show the estimated number of killed at different points in time. A red circle marks the place where the arrest took place.

Figure 10 - Sketch of the perpetrator's movements and murders on Utøya. Source: 22 July Commission (NOU 2012:14, 2012)

The terror attacks in Oslo and on Utøya have been unparalleled in recent Norwegian history. Both in terms of the nature and extent of the atrocities committed. The attacks are described in this thesis with a focus on the police. Therefore, it is essential to emphasise that a much broader community of responders was active. The Armed Forces were mobilised for security tasks, and the health and rescue services worked hard to deal with the injured and wounded. Civilian partners such as hotels were made available to relatives, to name a few. The incident put the whole national community to the test. The following section zooms in on NB's role and handling of the incident.

2. NB's ability to respond to the emergency

This section examines how the police and the Police national emergency resources (NB) handled the incident on 22 July. Various evaluation reports mention NB's contribution to the management of this crisis, but none focuses exclusively on its role (NOU2012:14, 2012; Politidirektoratet, 2012; Politidistrikt, 2012). The approach adopted here is not exhaustive,

instead the discussion highlights critical elements that show NB's ability to respond and handle core tasks related to this crisis.

The Oslo police district, the police district with the largest staff in Norway, was quickly depleted of most of its resources when a bomb went off in the government quarter. Therefore, NB was notified early on to provide support. NB units were mobilised in the following order after the bomb blast. The Bomb squad was notified at 15:28, the Special intervention unit (BT) was mobilised at 15:32, and the police helicopter at 19:09. The crisis and hostage negotiators in the Oslo police district were not notified separately. The Oslo district's evaluation (Politidistrikt, 2012) of the crisis explains that the crisis and hostage negotiators were informed and met under their other main functions at the time, which were, among other things, operators in the control room (Politidirektoratet, 2012). There were only two police officers on duty at BT when the bomb went off. An hour later, 23 police officers from BT were in action in the government quarter, and five were on assignment inside the police station in managerial functions. Continuous mobilisation continued. This was impressive response and mobilisation by normal standards, both in its speed and the number of personnel contributing to the police effort. This mobilisation is particularly remarkable since many police officers were on summer holiday. Norway is a quiet and peaceful country and has not had similar incidents in the recent past. Therefore, expectations and preparedness for such an incident were minimal to non-existent. This raises broader questions about standards of expectations. Should normal standards always apply, or do exceptional circumstances require extraordinary standards of expectations and procedures? One of NB's core roles is standardising responses to extraordinary events or crises, thus normalising the exceptional.

On 22 July 2011, the bomb blast in the government quarter made the NB staff quickly understand that this was a significant incident. Training and preparation made it easier for NB's units to understand the significance of this incident and its potential to escalate to more incidents. This understanding led to a mobilisation of all available NB resources. The police helicopter (only one was available that day) was on the ground due to budget cuts, and the crews were on summer vacation. The crews were ordered back from vacation, and later that evening, the helicopter was in the air. In retrospect, it was not wise that the helicopter was not available when needed. This issue was thoroughly evaluated and criticized in the Gjørv report (NOU 2012:14, 2012) and subsequently provided a strong rationale to invest in the helicopter unit.

Relying on its unique expertise, the Bomb squad (BG) played a crucial role in defusing the situation in the government quarter. BG officers were among the first at the scene in the government quarter and searched the area and buildings to prepare for the rescue work. They quickly mobilised more resources. They also used their measuring instruments to detect any chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear material (Politidistrikt, 2012), none of which were found. The squad was not used in the first operation on Utøya, although there was a suspicion of explosives there. The squad did not have sufficient resources to deploy at that time. The few resources they had were focused on the incident in Oslo, which was very demanding. It is probably that the police did not initially understand the seriousness of what was going on at Utøya. Therefore, they did not consider reassigning elements of the Bomb squad there. In the aftermath of the 22 July incident, BG was involved in several assignments in different locations, such as Breivik's mother's residence in Hoffsveien, his residence in Vålstua farm on Åsta, and several other suspicious places in central Oslo. BG was involved in 29 assignments during the week directly following the incident (NOU 2012:14, 2012). After the explosion, several 'suspicious objects' were reported around Oslo. These were objects that could not be ruled out to contain explosives. After an explosion, it is usual that people see much more suspicious objects than average. Many objects were seen as suspects and reported to the police. This put the Bomb squad, which at the time was considerably smaller than today, to a great test. Therefore, the Armed Forces were asked to assist with explosive ordnance disposal teams to support these missions.

The situation in Oslo was chaotic, confusing, and characterised by disbelief. No one fully expected and understood that a bomb of this size could go off in Oslo. The Chief of police's staff was deployed immediately after the bomb blast. For many citizens and first responders, the situation was surreal. Therefore, it was not incomprehensible that when a shooting report on Utøya came in, this was not perceived and understood immediately. BT was the fastest to react to the situation on Utøya due to a liaison from BT in the Chief's staff (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 97). The purpose of the liaison was to give local police leadership tactical advice and capture information early. A patrol car on standby to manage secondary incidents was sent toward Utøya and eventually followed by many others.

At the time, the situational awareness of BT crews who travelled from the government quarter to Utøya was that these were actions caused by several people equipped with weapons and explosives. On the way from Oslo to Utøya, a 30 minutes journey by car, BT's situational

awareness changed several times due to unclear reports. Sønderland and colleagues (2012) noted that:

> The final understanding of the situation was that there could be three to five perpetrators on Utøya and that IEDs (improvised explosive devices or charges) could have been placed in the forest. They received the information from their management. The information about several perpetrators and explosives came from callers on Utøya or relatives of people on Utøya (Politidirektoratet, 2012, p. 93).

Communication is vital in crisis management to keep up to date with rapidly occurring changes, but it is particularly challenging in dynamic crises. In his study of the 22 July attacks, Falkheimer (2014) emphasizes that the traditional theories of crisis communication are based on a notion of crisis as the consequence of a single cause, limited to one organisation, characterized by a clear beginning and end (Falkheimer, 2014). However, terrorist attacks such as the 22 July incident are multi-causal, characterized by cascade dynamics, and involve a variety of actors in different areas. In this context, information flows simultaneously and from many sources and rapidly becomes overwhelming to process. On 22 July, a lot of conflicting information came through various channels, including outdated radio communications. This made it challenging for responders to develop shared situational awareness. Communication through police radio and mobile telephony was a challenge for the police in 2011. At that time, the police emergency network was not as developed as today. The emergency radio network was analogous and provided poor coverage. This made communication on the way to and on Utøya very challenging. Even the mobile phone network had limited coverage in the area of Utøya. This severely restricted communication with the Oslo police district, preventing updates and limiting situational awareness. Therefore, the BT crews expected to meet strong resistance on Utøya from 3 to 5 perpetrators.

The terror attack on 22 July 2011 was an extraordinary crisis by Norwegian standards. The attacks struck society unusually loudly and more violently than imagined (NOU 2012:14, 2012). Society, and first responders, were not sufficiently prepared for a crisis of this magnitude. One unique element about this crisis was that it was very significant in scope but carried out and planned by a single man. Even though Breivik acted independently, he planned well and for a long time to achieve maximum effects. The scale and complexity of the situation required NB support. It was BT who arrested the perpetrator and, in that way, prevented him from killing more people. The Bomb squad searched and cleared objects and areas in Oslo with support from the Armed Forces' explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams. The crisis and

hostage negotiators had other functions in the police districts and therefore had a dual role that included working in the control room. The police helicopter was mobilised, and when the helicopter was eventually flying that evening, they contributed by providing an essential overview of the crime scenes. Overall, NB's resources played an essential role in the crisis management of this event. NB made a difference by strengthening other police resources with their distinctive capabilities. The incident showed that NB's resources were essential to crisis management. Through established agreements, routines and procedures, NBs units could quickly mobilise, despite some hurdles. It took a relatively short time from notification until many personnel from BG and BT were present in the government quarter. The distinctive capabilities of the Bomb squad, such as handling equipment to detect explosives and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear material, were crucial for the rapid clearance of the sites. BT's unique expertise in fighting terrorists and other dangerous situations meant they could arrest the perpetrator without shooting him.

This section has thus shown that NB had an essential role in the incident on 22 July. NB's resources were used in different areas, mainly as a reinforcement to other police units. Many of these support functions worked well – they were deployed at the right place and more often than not in a timely fashion. However, some mistakes were made and naturally came to the fore in subsequent debates. The following section examines the most prominent 'failures' in handling the crisis.

3. Points of failure

After the 22 July incidents, evaluations sought to make sense and draw lessons from this traumatic event. This section will use public evaluation reports to analyse NB's efforts in the incident from a more critical perspective. This perspective is best illustrated by the Gjørv commission's (NOU 2012:14, 2012) conclusion that 'the authority's ability to protect people on Utøya failed. A faster action from the police was possible. The perpetrator could have been stopped earlier.' Other evaluations like the Sønderlands commissions evaluation (Politidirektoratet, 2012), as well as the Oslo (Politidistrikt, 2012) and Southern Buskerud (Politiet, 2011) police districts evaluations, will also be used to corroborate perspectives.

The biggest and most well-known evaluation of the 22 July 2011 attacks is the Gjørv commission's report. This evaluation became a Norwegian public investigation (NOU), a status that gives it more weight. This government-appointed commission was chaired by Alexandra

Bech Gjørv, a lawyer and partner in the law firm Hjort. Other members included: Ragnar Line Auglend, a researcher at the faculty of law in Bergen and former chief of police in Hordaland; Karin Straume, county doctor in Finnmark and specialist in community medicine; Einar Skaarseth Enger, CEO of Tine; Laila Bokhari, a political scientist and researcher; Linda Motrøen Paulsen, head of an upper secondary school in Harstad; Torgeir Hagen, lieutenant general and former head of the Intelligence Service 2002–2010; Guri Hjeltnes, a journalism professor, historian and director of the centre for holocaust studies and religious minorities; Hanne Bech Hansen, a pensioner and author, former police director in Copenhagen; and Stefan Gerkman, Chief inspector of police at the Finnish Ministry of the Interior. The composition of this commission sought to reflect a broad range of backgrounds but limited expertise in the intricacies of police work. While some of its members were foreign police leaders, none were trained as police officers. This inevitably shaped the commission's evaluation of the incident and raised questions about some of its judgments. It would not be reasonable, for example, to expect such a diverse body to develop an analysis of the incident that reflects a deep understanding of what it was like to be a first responder on 22 July, working with missing and uncertain information.

The Gjørv commission's review finds that the police's handling of the terrorist attacks was hampered by a shortage of personnel in key functions and a lack of tools for cooperation internally in and between the police districts (NOU 2012:14, 2012). The commission concluded that the attack on the government quarters could have been prevented by effectively implementing already adopted security measures. A report was prepared as early as 2004 that looked at security around the government quarter. One proposed measure was to close Grubbegata and adjacent streets to vehicles. Had this been done, the perpetrator would not have been able to park the van with the bomb where he did (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 245). The Gjørv commission further considered severe deficiencies in the management and coordination of police resources, including the absence of well-functioning police radios and mobile communication, and too little attention to the need to procure boats led to BT not responding quick enough to Utøya. The commission's review of the incident concluded that several potential boats were available but escaped the attention of the police (NOU 2012:14, 2012).

The commission also found that the authorities' ability to protect people on Utøya failed because a quicker police action was possible. The report argues that the perpetrator could have been stopped earlier. The commission believes that the police officers from Southern Buskerud,

who first met on the mainland by Utøya around 18:00 (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 28), constituted a sufficiently large force to act rapidly against the attacker. They concluded that more than enough police personnel were available to act because the commission thought that the police officers were aware that the situation involved a single perpetrator who shot young people on Utøya. The commission concluded that there was no reason to assume that 3-5 perpetrators had weapons and explosives. This inaccuracy constitutes a form of hindsight bias on the part of the commission. Reports from police officers directly involved in the incident made clear they assumed there were multiple attackers. Based on various phone calls from people on the island and the scope of the attack, this was a reasonable assumption. This assumption and the fact that they heard through fragments on the police radio that BT was close, prompted them to wait for reinforcement from BT. BT arrived around 18:05. This was a sensible decision if there had indeed been 3 -5 perpetrators on the island. The evaluation made by the Gjørv commission disregarded this assumption, thus delivering an unreasonable judgment on this specific point (NOU 2012:14, 2012, pp. 136-137). It is difficult to speculate why the commission disregarded the police officers' understanding of the situation. This information could have been unknowingly omitted, or the commission might have chosen to disregard it for various reasons. For example, they may not have understood the significance of this perception of the situation and its tactical implications from the police officers' perspective.

The commission interviewed several of the police officers from BT after the incident. These officers claim they pointed out in their interviews that their situational awareness was to meet 3 to 5 perpetrators at Utøya. In her book on BT, for which she benefited from unique access to members of BT, Malin Stensønes (2018) points out how conversations between police officers from BT and witnesses at and on Utøya contributed to this perception (Stensønes, 2018, p. 283). Stensønes's (2018) research clarifies that, although explosives were reported in the attack on Utøya, there were no personnel in the operation to handle it. BT had to solve the actual action on the island without support from the Bomb squad, whose personnel were busy searching for and processing 'suspicious objects' in Oslo (NOU 2012:14, 2012). The police officers from BT took a significant and calculated risk, as the requirement to save lives overshadowed the operators' focus on their safety. The Gjørv commission fails to mention this in its public evaluation and concludes that there was no reason to believe that there was more than one perpetrator. This oversight has significant implications. From a practitioner's perspective, the two different situational understandings (one versus three to five attackers) demand different tactics and procedures. The Gjørv commission's conclusion that the perpetrator could have been

stopped more quickly, thus rests on the notion that there was only one perpetrator. If that was indeed the assumption made by operators on the day, BT officers could have thought less about safety and perhaps acted more quickly. However, since the officers perceived that they were likely to face significant resistance, other tactics were prioritised, which required more time and more personnel to form a strong enough team to combat what they assumed would be more significant resistance. The Gjørv Commission also believed quicker police action could have been possible if the police had used available boats on the spot, but the police did not use this opportunity. Several interviews in Stensønes' book indicate that BT's police officers tried to seize other boats. However, advanced security systems on newer boats meant they could not seize them (Stensønes, 2018). Why the Gjørv commission concluded that this was a plausible course of action is still unknown. It may be that these sorts of practical details were considered less important in all the work the commission had to assess and evaluate an extraordinarily complex event. It also suggests that the commission did not have a sufficient understanding of the realities of policing.

The 'Sønderland commission', which was composed of police leaders and appointed by the National Police Directorate, made a different evaluation (Politidirektoratet, 2012). The committee chairman was Olav Sønderland, former Chief of police in Rogaland police district. Other members included: Bjørn Kåre Dahl, assistant Chief of police from Rogaland police district; Egil Eriksen, assistant Chief of police from Rogaland police district; Espen Frøyland, department director from the police directorate; Terje Krogstad, assistant Chief of police from Hedmark police district; and Øystein Stavdal Paulsen, a senior adviser from Østfold police district. Jan Erik Haugland and John Starheimsæter, both assistant Chief of police in the police directorate, functioned as secretaries for the committee. The commission report conveyed one key point: the police must have an effective alert system to handle crises effectively. In the commission's opinion, the alert notification system failed on 22 July 2011. In an ideal world, situational reporting should give the recipient quick access to essential and targeted information, either in advance of an event or as a continuous orientation while an event unfolds.

The Sønderland committee supported the situational understanding of 3 to 5 perpetrators as an essential factor in explaining the course of action the police chose to tackle this assignment. This can be explained by the composition of the Sønderland committee, which consisted almost exclusively of police-trained personnel. Questions about whether this committee was biased and looked at the incident with 'police eyes' can be asked. One interpretation could be that

being mainly from the police, the Sønderland committee was keen to protect and find justifications for their colleagues. Another interpretation would be that being from the police, their understanding of the events rested on more reasonable and accurate standards of expectations.

It is essential to note that in the Sønderland commission's evaluation, there is little criticism of the police's actual efforts. Statements such as 'Overloading of the boat was regrettable and contributed to delaying the crossing to Utøya' and 'In the committee's assessment, the police have performed their duty as quickly as the situation and other circumstances allowed' exemplify this uncritical stance (Politidirektoratet, 2012, p. 9). Back in 2011, in the first days after the incident, the police were honoured with roses for their exemplary efforts during the incident. However, when the Sønderland report was released a few months after the incident and supported a positive impression of the police, the public mood changed quite drastically, and it was therefore heavily criticized. Many believed that the police should not evaluate themselves and that the result of the Sønderland evaluation was destined to be positive for the police. It led to massive criticism, both of the police and the evaluation. Even the police's union was critical of the evaluation (Auestad & Sættem, 2012; Helsingeng, 2012).

The limits of the Sønderland report have been underlined by independent research. Helge Renå's PhD thesis on police coordination on 22 July finds that pre-existing crisis coordination structures and practices significantly constrained the possibilities for the police to enact a swift mobilisation and coordinated response to the incident on 22 July (Renå, 2019). In other words, the problem was not one of resources and capabilities but one of organisation. The Sønderland committee and Renå both point out, in their ways, that information is essential to understanding the crisis one faces. Everyone involved must have the same information to get a shared situational awareness. Only then can crisis management be conducted in the best possible way. The lack of effective communication between responders on 22 July 2011 was a core challenge which meant that available resources were not optimally utilised.

The Oslo police district also evaluated its crisis management effort on 22 July (Politidistrikt, 2012). The primary impression emanating from this evaluation is that the police district had a crisis organisation with good plans, systems, and materials. The district also had managers and employees with high competence and motivation. These resources and procedures equipped the district to solve extraordinary events and crises. The evaluation emphasises how the police

district switched to immediate action and quickly mobilised all available resources to react to the situation (Politidistrikt, 2012). The evaluation also addressed three aspects that could have been better. First, the mobilisation of the Helicopter unit (HT) took too long to provide support and arrive on site. Second, the information about a possible perpetrator and getaway car was poorly handled. Third, BT overloaded the police boat on their way to Utøya. The image of an overloaded boat filled with operators from BT, which caused it to stop, was then shown on news channels worldwide as a symbol of poor mission performance. There is no doubt that the loading was unfortunate. When considering the situation from the operators' perspective, it is understandable that they considered it essential to be as many police officers as possible to meet a threat from 3-5 perpetrators with weapons and explosives. The fact that no other boats were available on the site BT departed from explains why they filled a single boat. Police officers from BT have subsequently clarified that there were other boats on-site, but these were locked with chains, and their petrol tanks were removed. They had no opportunity to use these, so no other boats were available (Stensønes, 2018, p. 230). The Sønderland commission also found that 'the police boat was the only boat to transport crews to Utøya and confront the perpetrator' (Politidirektoratet, 2012, p. 14). This fact directly contradicts Gjørv's claim that 'several potential boat resources escaped the police' (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 121), further casting doubt on the accuracy of its reporting.

The Southern Buskerud police district concluded in their evaluation (Politiet, 2011) that poor communication equipment led to the failure to coordinate assistance within the first hour of the crisis. Communication between the Oslo and Southern Buskerud police districts was not good for technical reasons. Oslo had a new communication system that had not been introduced in Southern Buskerud. Therefore, communication became difficult, and the police officers became dependent on mobile telephony with poor coverage. This resulted in BT not taking the shortest route to Utøya. In 2011, navigation aid in police cars was limited. The most common navigation aid at this time was a map book. Smartphones were not common. Therefore, police officers on assignments beyond their usual area were often dependent on being oriented by local police who knew their area better. BT could have been sent quicker to the site if communication had been good, and the emergency response time could have been deployed faster. The Southern Buskerud district report concludes that communication regarding the organisation of assistance became complicated due to various communication solutions and a lack of telephone capacity (Politiet, 2011). In addition, the Southern Buskerud evaluation finds that there was an emergency message from Utøya to the police district's operations centre that someone had shot

from the mainland against a target on Utøya at 17:59. The announcement was passed on to the district's local task leader at 18:04 and shared on the police radio at 18:07. The local threat assessment changed from that point onward; it was assumed that several perpetrators could be involved in the incident. The threat picture thus became more obscure than it was in the first place. Information about several possible perpetrators is also mentioned in the Southern Buskerud police operational log at 19:08 and 19:32 (Politiet, 2011). This assessment is likely to have affected how the first police officers on the scene assessed the situation. They knew BT was on its way and probably felt it would be wise to wait for them to travel together to Utøya. In addition, as they prepared to get to Utøya, these first police officers also witnessed injured young people swimming from Utøya, which they had to help as they came ashore after a long swim. Several of them were injured and exhausted.

'A faster police action was possible. The perpetrator could have been stopped earlier on the day 22 July'. This extract from the Gjørv commission's conclusions is commonly considered the final word on what happened on 22 July. It is probably also a reasonable conclusion from a group of outsiders who benefited from hindsight. However, uncertainty means the picture was far less clear for those directly involved in the 22 July incident. Developing a common understanding of the situation is a prerequisite for solving complex assignments. There is a noticeable difference in the Gjørv commission's understanding of the situation and the understanding the operators from BT and other elements of the police had when they went ashore on the island. BT solved the case on the island without support from the Bomb squad. Its operators took a significant and calculated risk. The evaluation from Gjørv then appears to be unfair and incorrect for and from the perspective of the numerous BT operators who participated in the action

Conclusion

The chapter has shown that NB's units played essential roles in handling the 22 July attack. They leveraged their unique capacities and made an important difference on the ground, mainly serving in their traditional capacity as a reinforcement to other police units. However, given the gravity of the incident, subsequent evaluations did identify a series of criticisms. Two major evaluations of the 22 July incident, and the discrepancy that emanates from their respective assessments, form the backbone of this chapter. The first is the Gjørv commission's report, commissioned by the government. The other is the Sønderland committee's report,

commissioned by the police. These two comprehensive reports agree on much of what happened. However, there are some significant differences in their assessment of the police efforts in the incident. The Gjørv commission has a more critical view of the police's efforts, while Sønderland mostly identifies and accepts the police's actions. This thesis does not aim to evaluate who is right and who is wrong but rather to highlight those significant discrepancies in the findings of these commissions, which urge caution when drawing conclusions on the performance of the police, NB and BT on the 22 July 2011.

The chapter also raises questions about the composition, respective approaches and political versus professional views developed by the two enquiries. On the one side, the expectation that the police should not evaluate themselves is correct. There is a loyalty to the police as a police officer that can bias the analysis. However, experience is crucial and can inform more reasonable expectations that drive the assessment. Therefore, there is reason to ask questions about the composition of the Gjørv and the Sønderland commission. Both seem wrong, with either too little or too much competence related to the police.

Another question that naturally follows from criticism of these evaluations is whether the police will ever be robust enough to solve all its assignments? Should future staffing and emergency preparedness be dimensioned for exceptional and resource-intensive events like 22 July? It is doubtful that the police ever will be able to answer all of their assignments perfectly. No crises are alike, and the range of possible crises that the police could confront is infinite – though not all possible crises are equally likely. On 22 July 2011, the incident happened at Utøya, 30 minutes fast drive from Oslo city centre. This meant many resources arrived in a relatively short time. If similar incidents had happened elsewhere in the country, especially in the north, the situation could have been entirely different. The police districts in some of the more remote regions of Norway are significantly less robust than the Oslo police district, and assistance from NB would have taken considerably longer. In a situation where the perpetrator aims to kill as many people as possible, providing a prompt response to stop the perpetrator is the most important thing. Overall, criticism and findings in the evaluations showed room for improvement for the police and NB. The next chapter addresses how the Gjørv evaluations' proposed measures to improve crisis management in Norway were handled after the incident on 22 July, focusing on actions related to NB.

Chapter 4 - Learning and adapting

This chapter looks at the Norwegian police's ability to learn and adapt to changing requirements. Changes in society and the threat environment require learning and adaptation. Major unforeseen events and crises often lead to evaluations and investigations, leading to measures that identify needed changes and plans to implement them. For the Norwegian police, 22 July 2011 was a turning point that led to extensive evaluations, criticism of the police, and recommendations for change. The Gjørv commission concluded that there was a lot in the police's crisis management of the incident that had not worked well. The report also contained recommendations to resolve perceived points of failure and prevent such an incident from happening again. This chapter examines those recommendations that are most relevant to the Norwegian police to see if they have been implemented and have improved the capabilities of the police to fulfil its missions. The chapter will specifically shed light on whether the measures associated with NB have improved and strengthened its functions to deal with subsequent and future crises. When doing so, the chapter underlines NB's ability to develop and adapt to contemporary crises, one of the core challenges highlighted by this thesis.

The first part of the chapter synthesises the Gjørv report's main recommendations for the police. There is no room to go into detail over the various measures identified in this report. However, the range of measures is presented to show the level of ambition and emphasise a broader desire to strengthen society and the police's ability to handle a new crisis in the aftermath of 22 July 2011. The section specifically shows how some measures and the overall reform indirectly impacted NB. The second part of the chapter looks at recommended measures primarily related to NB. This section goes deeper into the individual actions to see if the organisation and capabilities of NB have developed in a positive direction due to the implemented measures. The third and final part considers whether further changes are needed, based on how the police and NB are organised and function today, to optimise the Norwegian police and NB and improve their crisis management capability.

1. The Gjørv commission's recommendations

The Gjørv commission report (NOU 2012:14, 2012) concluded that the police's handling of the 22 July incident was affected by poor coordination, interaction and utilisation of resources. The lack of cooperation and coordination in and between the various police districts and inadequate technical equipment were among the contributing factors that made it difficult to establish good

situational awareness and delayed the police's arrival at Utøya. Management's ability to allocate responsibilities on time was also pointed out as a weakness. There was a lack of knowledge and compliance with plans and procedures. Extensive plans for emergencies, including terrorism and sabotage, were not used. It also became clear that exercises conducted before the terrorist acts were insufficient and that the police had not learned enough from them. The commission concluded that the lack of ability to recognise risk and carry out what had been planned and decided contributed to the police's failure. The report's main conclusion was that the police's attitudes, culture, and leadership led to a failure in handling 22 July.

Based on this bleak assessment, the commission identified 31 recommendations affecting several sectors such as the police, health services, army, and society. Nine of these recommendations concerned the police. The discussion in this chapter will focus specifically on these measures, which are summarised in the box below (Bjørgum & Aaram, 2016; NOU 2012:14, 2012).

- The Norwegian Police Directorate (POD) must establish an explicit **goal management system** that covers the police's tasks and ensure alignment between goals, priorities, resource and staffing planning, resource use and reporting. This means that **operational activities** must be strengthened. Precise requirements for response time, response quality and correspondence between tasks and staffing should be established.

- POD must take more responsibility for **coordination**, efficiency, and uniform solutions in the police. POD must ensure that the police organisation at the district level is sufficiently robust, both in response time and operational management capacity, experience, and equipment.

- POD must quickly prepare a clear, comprehensive **information and communication technology (ICT) strategy** for the police to enable cooperation at the operational and tactical level and to be able to examine, manage and develop the police strategically. Funds must be set aside for a quick and efficient implementation.

- Individual patrols must have **access to technology** for written and visual information sharing and training in systems that enables them to better solve their tasks.

- **Control rooms** must be equipped and staffed to fulfil their role. Solutions for effective notification between districts and rapid alert and mobilisation of own crews must be established.

- **A national police control room** should be established as a scalable part of the control room in Oslo to enable a coordinated interaction of an incident in several districts or an incident that exceeds the capacity of an individual district.

- The **competence to solve tactical missions** in the police force must be increased. Relevant parts of the training given to emergency personnel in category three (IP3) should also be given to emergency personnel in category four (IP4).

- The plans for a **centre for the Police national emergency resources** (PNB) should be implemented.

- A **robust police helicopter unit** must be established in the Oslo police district, and cooperation arrangements must be in place that ensures the police's transport capacity in other parts of the country. The capacity and role of the police helicopter in armed response must be clarified

The rest of this section discusses the first six recommendations that concern the police. The next section will discuss the last three points, which are dedicated to NB.

Parliament published a follow-up report on the Gjørv Commission's recommendations in 2013 (Meld. St. 21, 2013). This report specified several measures and recommendations the government should continue to work toward in several sectors and agencies. Many of these measures continued to concern the police directly. The report also recommended increased funding to facilitate the implementation of the Gjørv commission recommendations. This follow-up report facilitated the implementation of four key recommendations concerning access

to technology, the development of an ICT strategy, communication and strengthening of the control rooms in the police districts. These measures are explored in more detail below.

The Gjørv Commission pointed out that poor access to technology hampered police response during the 22 July incident (Meld. St. 21, 2013). The commission recommended that individual patrols should get access to technology facilitating written and visual information exchange and receive appropriate training to use such technology. Given the central role of vehicles in the emergency phase, the modernisation of technology and equipment is essential to improve crisis management capability. Through new mobile solutions, the police's front line was to have completely new prerequisites for performing their role. The plans envisaged mobile work platforms to move knowledge and police work from the offices into operational activities. Mobile solutions would give the police access to information in real-time and as close to the field as possible. In the long run, the police would access tailor-made services for carrying out police tasks with smartphones, tablets and PCs in patrol cars. The police officers would be able to record video and audio and perform registration of reports, goods, and fingerprints. They would also be able to search for information in the police databases on-site. Due to this need, a tool for mobile system access, called 'Mobiliti', was developed for the Norwegian police. The tool would give personnel on assignment access to several of the police's ICT systems on mobile devices. This was the start of an entirely new way of working for the police (Inderhaug, 2012). The development and deployment of this system were implemented as part of the police's ICT strategy to develop and utilise technological solutions. The development started in 2012, and updates and adjustments are still ongoing. Today all police officers have access to and use Mobiliti.

The Norwegian police's radio communication was previously analogous. This old system could be tapped and did not have a reasonable coverage rate. It was also impossible for the police to communicate with other emergency services with this system. The 22 July incidents highlighted an urgent need for a robust and secure radio connection for the emergency services to communicate securely and with good coverage. Replacement of old equipment and the introduction of a standard communication system was necessary to strengthen the police and its societal partners' ability to deal with organised crime, accidents, natural disasters, and terrorist threats (Meld. St. 29 (2012)). In the twenty-first century, in a context marked by increasingly complex crises and situations and the ubiquity of new communication technology and related security issues, the need for secure channels to share sensitive information

increased. The Norwegian data protection authority had repeatedly pointed out the need for a communication system that could not be intercepted to protect operations and privacy. A new communication system called 'Nødnett' was deployed in 2015 and satisfied these requirements. The initial planning and development of Nødnett date back to 1995. Its development had been ongoing for several years within various experimental districts. The Oslo police district has been one of these pilot districts since 2007 (DSB, 2017). The 22 July attacks catalysed more long-term efforts and investment. In December 2015, the development of Nødnett was completed, and the radio network was ready for use throughout the country. Nødnett has a higher capacity, better coverage, better voice quality than analogue systems, and 24/7 operation and monitoring. It has provided the police with increased security for emergency and response personnel through increased functionality and availability. It has also contributed to a safer and more robust society. Nødnett's nationwide coverage has strengthened preparedness and crisis management through the opportunity to operate on the same communication platform throughout the country. Nødnett has also enabled safe and secure communication between various actors involved in an incident, from the central strategic management to the regional manager at the county level, municipalities, agencies and out to the operational units that handle the crisis. Nødnett was a significant improvement that followed recommendations from the 22 July incident assessment.

The control rooms are the 'heart' of police command and coordination in each police district and are crucial for the police to respond effectively to various incidents. In the aftermath of the 22 July incident, a key priority was to create more robust control rooms in the police districts. Training, increased staffing and new equipment improved their robustness in the last decade. POD standardised control rooms in the new police districts after the police reform of 2015 (Prop. 61 LS, 2015). The police now had 12 control rooms with significantly greater capacity. The new control rooms were able to handle far more cases than the old ones, and consequently, they also had a much broader basis for developing experience and learning lessons. The Directorate also wanted to strengthen the capacity and knowledge of the control room supervisors and introduced requirements for common training in connection with the establishment of new control rooms. The advantages of this centralisation include, among others, the operators' ability to move between different districts without requiring extensive retraining. The harmonisation measure also facilitated the emergence of new routines for assistance across and between districts. These developments provided individual police districts with better conditions for handling a broader range of incidents (Meld. St. 13, 2016). However,

the plan to establish a national police control room was never implemented. This can partly be explained by the fact that the districts have been given more robust control rooms following the latest reform. Since the 2015 reform, some of the largest police districts have organically played a backup function that replaces the role a national control room could have played. If a control room in one district stops working, another district can take over the function.

The 22 July incidents were an important driving force behind the 2015 reform, the most significant change in the police and sheriff's departments until 2020 (NOU 2012:14, 2012; NOU 2013:9, 2013). The goal was to ensure a police force that was visible, operational and accessible and that could improve societal security (Bjørgum & Aaram, 2016). The reform created fewer and more robust districts, making it more manageable for the POD to establish and follow up a goal management system, which covered the entirety of the police tasks and ensured better connection between goals, priorities, resources, planning and reporting. This was achieved through more precise guidelines and requirements for the police districts to report through an online management system, the police management tool (PSV). Fewer police districts should also help POD better coordinate its actions and achieve more efficiency by developing more uniform solutions across the entire Norwegian police. In these conditions, it should be easier for POD to ensure and control that the police organisation at the district and local levels is sufficiently robust, both in response time and the operational management's capacity, experience, and equipment. Interviewees 2 and 3 confirm that the local police reform has had this effect. When asked about their opinion on the effect of the local police reform, they stated:

> The local police reform should perhaps be called a quality reform. It has delivered greater capacity and quality for several functions that strengthen crisis management (Interviewee 2, 2022).

> I would say that they [the police districts] are significantly better equipped, also on standby, and can scale up when required by the situation. The police reforms have had a spillover effect on both emergency preparedness and crisis management (Interviewee 3, 2022).

Overall, the measures taken in the aftermath of the 22 July attacks have led to significant changes in the Norwegian police. Many of the measures recommended by the Gjørv commission have been implemented. The measures introduced seem to have strengthened the police in many ways, especially concerning the standardisation of control rooms and implementing new technological solutions that have facilitated communication. The 2015

reform has strengthened districts, giving them more capacity and making them more equal. The following section will look at the measures the Gjørv commission recommended explicitly related to NB and how they have affected its development.

2. Adapting NB's organisation and capabilities

NB possess top expertise within their respective areas. Their task is to strengthen a police district in a crisis they cannot solve due to competence, the complexity of the crisis or lack of personnel. The development of NB has been gradual and has paralleled the development of society and the roles of the police. Incidents such as the 22 July attacks and their subsequent evaluations act as catalysts that put more focus on and speed up changes. Given its role in the 22 July incident, it should therefore come as no surprise that, in recent years, several public reports have sought to evaluate NB (Meld. St. 21, 2013; NOU 2012:14, 2012; NOU 2013:9, 2013; Politidirektoratet, 2020).

The Gjørv report (NOU 2012:14, 2012) identified three main sets of recommendations touching on NB. First, the commission recommended increasing the competence to solve tactical missions and armed response. This recommendation mainly concerned other police resources than NB, but it does concern NB to a certain extent. Other police resources must have the competence and capacity to solve armed missions. They cannot entirely rely on NB. NB has always been located centrally in south-eastern Norway, in Oslo. This geographical setting makes it impossible for its operators to systematically function as a first response unit when a crisis emerges elsewhere in the country. Although NB's units have varying degrees of preparedness for an immediate response, they are not an acute resource for districts far from Oslo. Norway is an elongated country, and NB's ability to deploy promptly all over the country is limited. NB is not robust enough to be everywhere at all times. Nor should they be. Therefore, local police must provide an initial response themselves. With good competence, they may delay perpetrators so that there is enough time for NB to reach out and assist with their capabilities. As a follow-up from the Gjørv report, it was decided that joint training between police officers in the local SWAT team (IP3) and NB should be further developed so that these teams would have the opportunity to gain experience from NB. Such shared activity was previously sporadic.

The second recommendation of the commission that touched upon NB proposed to establish an emergency centre. This need had long been identified. The expectation was that locating all of

NB's units together in a centre would provide a faster, more efficient, and safer response to societal crises. This colocation was also expected to provide more synergy in resource utilisation, response time, opportunities for joint training, joint administrative functions, and positive professional development (Meld. St. 21, 2013). However, a significant crisis is often needed to bring attention to such needs and draw political and financial capital to make the change finally happen. The 22 July incident functioned as one such catalyst, accelerating pre-existing trends. The Police National Emergency Centre (PNB) was established at Taraldrud, 10 minutes from Oslo's capital, in 2020. Its proximity to Oslo is justified by the variety and significance of a capital city's challenges, including crime, protection of symbolic buildings, very important persons (VIP), media, and a high population density. The centre is close to airports and has good transport options in several directions. One rationale for establishing a centre was the need for NB to have modern premises and training facilities that would enable their joint capabilities to be maximised. It means that NBs units could efficiently train, prepare and be on standby physically together for more significant assignments. This contrasted with the previous situation when NB units were located on different sites. The Police national emergency resources (NB) moved together as four different and autonomous units with quite different areas of expertise. When co-located in PNB, the intention was that they should also function as a joint unit and complement each other to constitute an even more robust resource together. Colocation, it was hoped, would also facilitate a better-shared understanding in joint missions. Proximity to the helicopters would also make a crucial difference in improving response times since they enable fast movement over large distances, benefiting all units. The emergency response centre has effectively increased the presence and ability of NB units to respond to incidents both during the day and at night (Politiet, 2020).

As part of establishing PNB, it was decided that joint training for NB and SWAT teams (IP3) should be formalised and binding and that the training should be performed at PNB. The training programme is funded by the POD and follows the first recommendation of the Gjørv commission highlighted at the top of this section. Today all IP3, consisting of about one thousand police officers, are divided into smaller groups who train for a week at the emergency centre every two years. The training provides an excellent arena for local and specialised units to get to know each other, interact, and learn. The intention is that IP 3 will be better able to act as first responders. IP3 training was launched in the autumn of 2021. Therefore, no formal evaluation of the training effect has yet been made. The police officers who have trained so far have expressed that they have been very satisfied with the training and see this as an essential

step toward achieving more robust and united Norwegian police (discussions with the author, 2021 and 2022).

In the wake of the 22 July incident, the Norwegian Parliament (Meld. St. 21, 2013) and the Gjørv commission both expressed an expectation that NB should better liaise with available resources from the Armed Forces. The parliamentary report encourages observers to look at Norway's total number of resources and take advantage of these across sectors. A separate instruction now regulates the Armed Forces' assistance to the police, the so-called 'assistance instruction' (Bistandsinstruksen, 2017). This instruction ensures that the Armed Forces' assistance is provided within adopted lines of responsibility and following the Constitution's provision on the use of military force. The instruction applies in peace, crisis, and war. A rationale for the Armed Forces to help the police is that the police's personnel and material resources are insufficient. According to the assistance instructions, the police may request that the Armed Forces make resources available under the overall leadership of the Chief of police in question. In a terrorist situation, the Armed Forces can, among other things, assist the police with transport support, security, and search for improvised explosive devices (IED). They can also support with expertise from the Armed Forces Special command (FSK), similar to NB's expertise. PNB's heliport means the Armed Forces can fly there and retrieve NB resources. Earlier, NB units had to move by car to a suitable place to be picked up by the Armed Forces helicopters. Clarifying the collaboration with the armed forces significantly improved the police's competence in solving tactical missions.

The third point of the Gjørv commission relates to NB's helicopter unit (HT). Initially, the Norwegian police rented one helicopter, agreeing to buy another one by 2010. In the period leading up to 2011, the HT was not given the priority it should have, which meant that there was no funding to keep the helicopter flying in the summer of 2011 (Dahl, 2013; Norsk Telegrambyrå (NTB), 2011; Støland et al., 2012). In 2012, the police bought its first helicopter and rented a backup helicopter to minimise the risk of downtime due to technical problems. In the state budget for 2013, NOK 10 million was allocated to upgrade and maintain the purchased helicopter. The number of crew at the Helicopter unit was increased to have the HT on standby with 15 minutes of emergency preparedness. The service has been available around the clock since 2013 (Meld. St. 21, 2013). In 2016, the Government decided to acquire three new helicopters (Trædal, 2016) and required that the first of the new helicopters should be in the air by the start of 2020. The police would then have one helicopter available 24 hours a day, and

from 1 July the same year, it would be possible to use two helicopters around the clock. One helicopter for observation and one for transport. The third acquired helicopter would serve as a backup machine and could be used for training (Ingebrigtsen, 2020). In 2019, the police received three new helicopters, which were put into operation in 2020. The new helicopters have increased information retrieval and information sharing capacity through improved sensor capacity and communication capabilities. These helicopters have a better range and longer flight time on assignments than the old helicopters. They can also transport more police officers and equipment and have a greater capacity to operate as a sniper platform, thus providing further support to other NB units and the police districts. Shortly after moving in and establishing the Police's national emergency centre (PNB) in the autumn of 2020, the recommended and desired helicopter capacity was operational and able to assist the other units at the centre with transport capacity around the clock. These changes have significantly improved NB's possibility to respond quickly to incidents.

The measures implemented due to the Gjørv report recommendation have made NB more robust and relevant to the police districts. Relevant means that NB is an accessible resource for the districts, which they can request when needed. NB has been strengthened and developed so that today they have an actual capacity to deploy and provide needed support in a larger geographical area. NB's resources have gradually increased since 2011, and more of the units are now providing around-the-clock service. The police officers interviewed in connection with this thesis were asked if they considered NB relevant to their district based on the development and availability of NB. All replied that they thought NB was a vital resource and had used NB's capacities several times. Interviewees 2 and 4, in particular, noted that:

> Given the crisis, NB is not only relevant, but NB is also a crucial resource for us. Even those who live far away from NB should understand that in a crisis where you have to exploit the real potential of NB, then it will probably take some time, and we may have to accept that it takes time [for NB to arrive on site]. We do not have to look very far in international examples that crisis tends to slow down, and the special units come and solve things and save lives (Interviewee 1, 2022).

> In incidents, they [NB] are relevant, and it is clear that we are within a radius that makes the response time not that long either. Therefore, NB are an essential resource for us (Interviewee 2, 2022).

The PNB has helped to centralise NB and to create efficiencies. Organising training at the PNB makes it possible to plan so that personnel who are busy with training are also available as an

emergency preparedness resource. They are operational and ready for emergency response in a short time. When required, colocation provides a significantly faster and more comprehensive response and is likely to put the police in a better position to handle several simultaneous incidents. In addition, arrangements have been made for the centre to contribute to better professional development and joint training with various units from the police and other partners. The centre was fully operational by 2020 (Meld. St. 29, 2020). Based on the evidence reviewed in this thesis so far, it is fair to conclude that the Police national emergency resources are now better equipped in personnel, skills, and procedures and better prepared for the next major crisis. Recent investments and constant professionalisation of capacities have improved NB's performance over the last decade, but this does not mean it should stop now. Adaptation must be constant for the police to align its capabilities and capacities to the changing threat environment (Van Puyvelde, 2019). Therefore, it is natural to ask whether further changes are necessary and, if so, which ones?

3. Are further changes necessary?

The organisation of the Norwegian police is an ongoing and never-ending process. The rationale driving this process is pursuing the most efficient and professional police force to serve society in the best possible way. The police are, and always have been, under considerable pressure to change. Societal trends such as the rise of cyberspace or the Covid pandemic challenge the Norwegian police model and place new demands on what constitutes a good police service. Gradual adjustment to society and the threat picture never ends. Significant incidents that lead to investigations and public criticism are often necessary to speed up the pace of change, as the 22 July incident and Gjørv commission's report highlight.

The incident at the Al-Noor Mosque in 2019

While many new measures have changed the Norwegian police since the 22 July incidents, there is uncertainty about whether they have had the desired effect. From a practitioner's perspective, the only real test of whether reforms have been successful is the occurrence of new incidents. A new incident can help assess whether the goals of previously implemented measures have had positive effects. One such incident occurred in 2019 in Bærum, just outside Oslo. On 10 August 2019, a young man killed his stepsister before heading toward the Al-Noor Mosque. In the mosque, he intended to kill those who were there. Coincidentally, he was overpowered by people in the mosque before he could injure anyone. The incident was defined as a terrorist incident, which was subsequently investigated by several public bodies. On 13

September 2019, a joint mandate was issued by the POD, the Police security service (PST), and the Oslo police district, which announced that an external committee led by Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen, a former head of the Danish intelligence and security service, would evaluate the police's handling of the terrorist incident in Bærum. The evaluation committee consisted of seven people, of whom three had a police background (Norsk Telegrambyrå (NTB), 2019).

The purpose of evaluating the Al-Noor incident was to identify learning points about what went well and what could have gone better. In the wake of the 22 July incidents, many were critical of the police's willingness to respond to the attack on Utøya (Krekling & Sandvik, 2012). The evaluations did not mention it, but many observers believed that the reason it had taken so long before the police acted on Utøya was that they were afraid and did not dare to act. Therefore, the evaluation of the Al-Noor incident also looked at the police's ability and willingness to respond. This evaluation also examined the issue of dissemination and follow-ups on PST's threat assessments related to right-wing extremism, tip handling and the police's operational handling of the incident at the Al-Noor Mosque (Evalueringsutvalget, 2020). This evaluation thus provides a good point of comparison to evaluate the implementation and effects of the Gjørv report's recommendations. This comparison provides a basis to assess whether the police have learned and developed since the events of 22 July. Specifically, this can help us understand whether the police have become more effective at providing security for the population.

Three key findings emerged from the Al Noor report. The first key finding considers that the Oslo police district's control room should have defined the incident as ongoing life-threatening violence (PLIVO**)**. Using this callsign means that all available resources must prioritise getting on-site as quickly as possible and immediately start their efforts to limit damage and save lives. If PLIVO had been reported to the police patrols, all available patrols would have responded with immediate action at the mosque to save lives. In the absence of PLIVO reporting, the police are likely to approach a situation more carefully. With a PLIVO notice, the police response would have been quicker, and this could have made a big difference if the perpetrator was about to execute people in the mosque.

The second key finding is connected to the first. The control room held back the first patrol, ordering them to wait before approaching the mosque because the control room thought the patrol had insufficient competence and equipment to act independently. From my practitioner's perspective, this was based on a realistic assessment and reasonable expectation from the

control room, which thought about the crew's limited competence and safety. However, this decision was also unfortunate since a quick response is critical in any incident where people are at risk of being injured. Regardless of this order, the police patrol still drove towards the mosque and arrived as the first patrol. They were also the first to go into action in the mosque. It turned out that PLIVO should have been reported, and the first patrol reacted correctly when it drove to the site despite being told to wait.

The last key finding was that the control room supervisor did not have enough time to lead the police action due to many other tasks. Instead, the supervisor spent a disproportionate amount of time on tasks not central to operational management, such as media management, writing minutes from the assessment group meetings, and writing situation reports to the superior level necessary for national management. The evaluation thus indicates that even though the control rooms have been strengthened with more operators, some adjustments still need to be made. The bottleneck that emerged around the supervisor suggests that more secondary tasks might need to be delegated during a crisis. These three findings show that there is still potential for improvement for the police. The Al-Noor incident also shows that a lot has gone well for the police. This time the perpetrator did not do much damage concerning what he had planned. The police, especially the patrol, did not lack the willingness to engage with the situation. The findings in the evaluation are not particularly damning for the police but are still important and need to be addressed to improve the Norwegian police constantly.

Adapting to criminal trends

Besides major incidents, the police are constantly adapting to criminal trends. The development of crime is an essential indicator that informs the organisation and prioritises police resources. Registered crime is declining in Norway. However, many citizens continue to be exposed to crime. Crime creates suffering and loss for those affected, spreads insecurity and inflicts massive costs on the community. Norwegian statistics (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2022) show that reported crime has recently decreased. At the same time, serious crimes such as violence have gradually increased. Figure 11 (below) shows an overview of the gradual reduction in reported offences from 2003 to 2020 and, during the same period, a slight increase in reported violence. The table does not show how crime has become more complex, transboundary, and organised, even though its reported occurrence decreased.

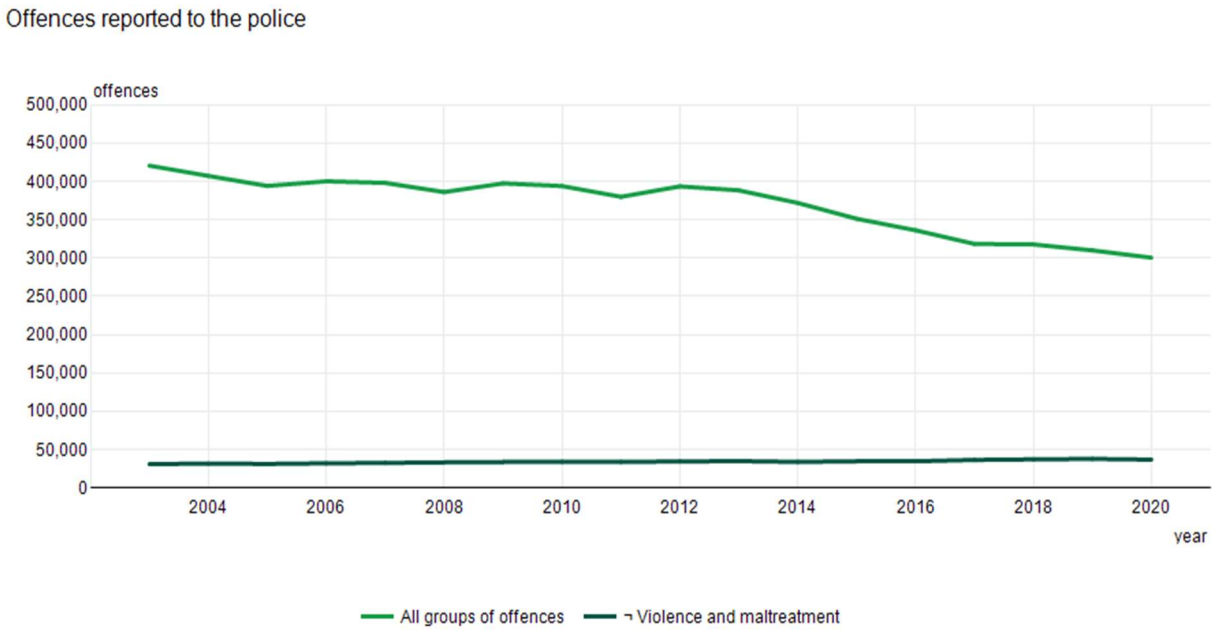

Figure 11 - Offences reported to the police. Source: (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2022)

The registered increase in violence may be related to the fact that domestic violence has received greater public attention in the last decade, which is likely to have increased the number of reported cases. It is fair to assume that there are still large numbers of unregistered types of violence and crime. Figures from, among other things, population surveys suggest that there are approximately 165,000 episodes of violence annually in Norway (Prop. 61 LS, 2015).

The latest trends in crime have underlined the need for a police force with the competence and capacity to prevent and combat more severe and complicated crimes. A 2020 white paper (Meld. St. 29, 2020) emphasises that the terrorist threat will continue to be a significant factor in the further development of the Police national emergency resources (NB) and cooperation with, among others, the emergency services and the Armed Forces. The intention with NB is that they will further adapt to the development of society. This should also be seen in connection with developing the government's strategic framework for preventing and managing terrorism. This framework will be cross-sectoral and look at society's ability to prevent, counteract, and deal with terrorism. The focus on combat terrorism in the last decade has probably opened the door to the development of other types of crime, which have received less attention. Predicting future threats requires versatility, broad focus, and constant investment, not just on the threat of the day.

In an increasingly globalised world, Norwegian security is affected by conflicts on other continents. Terror represents a severe threat that affects the civilian population randomly and symbolic targets. At the same time, it statistically represents a minor threat to citizens. Well-known statistics show that more people die from car or bathtub accidents than terrorism (Mueller & Stewart, 2021). Nevertheless, the terrorist threat creates worst-case scenarios that point toward an emergency preparedness that considers unlikely events. The Gjørv commission touched on this in its report by claiming that it is demanding to take full action and implement measures related to preventing worst-case scenarios and planning a response to unlikely events. Therefore, the commission believed that the police must be well equipped and professionalised to provide basic security to society. That means being well organised and ready to understand and partially respond to and manage a developing crisis. It was also pointed out that efforts in this area should consider historical experiences, surprises, and uncertainty (NOU 2012:14, 2012, p. 451).

As mentioned by the Gjørv commission, basic security can also be seen as a contingency to prepare for the unforeseen. NB provides basic security to society with its special capabilities, which remain on call 24/7. Safeguarding society is mainly about identifying, assessing, and managing risks. However, there are limits to how far police work can and should be stretched. It is impossible to remove all risks. A residual risk will always be there. It is also not desirable to create a one hundred per cent secure society, not the least because of implications for liberal democracy. Security measures often conflict with fundamental liberties such as personal freedom and privacy. The costs of security measures can exceed the benefit we – as a society – estimate these measures provide us. Awareness of and prevention of such possible effects are essential to maintain an appropriate level of societal security (Meld. St. 10, 2017).

In 2017, the government appointed a new committee to look at the specialist police agencies of the Norwegian police (NOU 2017:11, 2017). The purpose was to examine and strengthen basic security by clarifying the role of police units with special competencies responsible for the provision of assistance at the national level. The committee considered whether new specialist police agencies should be established and whether old ones should be merged or removed. The committee's proposal for the future organisation of these specialist agencies sought to strengthen basic security by providing more flexible and efficient police resources. The authors proposed that NB become a specialist police agency to provide a more comprehensive and effective set of services in the fight against crime and better adapt to the needs of the police

districts. Turning NB into a specialist agency was expected to strengthen the prerequisites for better management and national preparedness. The committee believed that the police's national efforts in crises should be subject to national leadership in emergency preparedness. In addition, they recommended that NB should be represented in the police director's national management group (NOU 2017:11, 2017). None of this report's proposals was followed. Political leadership considered it too much to implement a reform in this area when the local police reform had just been initiated (Lilleåsen, 2017).

The question of withdrawing NB from the Oslo police district and forming specialist police is worthy of further discussion. The Police act (Politiloven, 1995) states that the King may decide that for one or more police tasks, separate specialist police agencies shall be established. A 2017 public report (NOU 2017:11, 2017) states that the main reason for establishing such agencies is the need for national institutions with resources to assist the individual police districts in tasks they do not have the competence or capacity to solve. Such national police units with nationwide responsibility have a long tradition in Norway. This definition seems particularly well suited to the role of NB. On the one hand, it can be assumed that NB would be perceived as more of a common good for all police districts instead of belonging to a police district if it was to stand on its own. NB would then be likely to be used more frequently because its status as a specialist agency may be perceived as more easily accessible to everyone. On the other hand, an independent NB would probably entail high administrative costs. One solution might be to place NB in an already existing specialist police agency to save administrative costs and, at the same time, benefit from a clearer status as a common good to be used by all police districts.

The police officers interviewed for this thesis were all asked what they expected from NB in the future. Their replies strongly supported that NB should become a specialist agency. Interviewees 2 and 3 specifically noted that:

> In my perspective, NB should be a separate specialist agency. If you ask me, it would be about time to pick up that ball again. An essential national resource should not be located in a police district (Interviewee 2, 2022).

> NB need to become a separate specialist agency where more capacities, which today are fragmentarily placed in different districts, can be placed (Interviewee 3, 2022).

To this day, NB remains organised as a unit within the Oslo police district. There have been no other plans or signs of organisational changes since the last proposal regarding specialist police agencies in 2017. However, NB units have physically moved and are now co-located at the emergency centre at Taraldrud.

One remaining question is whether NB's organisational affiliation and internal organisation align well with the tasks they are set to solve. The Police emergency preparedness system (Politidirektoratet, 2020) clarifies that NB must assist all police districts and specialist police agencies in hazardous and complex incidents and must be complementary and mutually reinforcing. This dual requirement is demanding. It should be possible to achieve complementarity and mutual reinforcement, but this might require an internal reorganisation of NB or a realignment of existing procedures. Co-location in the centre provides NB with new opportunities for economies of scale. It will probably require further adjustments to balance and align NB's resources to be complementary and mutually reinforcing. Among other things, improvements could further align and optimize the work plans of the individual units, facilitate the sharing of relevant resources and ensure their availability around the clock while maintaining the proper level of preparedness. Recent NB assignments suggest some of these processes are underway.

A recent incident occurred in November 2021 that may indicate NBs complementary. This thesis will not discuss this incident at length as it is still under investigation. The incident indicates that a lot is working well for NB regarding coordination and response. A person with a bow and arrow threatened random people in Kongsberg, a small town one and a half hours drive from Oslo. The local police were quick to arrive on the scene. When they arrived, the suspect shot arrows at them. The police had to withdraw to put on more robust safety equipment from their car. The perpetrator then used this opportunity and killed five people with a knife. At the same time, NB was asked to assist. They arrived shortly after being called for assistance, both by helicopter and cars, reinforcing the local police. In this case, PLIVO was reported, and many local resources arrived promptly on site. However, the suspect did not need much time to perform his deeds. The man had a mental health condition and acted irrationally. Therefore, predicting that he would act as he did was challenging. Subsequent evaluations will show whether the police can be blamed for the management of this crisis. However, early evidence suggests no issues in terms of communication, coordination or deployment of police and NB resources in a timely manner (Fausko et al., 2021; Jørstad et al., 2021; Røset et al., 2021).

The development of the police in recent years indicates that valuable measures have been implemented. The evaluation of the Al-Noor incident indicates that further improvements are still needed. It is also essential to note that this incident could have happened elsewhere in Norway, where the police could have taken longer to arrive, thus leading to a very different outcome. Incidents such as the one in Al-Noor and the one in Kongsberg can be managed, but their occurrence is inevitable. A quick response from local police is essential to prevent or limit an offender's actions. However, a few incidents do not provide a sufficient basis to ascertain whether the police have been strengthened or whether the measures that have been introduced have failed. The evidence discussed in the reports and this study is, therefore, at best, illustrative of broader trends. Significant incidents that have revealed failures in the systems have been evaluated, and measures have been implemented to sort out several issues. However, society and the threat picture are dynamic, requiring the police to be adaptive. The total effect of the latest and most recent reforms has probably not been observed yet, as it takes time to change such a large organisation as the police. Regardless of their current preparedness status, the police must find time to adjust to current requirements and anticipate possible changes and future challenges.

Conclusion

This chapter shows that the Norwegian police and NB have undergone significant changes in recent years. These changes include the colocation of NB units in a single centre and investments that have led it to develop a robust capacity. However, an organisation like the police should be constantly evaluated and adjusted to mirror societal changes and the threat picture. This capacity to change rests on the police's ability to understand and adapt in advance of a significant incident. Unfortunately, history has shown that significant events and crises are needed to accelerate changes. Crises tend to bring political attention and new resources to tackle problems that are often pre-existing but feel more pressing to decision-makers in the wake of a significant incident. The police must then learn from the latest crisis and try to make changes that mean they are more prepared to solve pre-existing issues when the next crisis emerges. The wide range of possible crises makes it challenging to focus and prioritise the police and NB's limited resources. NB covers mainly the fight against serious crime, terrorism, and emergency preparedness. Preparing for the entire range of possible contingencies in these domains is very expensive and impractical. However, investing in NB is comparable to an insurance policy. It is expensive. Hopefully, it will never be needed, but it is good to have it when required.

Emergency preparedness similarly feels like a useless expense until a severe crisis emerges. This suggests that it is crucial to manage and develop NBs resources well. NBs units have unique capacities, are available to the police districts, and are widely used. The development of NB and their mutual reinforcement since the units have been collocated have given it a more significant and unified character. Therefore, it is not surprising that interviews with senior police officers suggested NB should become a specialist agency. The complementary role of NB would appear more clearly as a support resource for the entire police if they were considered as a specialist agency instead of being under a police district. From this perspective, further adaptation of the organisation of NB within the Norwegian police system is required to achieve a more significant effect with an already limited pool of resources. Such a decision would also help to align NB capabilities to the challenges and crises confronted by Norwegian police at the national level.

Conclusion

This dissertation has filled a gap in the literature and the public debate on the Police national emergency resources (NB). More specifically, this thesis's primary objective has been to identify if the organisation and capabilities of NB are well-aligned with the challenges confronted by the Norwegian police in contemporary crises.

The first chapter looked at the organisation of the Norwegian police and how it conceives of crisis management. Norwegian police have become more robust through two major reforms that have created fewer but larger police districts. Although they have become more robust, districts continue to lack NB's special expertise in solving complex crises. The police districts can therefore ask NB for support when their competence is insufficient to solve the crisis on their own. The significant threats posed by wicked problems such as terrorism and serious crime require special procedures and capabilities. It is mainly to confront these problems that NB assist. Today, NB are seen more as a 'reinforcement' resource and will deploy their unique capacity to normalize the situation. This indicates that NB are an essential resource for the police districts to assist in solving complex crises.

The second chapter zoomed on NB's organisation and capacities. NB is the police's special unit to be able to conduct anti-terror operations, disarm bombs, fly helicopters and negotiate with people in crisis. NB have a contingency plan, which means that personnel from the various units are always available to support the police districts. Recent developments have sought to make the districts better able to handle crises until NB arrives to assist. NB also host and train local emergency response personnel to support this local capacity, thus empowering local districts to handle various crises themselves. When situations require support from NB, the police districts should be better prepared to cope with the initial assignment while waiting for NB's assistance. This form of burden-sharing or compromise is perhaps the most significant change in the organisation of emergency resources in recent years. NB have clearly adapted to become more of a reinforcement resource that solves crises the districts have already started responding to. This approach strikes a balance between the need for centralised capabilities to deal with extraordinary circumstances and a decentralised system that can identify and respond to emerging crises as early as possible.

The third chapter developed a more detailed case study analysis of the terror attack in Norway on 22 July 2011. Although it took place over a decade ago, this incident provides good insights into NB's capacities at that time. BT and BG were mobilised quickly from various locations,

HT was not operational until later in the evening due to budget cuts, and KGF had other primary tasks. Subsequent evaluations of the attacks shed light on perceived gaps in police and NB capabilities, specifically helicopter preparedness, poor communication tools, and lack of shared situational awareness. However, the case study also shows that NB's units had essential roles in handling the 22 July attack. BG was crucial for quickly and safely clearing out places where explosives were suspected, and BT went ashore on Utøya and arrested the perpetrator. NB thus made an important contribution to the resolution of the crisis, despite the identified gaps.

The last chapter looked at how the police and NB learned from and adapted after the 22 July incident based on measures recommended in the evaluations after the incident. This chapter shows that the Norwegian police and NB have undergone significant changes in recent years. These changes include the colocation of NB units in a single centre and investments that have led it to develop a more robust capacity, making NB better able to assist the police districts. New helicopters, better equipment, and a common police emergency centre (PNB) where the local SWAT teams come to train with NB have also enabled better cooperation between NB and the districts and thus reinforced common crisis management capacity. This chapter also considered whether further changes are required and explored the argument that NB should become a specialist agency to better align its status to the national nature of its support mission and capabilities.

The chapters made it possible to progressively respond to the central research question. The bottom line is that NB are better aligned today to the challenges that may arise in a contemporary crisis than in the past. Developments in recent years, particularly since the 22 July attacks, have enabled NB to establish its status as an essential support function in a crisis for the police districts. This support mostly consists of professional advice within NB's subject areas and physical support to the districts in assignments they cannot handle. However, it is essential to point out that NB’s success also depends on the districts themselves being able to manage emerging crises while they wait for NB’s support. NB is a reinforcement resource and not a first responder in a time-critical emergency mission. In this context, NB’s efforts to liaise and provide more systematic training to police districts are particularly important, suggesting that the trajectory has largely been positive. NB can also be the first responder in assignments when notified. Again, NB’s performance depends on good communication with local districts and other partners and sometimes on intelligence to provide tactical warning that anticipates an incident.

The thesis has shown that NB's capacities and the Norwegian police have developed over time and that this development has accelerated in the last decade. NB has grown and developed in step with the needs of the police and society. Reforms and major incidents have influenced the development of the police to become what the police Norway has today. The overall arc of the story that is traced in this study is positive. This is the story of a police force and its links to a set of specialised units whose performance is periodically assessed and reassessed, leading to a range of reforms and adaptations. NB have several capacities the districts do not have, which can be crucial in gaining control of a situation. At the same time, the districts today are in a better position to handle the onset of crises themselves. This capacity contributes to the success of NB, both by preparing the scene for NB but also more indirectly since NB is composed of police officers that transfer to its units. In this context, training is crucial to make both the police districts and NB better able to manage and coordinate crises.

The author's experience of serving 27 years in the police, including more than 20 years in NB, largely confirms this overall trajectory. The police are improving, specifically as far as crisis management is concerned. When I started in the police, crisis management was almost an unknown concept, not something we discussed or thought of. Today, it is a separate subject police officers study theoretically and practically through exercises, whether or not they are part of NB. There is now a significant focus in the police community on developing the best possible crisis management system. Practices such as communication, coordination and training have been systematised, increasing security and efficiency in police operations considerably. Training today is much more structured and thoughtful than it used to be. There are separate curricula with requirements for implementation and certification. This has formed more equal police officers and improved the emergence of common standards, practices and a shared understanding of the situation and related assignments. Improvements have also been striking in the domain of technological support. When I started my career, access to radio was limited, and its coverage was poor. Today, all police officers have personal police radios and mobile devices to quickly send and receive relevant information when needed. Shared situational awareness through these devices is incomparably better than it used to be. However, these improvements should not lead us to conclude that everything is perfect or that the police should stop assessing its performance and anticipating how it needs to adapt.

One broader concern identified in the thesis is that recent reforms might have moved the pendulum too far toward centralisation at the expense of police presence on the streets. While

it is important to develop solid and robust organisations, the ability and frequency of police patrols also directly affect the police's ability to respond to crises, sometimes before they escalate further. This emphasis on patrols is particularly important in a security context that emphasises the possible threats caused by so-called lone wolves. However, police districts have developed more specialised competencies in handling incidents, not the least through the training of their SWAT teams (or IP3 crews). IP3 and other police should be better able to handle the start of a significant crisis awaiting support from NB. This reliance on NB further indicates that Norway's current crisis management system makes it crucial to manage and develop NB's resources well. From this perspective, further adaptation of the internal and external organisation of NB is required to achieve a more significant effect with an already limited amount of resources. Here the question of the location of NB in the broader Norwegian police system remains unresolved. The thesis emphasises that the location of NB within the Oslo district is not particularly well aligned with its national role and - arguably - the principle of equality.

Further research on NB will be needed. First, as a matter of principle, the police and security service constantly need to evaluate their performance and need to adapt. Second, the thesis could not explore everything. Access to declassified information necessarily limited the level of detail of the discussions. Much public information has made it possible to shed light on the thesis topic. However, access to classified information would significantly enrich another research project. Due to NB's role as a national resource with tactics and procedures that are protected information, it has not been possible to shed light on all aspects of NB's structure and capability, for example, and related problems. Another promising research trajectory would compare NB to foreign equivalent units to develop a more nuanced and global analysis of contemporary crisis management.

Appendix 1

Interview guide

Johnny Lian

Student

University of

Glasgow

Presentation; briefly introduction of my research project and myself.

Formalities:

- Consent statement
- Opportunity to withdraw at any time
- Anonymisation
- Approval from the University of Glasgow
- The project will be unclassified

Conducting the interview

- The main topic being reviewed
- I will use an audio recorder combined with notes
- Duration about 1 ½ hour
- The interview will be conducted in Norwegian

The interview will mainly be semi-structured based on an open conversation. I will present the objects I am writing about and why I want to hear their opinion on "The Police national emergency resources (NB) relevance in crisis". The research question is: "To what extent is the organisation and capacities of NB well adapted to the challenges Norwegian police face in a contemporary crisis?"

The questions below are questions I intend to use in my semi-structured approach to provide focus and direction on the topic I want to research.

QUESTIONS:

Background and experience:

1. Current position and function
2. What is your role during a crisis or severe event?

1. The local police reform is a measure triggered after the 22 July incident, which should improve the Norwegian police with several measures, including making the police districts more robust by reducing the number. What are your thoughts on the effect of the local police reform (for your district) concerning crisis management?

2. Has crisis management in your police district changed due to reforms after 22 July?
   a. In what way / why not?

3. Is NB, in your opinion, a relevant national resource for your police district/police in general?

4. In your opinion, does NB have relevance in your district's crisis management?
   a. Yes- why / no - why not?

5. What are your expectations for NB in the future?
   (More accessible / easier to get assistance/ assist in other areas?)

6. The threat picture changes over time. Possible scenarios are described in PST's annual threat assessments. What do you think regarding the police's ability to adapt to change and development?
   (Learning organisation, future-oriented, ability to understand change, hybrid situations)

Johnny Lian

Oslo, 23.02.2022

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