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PRESS RELEASE

[Legal decision]

Individual identification of police officers and gendarmes: the Conseil d'État orders the Minister of the Interior to complete the implementation of the measures already initiated by the end of 2026

Following an application lodged by two organisations, the Conseil d'État today ordered the Minister of the Interior to immediately implement all the measures announced to ensure that police officers and gendarmes wear individual identification numbers. It also required the Minister to order and distribute the new equipment, on which the identification number is printed in larger, more legible characters, by 31 December 2026.

Under the French Internal Security Code (article R.434-15), police officers and gendarmes are required to comply with an obligation of personal identification. This requirement involves wearing a seven-digit identification number displayed on a band attached to the uniform, known as a “RIO” (identity and organisation reference) for police officers.

In October 2023, acting on an application brought by the Human Rights League, the Conseil d'État, sitting as its Litigation Assembly, found that this requirement was insufficiently complied with by police officers and gendarmes. It ordered the Minister of the Interior to first take the necessary measures to ensure compliance and, secondly, to modify the features of the individual identification number to make it more visible.¹²

Now required to rule on the enforcement of the 2023 decision, the Conseil d'État today ruled that, whilst the measures proposed by the Government are likely to satisfy the injunction issued, it remains necessary to ensure their effective implementation.

Measures to ensure that the RIO is actually worn have not yet been fully implemented

The measures taken or announced by the Minister of the Interior to ensure compliance with the requirement to wear personal identification - including the issuance of instructions reiterating this requirement, amendments to the list of breaches of professional conduct, the inclusion of this requirement in training programmes and the wearing of identification numbers on the front of vests during law enforcement operations – should ensure the implementation of the 2023 decision. The Conseil d'État noted, however, that to date the measures had not been fully implemented in practice.

Uncertainty regarding the timeframe for ordering and distributing the new equipment

Made up of 17 judges, the Litigation Assembly is the highest judicial body of the Conseil d'État, where cases of exceptional importance are heard.¹

² [Decision of the Conseil d'État No. 467771 of 11 October 2023](#)

The Conseil d'État also considered that the new features of the individual identifier (which were not contested by the petitioning organisations) would ensure that it was sufficiently legible to the public in all operational contexts. The minister intends to increase the size of the individual identifier and make its seven characters more legible, by both enlarging the font size and printing in white against a black background. However, the Conseil d'État considers that its 2023 decision has not, at this stage, been fully implemented due to remaining uncertainty regarding the timeframe for ordering and distributing the new equipment.

For all these reasons, and to ensure the implementation of the 2023 decision, the Conseil d'État ordered the Minister of the Interior to immediately implement all the measures announced to guarantee that individual identification badges are worn by police officers and gendarmes, to place an order for the supply of individual identification badges and to distribute the new equipment by 31 December 2026.

Decision No. 507239, Human Rights League et al., 29 April 2026