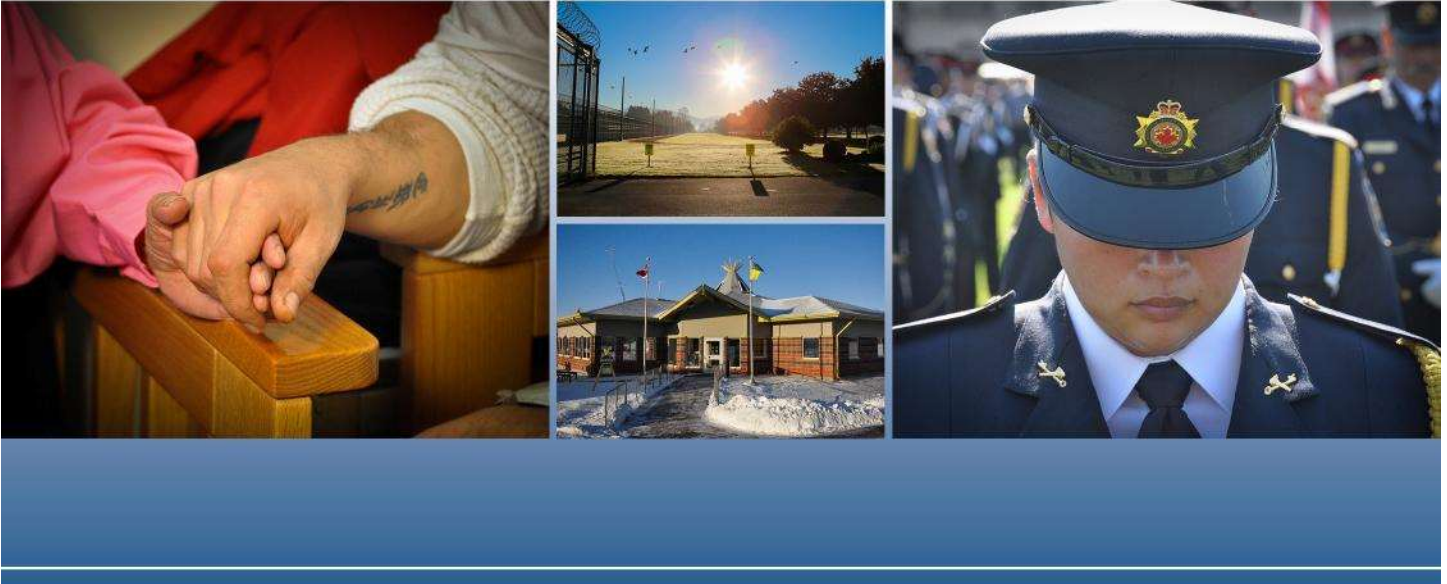




# CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.



## Appearance of the Commissioner before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP)

**FALL 2019 REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA: RESPECT IN THE  
WORKPLACE**

**JANUARY 28, 2021**

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## Opening Remarks

### Speaking Notes for

Anne Kelly  
Commissioner, Correctional Service of Canada

For an appearance before the  
Standing Committee on Public Accounts

*Check against delivery*

Madam Chair and members of the committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Respect and a healthy workplace are a key priority for me as Commissioner, and this needs to be at the heart of everything we do.

Our 18,000 employees are one of our greatest strengths in successfully carrying out our work. They are hard-working, professional and passionate about making a difference in the lives of offenders and ensuring public safety.

Correctional work can be challenging and stressful, and the well-being of our staff is essential. Harassment, discrimination or violence have no place in the Correctional Service Canada.

We recognize the importance of the Auditor General's findings last year, and I want to assure this committee that we have been taking it very seriously and are taking concrete actions.

Culture change does not happen overnight. This is

something we continue to work at in order to sustain positive change.

Since the beginning of the pandemic back in March, our organization has worked tirelessly to implement a comprehensive and coordinated response to limit the risk of COVID-19, and to protect the health and safety of staff, inmates, and the public during these unprecedented times.

The pandemic has helped to reinforce the importance of our making our health and safety a top priority in all of our workplaces – including our mental, physical and emotionally wellbeing. This is especially topical as we take part in a national dialogue on mental health today during *Bell Let's Talk*. Every action counts.

To this end, since the completion of the Auditor General's report last year, we have worked to strengthen our ability to maintain healthy workplaces in several ways.

We are ensuring that all of the commitments outlined in the Management Action Plan developed in response to the Auditor General's recommendations are completed.

In response to those recommendations, we have reviewed guidelines and tools on harassment and workplace violence as well as working to ensure employees at all levels of the organization are aware of these resources.

We have developed and implemented an assessment form to ensure a nationally consistent and robust approach to assessing and documenting harassment, discrimination, and workplace violence complaints. A new Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention policy is now in place together with procedures to respond to incidents of harassment and violence if they do occur.

Understanding that change requires constant communication, town halls were conducted with staff on several occasions this year, including around CSC Respect Day this past November. I have led several town halls myself with our senior leaders. We discussed topics such as respect, mental health, and priorities in terms of organizational change and culture.

We have already begun to see changes based on these initiatives. The results of the 2019 Public Service Employee Survey showed that the rates of reported harassment and discrimination have dropped for a second year in a row.

The survey also showed that together with the drop in reported harassment rates, there was an increase in the number of respondents that felt that the department is working hard to create a workplace that prevents harassment and discrimination.

While this decrease is a positive step in the right direction, we know there is more work to do and we are working to ensure that respectful behaviour is embedded in our culture.

In our efforts to improve our workplace culture, we launched the National Comprehensive Strategy on Workplace Wellness and Employee Wellbeing last fall. This strategy identifies risks and action plans with clear accountabilities and performance monitoring so that we can track progress.

We are measuring our results on an annual basis through the release of our annual Workplace Climate and Employee Wellbeing report. This report informs us on areas of improvement and on the programs and initiatives that must be prioritized in the future. The first report was released in 2019 and the 2019-2020 report will be released within the next couple of months.

Lastly, we are now in our third year of the Respectful Workplace Campaign. This Campaign involves various initiatives including awareness, promotion and developing avenues for employees to disclose inappropriate behaviour. More specifically, CSC has implemented:

- a tip line and a generic email address to provide employees with options to report concerns relating to workplace misconduct; and
- two courses on respectful workplace and violence in the workplaces which are now a part of the National Training Standards for all employees.



- We have also begun conducting an audit of CSC's Culture. The goal of the audit is to identify ways to make CSC a safer, healthier, more respectful and violence-free environment for all employees and offenders. The results of 2020 Public Service Employee Survey will assist the audit and help us to identify what we are doing well and where we need to further improve.
- Madam Chair, while we know we have more work to do, we are seeing progress.

In closing, I strongly believe a safe and supportive environment is fundamental to achieving positive correctional outcomes. We are building a culture where we all lead by example and where employees feel valued and look forward to coming to work everyday... which I still do after 37 years with the Service.

Thank you.

## **Fall 2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada: Respect in the Workplace**

### **Key Messages - General**

- There is no place for harassment or violence in our organization and the misconduct by staff is not acceptable under any circumstances.
- It is CSC's priority to address issues brought forward and ensure a positive and healthy work environment for our employees.
- We are committed to addressing issues brought forward and ensure a positive, healthy, respectful and supportive work environment for our employees.
- CSC recognizes the importance of the Auditor General's findings last year.
- Before and since the completion of the Auditor General's report, the Service has undertaken a number of initiatives to implement all of the recommendations.
- Culture change can take time but CSC is absolutely committed to it.

### Key Messages - Progress

- We have accepted all the recommendations in the OAG Report and are taking concrete actions to implement them.
- Over the past year, we made important progress on implementing several of our action items and are on track to implement remaining actions by March 31, 2021, as outlined in our management action plan.
- Most recently, we completed two items of our Management Action Plan that had implementation dates of December 31, 2020:
  - The new Harassment and Workplace Violence policy and processes have been posted on CSC's internal intranet site (the Hub).
  - Template letters and other tools to inform of informal processes have been prepared and are available to all employees through GC docs harassment and violence prevention shared folders.
  - In response to those recommendations, we have reviewed guidelines and tools on harassment and workplace violence as well as working to ensure employees at all levels of the organization are aware of these resources.
- We are working hard to ensure the remaining commitments are completed:
  - We will publish our second Workplace Climate and Employee Wellbeing Report for 2019-2020; and
  - We are considering a separate ombuds-style function at CSC.
  - We will complete an Ethical Risk Assessment initiative to help support a respectful workplace at CSC by March 2022.

### Other results:

- The first-ever National Comprehensive Strategy on Workplace Wellness and Employee Wellbeing was launched on October 30, 2020.
- The Respectful Workplace Campaign has been in place since early 2018. The third annual respect day was held on November 20, 2020.
- We created a 24/7 tip line to provide employees with additional avenues to report misconduct.
- CSC has also developed an overarching strategy for leaders at all levels to encourage them to have honest and open discussions with employees on the importance of creating a healthy and respectful work environment.
- Town halls were conducted with staff on several occasions this year, including around Respect Day this past November. These town halls discussed topics such as respect, mental health, and priorities in terms of organizational change and culture.

### Key Messages - Culture Audit

- We are currently in the planning phase of an internal culture audit.
- The goal of the audit is to identify ways to make CSC a safer, healthier, and more respectful, violence-free environment for all employees and offenders.
- This audit is an important way to help us assess all aspects of CSC's environment. It will inform us of areas we need to focus on and guide us in planning changes that will help us improve our culture and the way we work.
- The 2020 Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) will also be an invaluable tool to help us to identify what we are doing well and where we need to improve.
- The survey contains a range of questions about:
  - mental health
  - compensation
  - leadership
  - respect
  - diversity
  - harassment
  - discrimination, and
  - other workplace priorities
- The survey was designed to get feedback on how CSC was impacted in 2020, as the pandemic posed unique challenges for staff working in all aspects of the organization.
- The survey results will feed the audit and provide information to support the continuous improvement of people management practices in the federal public service, which will ultimately help us improve practices at CSC.
- We anticipate that the survey results will be representative of all regions, sectors, and occupational groups, and give us a clear snapshot of CSC's culture.

### **Key Messages - Mental Health**

- CSC values its staff and recognizes that they play a key role in the organization's success. Therefore, their health, wellbeing and achievement of their full potential are essential.
- With some 18,000 employees, we recognize that investing in health, mental health and wellness of its staff will have long-term impacts for employee and organizational health and success.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted what we do and how we do it. During the pandemic, we have made the health and safety of our employees, offenders and the public our top priority in every operational decision.
- We regularly reinforce, through ongoing communications, the importance of maintaining a positive and healthy environment – and exercising self-care – to support our mental, physical and emotional wellbeing during this challenging time.

### **Actions in Support of Mental Health:**

- We launched the Comprehensive Strategy for Workplace Wellness and Employee Wellbeing on October 30, 2020.
- We include Employee Wellness in all discussions with union partners. Labour partners are also active members of our Advisory Committee to help us make decisions about our ongoing COVID-19 response.
- Staff have a 24/7 access to LifeSpeak, a digital wellness platform at no charge and anonymous.
- Various local, regional and national wellness committees operate in administrative and operational units.
- We continue to provide access to Employee Assistance Service and a crisis referral line that is available 24/7, 365 days a year.
- We have a Steering Committee on Mental Health Injuries, chaired by the Commissioner, to advise CSC on support for mental health injuries in employees.
- We are an active participant in the Bell Let's Talk campaign.

### **Actions specific to COVID-19:**

- We collaborated with the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT) to support virtual town halls for Public Safety Personnel.
- In addition, CSC's Mental Health Injuries Steering Committee worked with CIPSRT to co-host a town hall specifically for CSC employees, entitled, "Self care during times of crisis and change."
- We have hosted on-site activities, respecting OHS guidance, for front-line staff in institutions and regions with outbreaks providing literature for supporting mental health.
- We have created a dedicated space on our internal website which created a "one-stop-shop" for mental health and wellness programs and information.

## **Key Messages - National Comprehensive Strategy on Workplace Wellness and Employee Wellbeing**

- We launched the first-ever National Comprehensive Strategy on Workplace Wellness and Employee Wellbeing in October 2020.
- It identifies risks and action plans with clear accountabilities and performance monitoring so that progress is closely tracked.

### **The Strategy is based on three pillars:**

#### **Pillar 1: Improve the Culture and Increase Pride**

- Establish an inclusive structure by reducing stigmatization, fostering communication, increasing pride and assuming our shared responsibility in establishing and maintaining a healthy workplace, considering that health and wellness at work are based on a culture of respect, trust, diversity, inclusion and fairness.

#### **Pillar 2: Build Capacity**

- Promote integrated programs, initiatives and services that are based on best practices and meet the changing needs of employees, managers and the organization in order to establish and maintain a healthy, safe and inclusive workplace.

#### **Pillar 3: Foster Healthy, Respectful and Resilient Environments Free from Harassment, Bullying and Violence**

- Ensure that all employees and managers have a greater awareness and better understanding that harassment, bullying and violence are unacceptable under any circumstances. Encourage the reporting of misconduct and ensure that everyone feels like equal members of the organization who are supported and treated equally.

### Key Messages - Systemic Racism

- Systemic racism is a complex issue that must involve all of us – at multiple layers of the criminal justice system. We must all play an active role in addressing it.
- Racism and discrimination have absolutely no place at CSC and we have no tolerance for these behaviours.
- We know there is more work to do. Addressing it requires an ongoing commitment to ensure that our structure, practices, policies, and programs address the root causes of inequities.
- We are committed to working harder to address systemic racism, including building greater diversity in our leadership positions, and more inclusion and equity in everything we do.
- In July, CSC implemented a joint working group with the Parole Board of Canada to look at diversity and racism within the federal corrections and conditional release system.
- This group completed an initial review of our current policies and programs that address the unique needs of racialized offenders, as well as those aimed at increasing the diversity of our employees. Their review took into consideration existing studies on the issue of over-representation of Black Canadians and Indigenous people in the criminal justice system, including recommendations from the Parliamentary Black Caucus.
- To build on this work, we are in the process of developing an anti-racism framework and action plan.
- We are currently consulting with stakeholders, and Indigenous and Ethnocultural groups, on what our focus areas need to be moving forward. Employees will also help inform our way forward.
- CSC requires employees to complete mandatory Diversity and Cultural Competency Training, as well as provides ongoing professional development opportunities and resources to continually promote and increase staff awareness and inclusive practices.

### Key Messages - Engagement

- CSC has developed an overarching strategy for our leaders at all levels to encourage them to have honest and open discussions with employees on the importance of creating a healthy and respectful work environment.
- We are in the third year of the Respectful Workplace Campaign and are working to ensure that respectful workplace behaviour is embedded in our culture.
- This Campaign involves various initiatives including awareness, promotion and the creation of vehicles to disclose inappropriate behaviour.
- Town halls were conducted with staff on several occasions this year, including around Respect Day this past November. These town halls discussed topics such as respect, mental health, and priorities in terms of organizational change and culture.

### Notable events:

- Bell Let's Talk Day, celebrated January 29, 2020
- Pink Shirt Day, celebrated February 26, 2020
- Third National CSC Respect Day, celebrated November 20, 2020
- Launch of the National Comprehensive Strategy on Workplace Wellness & Employee Wellbeing, October 30, 2020

### Results:

- The 2019 Public Service Employee Survey has shown that our initial efforts are beginning to show results. The Survey showed:
  - A decrease of 6% in respondents indicating harassment from previous year;
  - an increase of 7% in respondents indicating their satisfaction with the quality of supervision they receive;
  - an increase of 6% in respondents indicating their satisfaction with how interpersonal issues are resolved in their work unit; and
  - an increase of 5% in respondents indicating that their immediate supervisor seems to care about them as a person.
- We look forward to receiving results from the latest survey, which is closing today.



## CSC's Culture Audit

### Speaking Points:

- CSC is currently in the planning phase of its internal culture audit.
- The goal of the audit is to find ways to make CSC a safer, healthier, and more respectful, violence-free environment for all employees and offenders.
- To ensure its relevance, senior management, regions and sectors, various subject matter experts from the National Advisory Committee on Ethics, external consultants, labour partners, and other federal government departments and organizations who have been undergoing changes in their organizational culture will be all be engaged.
- This is an excellent opportunity to engage on CSC's organizational culture, examine all sides of our environment, and ensure we are adopting the right approaches moving forward.

## Background: Culture Audit

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, healthy, respectful, and supportive work environment for our:

- employees
- partners, and
- offenders

To determine how well we are doing, we are undertaking an **Audit of CSC Culture**. This audit is an important way to help assess all aspects of CSC's work place and environment. It will inform us of areas we need to focus on and guide us in planning changes that will help us improve our culture and the way we work.

The audit, led by our Internal Audit Sector, is currently in the planning phase. The sector will use the **Public Service Employee Survey (PSES)** as a key source of data for the audit. The survey contains a range of questions about:

- mental health
- compensation
- leadership
- respect
- diversity
- harassment
- discrimination, and
- other workplace priorities

The survey was designed to get staff feedback on how their work was impacted in 2020, as the pandemic posed unique challenges for staff working in all aspects of the organization. The survey results will feed into our audit and provide information to support the continuous improvement of people management practices in the federal public service, which will ultimately help us improve practices at CSC.

## Timing and Phases

**Note: timing below is based on information available at this time. We still need to consult the EXCOM and DAC which could change the scope and timing of the audit.**

- Planning Phase: expected to be completed in March 2021.
  - A presentation is scheduled for March 2021 at EXCOM on the potential approach and methodology (including objective and scope) to be undertaken for this audit. A presentation is also planned for late April 2021 with the Departmental Audit Committee.
- Examination Phase: We expect this phase will begin in April to December 2021
- Reporting Phase: TBD based on scope of this audit. Will be discussed at EXCOM and DAC.
  - If pressed by Public Accounts Committee, Reporting should occur in mid-year 2022.

- Management Action Plan: Following the receipt of audit results, CSC will develop a detailed Management Action Plan (MAP) to respond to the recommendations. The report and the MAP will be presented at the external Departmental Audit Committee (DAC). The DAC and the Internal Audit Sector will monitor the implementation of the MAP until all actions are fully implemented.

## **2019 Fall Report of the Auditor General of Canada - Report 1: Respect in the Workplace**

Please click this link to find a copy of the Report:

- [Respect in the Workplace](#)

## CSC's Hot Issues Notes

### COVID-19 Federal Corrections: Measures

#### Speaking Points:

- The Correctional Service of Canada is committed to protecting the health and safety of staff, inmates, and the public during these unprecedented times.
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada has implemented a comprehensive and coordinated response to limit the risk of COVID-19, all in line with the Public Health Agency of Canada's advice.
- The Correctional Service of Canada has been focusing its efforts on minimizing the risks of COVID-19 in all of its workplaces.
- Extensive infection prevention and control measures are in place at correctional Institutions.
- Active screening is occurring in each Institution, inmates and staff must wear masks, practice physical distancing, wash/sanitizing their hands often and there is enhanced and frequent disinfecting and cleaning at facilities. The Service is also working in lock step with public health experts and the Canadian Red Cross to make sure its response is based on the latest science and evidence.
- In areas where there are outbreaks and higher rates of community transmission, heightened operational measures are in place. These include limiting comings and goings from Institutions, suspended visits and modified routines and movements to prevent possible spread of the virus.
- As of January 21, 2021, there are 24 active COVID-19 cases among inmates.
- Inmates who have tested positive are medically isolated and being closely monitored.
- The Service has also rolled out its first phase of COVID-19 vaccines to elderly, medically vulnerable inmates, based on advice from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization.
- The Correctional Service of Canada is working closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), local public health authorities and all of their labour partners and stakeholders.
- These precautions have been taken in response to instances of COVID-19 in the community, including among staff members.
- As of January 18, 2021, there are 51 active COVID-19 cases among employees.
- When an employee becomes symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19, they are required to self-isolate at home until cleared to return to work. Contact tracing is immediately conducted to ensure that close contacts are self-isolating, and additional testing is conducted, as needed.
- Frontline staff are also top of mind for the vaccine. Health care workers and other frontline staff work in high-risk settings. As always, these staff will be vaccinated by their home province or territory, based on National Advisory Committee on Immunization prioritization.

- The Correctional Service of Canada has been working closely with provinces to identify health care and frontline workers for prioritization. Some health care workers have already been vaccinated and the Service will continue to stay on top of this.

## **Background: COVID-19 Federal Corrections: Measures**

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has successfully implemented a number of measures to protect staff and the inmate population from COVID-19.

### **Current Measures**

#### ***Cases among Inmates***

In the Prairie region, Drumheller Institution has 10 cases, and Saskatchewan Penitentiary has six cases. In the Ontario region, Joyceville Institution has 8 cases.

#### ***Personal Protective Equipment***

CSC continues to take exceptional measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in all CSC institutions to limit the risk to inmates and staff, including having everyone at sites wear masks. Additional personal protective equipment is available to employees that need it, including health care staff.

#### ***Suspension of Visits to Institutions***

CSC is monitoring the situation closely as it evolves and will adjust its approach in consultation with public health partners across the country. At the first sign of one case of transmission at a site, non-essential staff and visitors will no longer be allowed in that site until the outbreak is contained. The list of Institutions affected by closures can be found here:

- [Visiting status of federal correctional institutions](#)

Visitors will be restricted access to Institutions if they are visiting an Institution in an area that is identified as being moderate to high risk in accordance with CSC's National COVID-19 Risk Management Framework, or where inter- and intra-provincial travel restrictions apply.

Offenders will continue to participate in on-site programming and activities that support their rehabilitation. Health services will be maintained and temporary absences for medical and compassionate reasons will continue, as needed. Offenders are encouraged to continue connecting with their families and loved ones by telephone or video visitation.

#### ***Release of Offenders***

While being a full participant in the Canada-wide public health effort to fight COVID-19, CSC continues to fulfill its obligations with respect to the care and custody of inmates to prepare them for safe release into the community.

CSC and the Parole Board of Canada (PBC) continue to process eligible inmates for release in accordance with the law. A number of considerations go into release decision-making with public safety being the paramount consideration. COVID-19 and other health related issues are only one of the many considerations taken into account when releasing offenders into the community.

CSC, in consultation with PBC, has worked to streamline the case preparation process for offenders. In addition, PBC is working to ensure cases are dealt with as expeditiously as possible, while continuing to use risk- and evidence-based decision-making.

Since the beginning of March 2020, the federal custody population has declined by 1,476 inmates (as of January 19, 2021). This reduction is the result of fewer admissions from the provinces and territories coupled with continued releases into the community. This downward trend in the federal inmate population is expected to continue over the coming months.

CSC is engaging with community partners on an ongoing basis to ensure that offenders on conditional release have a safe, secure and supportive environment to which they can return. This is an important part of any safe and successful release into the community.

### ***Reduced Staffing Due to Self-Isolating***

Staff members at a number of CSC Institutions have tested positive for COVID-19. The table below outlines the number of staff with positive COVID-19 tests and the number of resolved cases at federal Institutions in each province.

CSC is collaborating with public health authorities to conduct contact tracing to ensure that close contacts are self-isolating at home and additional testing is conducted, as needed.

CSC assesses operational decisions around schedules and activities on a regular basis when taking into consideration staffing levels. Staffing levels are monitored and assessed daily and adjusted, as required. Staff on-site are showing flexibility and some have worked extended hours to meet the operational requirements of running Institutions.



## COVID-19 Vaccination Program

### Speaking Points:

- The Correctional Service of Canada is committed to protecting the health and safety of staff, inmates, and the public during these unprecedented times.
- The Service has worked very closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada to respond to every aspect of the pandemic, including the provision of vaccines to inmates.
- Under the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*, the Correctional Service of Canada has an obligation to provide essential health care to the approximately 12,500 inmates in correctional Institutions across the country.
- This includes the eventual provision of vaccines to all federal inmates in its care and custody.
- The Correctional Service Canada's vaccination strategy follows the advice of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization. It supports the timely allocation, distribution and administration of the vaccine for those in federal care as efficiently, safely and equitably as possible.
- As part of phase one and guided by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, approximately 600 older, medically vulnerable federal inmates were offered a vaccine.
- As further supply of the vaccine becomes available in phase II, it will be offered to all federal inmates based on National Advisory Committee on Immunization prioritization guidance.
- Employees are also top of mind. These include health care workers and other frontline staff working in high-risk settings. They keep operations going 24/7.
- As per National Advisory Committee on Immunization guidelines, the institutional health care staff are included as priority Canadians for phase one and they will be offered vaccinations by their provincial/territorial health authorities. Provinces have begun vaccinating these workers. The Service continues to be vigilant in applying infection prevention and control measures, including enhanced cleaning protocols, providing staff, inmates and anyone entering the sites with masks, if necessary, continuing ongoing education about hygiene, physical distancing and monitoring symptoms, COVID-19 testing, and contact tracing.

## Background: COVID-19 Vaccination Program

On January 8, 2021, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) began vaccinating inmates against COVID-19 in accordance with guidelines established by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization. Clinics were organized by medical staff to ensure elderly, medically vulnerable inmates were able to access the vaccine. In some cases, and when safe to do so, if an institution has one or a small number of elderly inmates who are considered a priority, these individuals will be vaccinated at a nearby institution.

It is expected that CSC will have completed its first phase of COVID-19 vaccinations in the next few days. In phase I, vaccines were administered at the following institutions:

- **Atlantic Region:** Dorchester Penitentiary, Springhill Institution and Shepody Healing Centre
- **Quebec Region:** The Regional Reception Centre, La Macaza Institution, the Federal Training Centre, Cowansville Institution, Drummond Institution, and Archambault Institution
- **Ontario Region:** Bath Institution, the Regional Treatment Centre (Bath Institution), Beaver Creek Institution, Collins Bay Institution, Grand Valley Institution for Women, Joyceville Institution, Millhaven Institution, the Regional Treatment Centre (Millhaven Institution), and Warkworth Institution
- **Prairie Region:** Drumheller Institution, Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Bowden Institution, Regional Psychiatric Centre, and Stony Mountain Institution
- **Pacific Region:** Kent Institution, William Head Institution, Matsqui Institution, Mission Institution, Kwikwèxwelhp Healing Village, Fraser Valley Institution, Mountain Institution, and Pacific Institution/Regional Treatment Centre

## Procurement

CSC has received doses of the Moderna vaccine, allowing CSC to begin vaccinating elderly, medically vulnerable inmates in January 2021. CSC expects to receive more vaccines from Health Canada as they become available and will continue to vaccinate inmates in the coming months. CSC has supplies necessary for administration of the Moderna vaccine, including syringes and alcohol wipes, provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada's national inventory. CSC has monitored freezers (-20C) for COVID-19 vaccines storage at its regional pharmacies. Vaccines will be sent to health care units as necessary.

## Phase I

CSC established an integrated risk management process where, on an ongoing basis, decisions about its operations are made in close collaboration with public health authorities, unions, Elders, and stakeholders to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. CSC expects to vaccinate approximately 600 inmates in phase I. In future phases, as more vaccine becomes available and based on the NACI prioritization guidelines, other inmates will be offered the opportunity to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Additional vaccines are expected to be delivered through the year.

CSC has a vaccination strategy that is aligned with the Government of Canada approach, following the recommendations and guidance of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization. CSC's approach is consistent with past public health situations, such as H1N1, during which a similar process was followed.

CSC is responsible for offering vaccines to all federally-incarcerated individuals. As per National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) guidelines, elderly, medically vulnerable federal inmates have been offered vaccination during phase I. CSC's plan moving forward is to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to all

federally-incarcerated individuals before end of year 2021. Inmates in the community will be vaccinated by the provincial and territorial health authority.

## Structured Intervention Units

### Speaking Points:

- On November 30, 2019, legislation eliminating the use of administrative segregation in federal correctional institutions came into effect.
- The Correctional Service of Canada established a new correctional model, which relies on Structured Intervention Units to address the needs of certain inmates under its care, when necessary.
- This is a significant transformational, new approach to address the specific needs of offenders so they can have better confinement conditions and be successfully rehabilitated and returned safely to the community.
- The legislation provides daily opportunities for meaningful human contact and time out of cell, and access to correctional programming, interventions and services to address their specific risks or behaviours that have led to the transfer.
- This includes education programs based on the education assessments, needs, and objectives. As well, all inmates continue to have access to chaplains representing all faiths and spiritual activities. Indigenous inmates continue to have access to Elders/Spiritual Advisors, Indigenous liaison officers, and traditional and spiritual practices.
- Since their implementation, Structured Intervention Units have been closely monitored by the Independent External Decision Makers to ensure transparency and accountability. Efforts are currently being made to strengthen successes and improve practices and outcomes.
- The Structure Intervention Unit Implementation Advisory Panel was created to monitor the initial implementation of the Structure Intervention Units. Based on lessons learned from the first year, the Minister is considering re-establishing the panel with an adjusted reporting structure and additional clarity around communication.
- We are working on building a new compliance tool on legislative and policy requirements.
- We are identifying resources and technological requirements so we can continue to build and invest to increase the overall effectiveness of Structure Intervention Units.
- We are working on stabilizing data related to Structured Intervention Units to so that we can be confident that we have a clear and accurate picture of how they are working.
- The Correctional Service of Canada continues to manage a complex and diverse inmate population, which has a direct impact on the safety and security of institutions.

## **Background: Structured Intervention Units**

Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) allow inmates to be separated from the mainstream inmate population; providing the opportunity to maintain their access to rehabilitative programming and interventions. Inmates in an SIU:

- Receive interventions and programming specific to the reasons that led to the transfer;
- have an opportunity to be outside of their cell for at least four hours a day, with additional time for a shower;
- have an opportunity to interact with others for at least two hours a day; and
- receive daily visits from healthcare professionals who may recommend for health reasons that the inmate's conditions of confinement be altered or that they not remain in the unit.

SIUs are for inmates who cannot be managed safely within a mainstream inmate population. An inmate could be transferred to an SIU if they are a threat to any person or the security of the institution, their safety is in jeopardy or their placement in the mainstream population would interfere with an investigation, and there is no reasonable alternative.

Inmates in SIU's are provided with opportunities to participate in structured interventions, hobbies, leisure and physical activities as well as research-based programming to address their specific risks and needs, with the goal of facilitating their reintegration into a mainstream inmate population as soon as possible. It is expected that SIUs will enhance correctional outcomes, as well as assist in reducing the rate of institutional violent incidents, resulting in a safer environment for staff, offenders and visitors.

Visits, engagement with partner agencies, Elders, cultural and spiritual leaders and opportunities for inmate interaction are available in providing opportunities for meaningful human contact. When visits are restricted due to measures related to reducing the spread of COVID-19, alternatives are available, such as video visitation.

The opening of SIU's at men's sites has been a gradual, phased in approach with the first 10 SIUs opening as of November 30, 2019. All five women's institutions opened an SIU as of November 30, 2019. We are completing resource reviews of each SIU to evaluate if current resources meet operational needs.

## **Implementation Advisory Panel (IAP)**

The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness established the SIU Implementation Advisory Committee in 2019 as part of the Government's efforts to provide accountability and transparency of the operationalization of SIUs. The eight-person panel was intended to help monitor and assess the implementation of SIUs established by Bill C-83, which was adopted by Parliament in June 2019. The new SIU model requires CSC to offer opportunities for daily minimum times to be out of cell and to interact with others. The new model is subject to independent external oversight.

The Advisory Panel was intended to provide non-binding recommendations and advice to the Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), and reports to the Minister on its views as to whether the SIUs are being implemented as intended by the legislation.

As of August 2020, the Advisory Panel has dissolved. Public Safety and CSC continued to engage with Dr. Anthony Doob, former Chair of the Advisory Panel, to ensure that there is an opportunity to review the data and provide findings.

### **Preliminary Findings**

The preliminary findings (published October 26, 2020) of Dr. Doob and Dr. Sprott provide valuable insight to support CSC's ongoing work to monitor the operation of SIUs, recognize trends and make adjustments to policy, procedures, and practices. The findings will complement the continuous feedback received from the IEDM case-specific reviews and determinations. Efforts are being made to strengthen successes and improve practices and outcomes.

Among other notable elements that will need to be considered in analyzing these findings is the COVID-19 pandemic, which required operational adjustments at all CSC institutions to support the Government of Canada's mitigation measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 while ensuring inmates continue to have opportunities to spend at least four hours a day outside of their cell and to interact with others for at least two hours. The Service remains committed to deploying all the necessary efforts to coordinate the research and implementation of strategies to ensure the entitlements for inmates, while at the same time respecting public health protection measures.

Moving forward, CSC has put a project team in place to focus on three interlinked themes: fostering an operational culture of data stewardship, through engagement with frontline staff; optimizing outcomes by reviewing SIU business requirements and aligning technology solutions; and, strengthening corporate resources to support performance and compliance reporting.

### **Independent External Decision Makers**

Independent External Decision Makers (IEDM) provide oversight related to an inmate's conditions, frequency, and duration of confinement in an SIU and review cases. As of December 31 2020, there have been over 1770 decisions and reviews completed by IEDMs.

- Of the IEDM decisions, approximately 81% have determined that the inmate should remain in an SIU.
- Of the IEDM reviews related to conditions of confinement, 80% have resulted in the determination that CSC has taken all the reasonable steps to provide inmates with opportunities for time out of cell, meaningful human contact and have been encouraged to avail themselves of those opportunities. 20% have resulted in recommendations to CSC to take additional steps.
- 2.6% of the reviews related to conditions of confinement have resulted in an order to remove an inmate from the SIU.

This external oversight contributes to the continued enhancement and shaping of SIUs.

### **Structured Interventions Units – Technological Services**

CSC uses a technological application to enable the collection of SIU data to facilitate reporting on performance to institutional and senior management.

The “Long-Term Evolution (LTE) SIU project” creates a modern application for the management of offenders in SIUs. This application collects critical information in the daily interactions between staff members and offenders, allowing near real-time status updates on the inmates’ opportunities for interaction with others; net and total time spent in the SIU; time outside of cell; delivery of programs and interventions; leisure time; visits by correctional/intervention staff; health care review; and executive overview, among other things.

Interactions with inmates, programs referral, and decision information is also captured to ensure compliance with associated policies and legislation.

## Dry Cells

### Speaking Points:

- The Correctional Service of Canada is committed to safe, humane, and effective corrections for offenders in Canada.
- Under the law, the Correctional Service of Canada must have reasonable grounds to use a dry cell if they believe an inmate has ingested contraband or is carrying contraband in a body cavity.
- Dry cells are used as one of many tools to prevent the entry of contraband into institutions.
- Ingested contraband can have serious impacts on the health and safety of an individual. Dry cells allow close monitoring of inmates to ensure their safety.
- Dry cell placements are limited to what is reasonably required and used for the shortest possible time. Inmates are provided with adequate bedding, food, clothing, and toiletry articles. CSC also provides reasonable access to medical, spiritual, and psychological assistance, and a medical professional visits the inmate daily.
- The Service is looking into this situation and will consider additional safeguards and oversight measures in the use of dry cells.



## **Background – Dry Cells**

Dry cells are used as one of many tools to prevent the entry of contraband into institutions. Ingested contraband can have serious impacts on the health and safety of an individual. Dry cells allow close monitoring of inmates that are suspected to have hidden contraband in their body cavities to ensure their safety.

As outlined in section 51 of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA), where the institutional head is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to believe that an inmate has ingested contraband or is carrying contraband in a body cavity, they may authorize in writing the detention of an inmate in a cell without plumbing fixtures (with notice to medical staff) on the expectation that the contraband will be expelled.

## **Dry Cell Procedures**

Dry cell procedures are followed as per Commissioner's Directive 566-7 Searching of Offenders, where every bowel movement will be searched by a correctional officer/ primary worker. Once it has been determined that the contraband may have been expelled, if any items are recovered the procedures in Commissioner's Directive 568-5 Management of Seized Items will be followed.

As soon as an offender is placed in a dry cell, they are provided the opportunity to retain and instruct legal counsel without delay. While in a dry cell, the inmate is also provided with adequate bedding, food, clothing, and toiletry articles. CSC also provides reasonable access to medical, spiritual, and psychological assistance, and a medical professional visits the inmate daily. Limited activities may be permitted as long as they do not compromise contraband recovery.

Legislation and policy do not prescribe a maximum amount of time an inmate can spend in a dry cell, but policy does prescribe that the placement must be reviewed by the Institutional Head daily, as per Annex E of Commissioner's Directive 566-7. The offender may make written representations for consideration at the daily review.

## **Dry Cell Enhancements**

Over the years, CSC has made a number of enhancements to dry cell requirements. The June 2012 update to the policy framework (Commissioner's Directive 566-7 - Searching of Inmates) introduced national requirements for dry cell placements, which included enhanced oversight and monitoring. Procedural safeguards outlined in policy require that the Institutional Head review the placement on a daily basis. To allow for oversight by someone other than the Institutional Head, the Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Correctional Operations at Regional Headquarters is notified of any placement exceeding 72 hours. Moving forward, CSC will consider additional safeguards and oversight measures relevant to the use of dry cells.

## **Risk Assessment Tools – Indigenous**

### **Speaking Points:**

- The Correctional Service of Canada acknowledges that Indigenous people, Black Canadians and other racialized people far too often experience systemic racism and disparate outcomes within the criminal justice system.
- They are continually working to eliminate systemic barriers in federal correctional institutions, and ensuring that all inmates have access to appropriate and effective programming and assessments.
- To ensure that risk assessment decisions of offenders are effective and appropriate, the Service is currently consulting on its assessment tools to determine if they need revisions.
- Currently, to assess the inmate security levels of individual offenders, staff receive comprehensive training on how to consider their ethnic, cultural, religious, and/or linguistic needs.
- The staff also receive mandatory training about unconscious bias and cultural-sensitivity, and they are provided resources to ensure assessments are reflective of the offender profile.
- An Ethnocultural Offender Resource Kit is also available to assist staff in responding to the needs of ethnocultural offenders, including Black and Indigenous offenders.
- The Correctional Service of Canada is committed to doing more to create an environment that is conducive to inclusion, equity and diversity – and one that is committed to self-reflection, action and continuous improvement.
- They are conducting research, in collaboration with universities and other academic partners, to better understand the experience of ethnocultural offenders.
- They also work closely with the National Indigenous Advisory Committee to discuss ideas and actions relevant to Indigenous offenders including examining the barriers faced by diverse communities in the broader criminal justice system.

## **Background – Risk Assessment Tools – Indigenous**

All offenders who enter a federal institution undergo an assessment to ensure they are placed at the appropriate security level and receive the programs and services required to address their specific needs. The assessment of an offender's security classification is conducted in accordance with the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*, and the *Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations (CCRR)*.

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC)'s approach to both initial security classification and security reclassification includes the use of evidence-based assessment instruments, such as the Custody Rating Scale for initial security level, the Security Reclassification Scale and the Security Reclassification Scale for Women for security classification review, together with the professional judgment of specialized staff and psychological assessments, if applicable. Section 18 of the CCRR identifies the following three domains that CSC must use to determine the inmate's security level: institutional adjustment; escape risk; and risk to the public in the event of an escape. An offender's security classification is regularly reassessed during their sentence, including after the completion of programs to ensure they continue to be placed at the appropriate security level.

## **Staff Training**

Given the importance of carefully assessing the unique needs of each individual offender, including social and cultural factors that may impact how they respond throughout the correctional process, staff who are responsible to assess an inmate's security level receive comprehensive training on how to consider their ethnic, cultural, religious, and/or linguistic needs.

All employees are required to complete the mandatory Diversity and Cultural Competency Training, where employees are expected to demonstrate an understanding of diversity that is inclusive of everyone; identify individual places of privilege and how this connects to their work in CSC; and, identify ways to improve working with diversity and cultural competency with offenders, employees, visitors and the public.

## **Indigenous Offenders**

CSC continues to observe an increase in the number of federally sentenced Indigenous offenders. At the end of fiscal year 2019 to 2020, Indigenous offenders represented 30% of the total in custody population and Indigenous women offenders represented 44% of the total in custody women population.

Since 2018, as a response to the 2014 Office of the Auditor General (OAG)'s report – Preparing Indigenous Offenders for Release, CSC has implemented in its policy that a Security Classification Review will be completed within 30 days of an Indigenous inmate's successful completion of a main program for inmates classified at maximum or medium security level. In addition, a Security Classification Review is initiated at least every six months for Indigenous inmates participating in Pre-Pathways interventions/Pathways units. In the past years, CSC has conducted several studies, and is currently undertaking additional research on some of its central classification tools. For example, CSC is working with academic partners to conduct consultations with Indigenous communities in the development of risk assessment tools for Indigenous offenders.

CSC is working to respond to the disproportionate representation of Indigenous peoples in custody, through a variety of programs such as:

- The National Indigenous Plan, which incorporates advice and guidance from the Office of the OAG and the National Indigenous Advisory Committee (NIAC), is a national framework designed to transform Indigenous case management and corrections. The Plan includes streamlining existing Indigenous resources and services to ensure that those offenders choosing to access the Indigenous Continuum of Care interventions are prioritized for placement at specific sites.
- Indigenous Interventions Centres (IICs) are a key component of regional Indigenous action plans. The IICs integrate intake, programs and interventions, and engage Indigenous communities at the start of an Indigenous offender's sentence, or at least two years before their first eligibility date. IICs provide a more focused and targeted approach to interventions through specialized case management, with the necessary support and coordination to prepare Indigenous offenders serving shorter sentences for conditional release earlier in their sentences. IICs also offer Indigenous correctional programs and interventions in order to foster timely preparation of conditional release for Indigenous offenders.
- CSC has implemented the Pathways Initiative for offenders who are committed to following an intensive traditional path of healing which includes the active involvement of Elders. The Indigenous Women's Pathways Continuum provides opportunities for Indigenous women to engage in intensive healing interventions supported by Elders through specific activities.
- The Indigenous Women Offender Correctional Programs, which includes program continuum unique to Indigenous women offenders.
- CSC has developed and implemented Indigenous and Inuit specific Correctional Programs.

Decisions with respect to sentencing are outside of CSC's control. CSC does, however, influence the time Indigenous offenders spend in custody by providing culturally responsive programs and interventions to address an Indigenous offender's risk, provide effective rehabilitation and foster successful community reintegration. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of discretionary releases for Indigenous offenders, from 23.5% in fiscal year 2013 to 2014 to 40.1% in Fiscal year 2019 to 2020.

### **Black Offenders**

At the end of 2019 to 2020, 8.8% of incarcerated offenders were Black, while 7.1% of offenders supervised in the community were Black. From 2015 to 2016 to 2019 to 2020, the proportional decrease of incarcerated Caucasian offenders was 17.0%, and incarcerated Black offenders showed a decrease of 3.2% during the same period.

CSC is conducting research to better understand the experience of ethnocultural offenders under its care, including Black offenders. This multi year project has already highlighted the profile and diversity of this population and Emerging Research Results were produced in 2019. CSC is presently looking at aspects of the in-custody experience, including participation in correctional programs, education, employment, etc. CSC will also be studying how ethnocultural offenders are reintegrating in the community, in terms of program participation, employment opportunities and successful completion of sentence. It is anticipated that the full research report will be available in the Fall of 2020.

Currently, Black offenders are offered a comprehensive level of varied interventions and services, aimed at supporting their reintegration. These initiatives include: addressing cultural employment and mentorship needs; participation in culturally relevant presentations from community members to offenders and staff; community outreach; ongoing interventions by the Project officer, Community Engagement and Ethnocultural Services; and access to culturally-relevant materials. Additionally, CSC requires mandatory training aimed at increasing the cultural competency of staff.

Although there are no specific correctional programs for Black offenders, the enrolment and completion rates of Black offenders in the Integrated Correctional Program Model and the Women Offender Correctional Programs show positive participation. Also, certain institutions benefit from the participation and activities of inmate groups composed of mostly Black offenders. Groups such as Black Inmates and Friends Assembly (BIFA), Christian groups, Rastafarian groups, and Muslim groups bring awareness, educate and develop a sense of belonging and self-esteem among the Black offender population.

### **Women Offenders**

In November 2019, to reflect the elimination of segregation and to add time spent in a Structured Intervention Unit (SIU), the Security Reclassification Scale for Women (SRSW) was modified. The updated SRSW consists of different indicators, notably the number of convictions for serious disciplinary offences, the number of recorded incidents, the pay level, the motivation and progress in the Correctional Plan and whether the offender maintains positive family contact.

The reliability and validity of the adjusted SRSW was examined by CSC's Research Branch in September 2019, and was determined to remain valid for use with Indigenous and non-Indigenous women offenders.

## 2019 to 2020 Annual Report Office of the Correctional Investigator

### Speaking Points:

- The Correctional Service of Canada welcomes the findings and recommendations made by the Correctional Investigator of Canada in his Annual Report.
- The Office of the Correctional Investigator plays a critical role in assisting the Correctional Service of Canada in fulfilling its mandate to support offender rehabilitation and maintain public safety by identifying areas that can be improved in the federal correctional system.
- In the 2019 to 2020 Annual Report, the Correctional Investigator has reported on three important issues: education and vocational training for federal offenders; therapeutic ranges; and sexual coercion and violence in CSC institutions. There is also a recommendation regarding the deeply personal issue of Medical Assistance in Dying within correctional institutions.
- Each of these issues requires careful consideration and meaningful action to address the recommendations. While some work is underway already, more can and will be done.
- The Correctional Service of Canada look forward to working closely with the Office of the Correctional Investigator to ensure that we achieve enhanced results in the areas identified in this report.

## **Background: 2019 to 2020 Annual Report Office of the Correctional Investigator**

Under the provisions of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA) (Part III), the Correctional Investigator (CI) serves as the Ombudsman for federal offenders. His primary responsibility is to independently investigate and facilitate resolution of offender issues.

The CCRA stipulates that the CI shall, within three months after the end of each fiscal year, submit a report to the Minister of the activities of the Office of the Correctional Investigator (OCI) during that year. The Minister is required to table the report in Parliament within the first 30 sitting days following its receipt. The 2019 to 2020 Annual Report of the OCI was submitted to the Minister on June 26, 2020 and was tabled in Parliament on October 27, 2020.

The Annual Report for 2019 - 20 provides 13 recommendations, nine of which are directed to Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and the remaining four are directed to the Minister of Public Safety. Recommendations are centred around three main themes:

- Sexual Coercion and Violence (SCV) within correctional institutions;
- therapeutic ranges at male maximum security institutions, and;
- educational and vocational training offered to offenders in institutions.

There is also a recommendation on the medical ethics of access to:

- Medical Assistance in Dying within correctional institutional settings,
- offender transportation,
- independent patient advocacy and
- the use of distraction devices.

## **Sexual Coercion and Violence (SCV) involving Inmates in Correctional Institutions**

The report made four recommendations to CSC and two to the Minister of Public Safety related to SCV in institutions. The recommendations include:

- the development of an evidence-based strategy for the prevention of SCV as well as a Commissioner's Directive;
- education, awareness and training programs on SCV,
- as well as a specific flag in OMS for perpetrators.

The recommendations to the Minister were to direct CSC to designate funds for an independent national prevalence study and introduce a legislative package that endorses a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and establishes a public reporting mechanism.

A zero-tolerance approach to SCV is consistent with CSC's policy and is fundamental to its operations. CSC's priority is to protect the physical and mental health and overall safety of those who live and work within federal correctional institutions. CSC agrees with the OCI that it is important to gain a better understanding of SCV in Canada.

CSC has a framework in place to establish safe correctional environments, which promotes effective correctional operations and interventions through the use of dynamic security, and contributes to the safety of the public, staff, and offenders (*Commissioner's Directive (CD) 566 – Framework for Safe and Effective Correctional Environments*). Specifically, all staff who directly interact with offenders must apply dynamic security practices while carrying out their responsibilities. This includes continually enhancing their knowledge of offenders' activities and behaviours (both positive and negative) through direct observation and interactions. CSC promotes the use of dynamic security practices for the prevention of security incidents, including



incidents of SCV. Cases of sexual violence, when made known to staff, must immediately be reported and investigated.

In the case of a sexual assault or an allegation of a sexual assault, the Correctional Manager, Operational Desk, must notify the police force of primary jurisdiction, as per *CD 568- 4 – Preservation of Crime Scene and Evidence*. As well, any staff member made aware of a sexual assault must report it under *CD 568-1 – Recording and Reporting of Security Incidents*; sexual assaults also require a Warden's Situation Report under *CD 041 – Incident Investigations*. This would require the site to collect all the relevant facts surrounding the assault/allegations in order to have the Warden's report completed.

A survey on SCV in federal corrections is being led by Public Safety and will be conducted by external, fully independent experts. The survey will be collecting information that will help inform correctional policy and practice in responding to sexual violence in federal institutions. The research will collect information and data in order to identify gaps in knowledge. The research will consider the unique challenges faced by vulnerable populations, including inmates with prior trauma, LGBTQ2+, women, and those with mental health issues. An interim report on the work undertaken is set to be developed by Spring 2021 and will help inform future actions required to detect, prevent, and respond to sexual violence in correctional institutions.

Moreover, given the serious nature of the issue, the Minister of Public Safety has agreed to write to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security requesting that consideration be given to undertaking an independent study, along with a report on their findings, on SCV in federal corrections.

### **Therapeutic Ranges**

The report recommends that CSC conduct an external review of its Therapeutic Range resourcing model, and to ensure that bed capacity and staffing reflects the needs of Mental Health Services.

CSC is committed to conducting a thorough review of Therapeutic Ranges by the end of 2022. The review will draw on the knowledge of external experts and will be led by our National Senior Psychologist. This review will also consider recommendations put forward in an external review completed for CSC on the integration of traditional and Western healing and options for implementation on Therapeutic Ranges. The purpose of the review will be to ensure that a therapeutic environment has been implemented and that opportunities for treatment interventions and work with Elders and Indigenous services staff are maximized.

CSC will continue reviewing infrastructure and staffing requirements to support a therapeutic environment, including optimal placement for observation cells and Pinel Restraint System beds.

Addressing the mental health needs of offenders through timely assessment, effective management, appropriate intervention, relevant staff training and rigorous oversight is a corporate priority for CSC. The Correctional Service of Canada has an integrated Mental Health Strategy and a mental health service delivery model to ensure essential mental health care services match the needs of the offender population. Offenders have access to mental health care provided by qualified mental health professionals and are based on an individual's need assessment.



### **Educational and Vocational training**

The report recommends that the Minister of PS establish an expert working group to guide implementation of the OCI's current and past recommendations on education and vocational training in federal corrections.

Reintegration outcomes for federal offenders can be improved through access to opportunities that contribute to rehabilitation such as education and vocational training. In line with its mandate to support reintegration of offenders, CSC has committed to continuing to modernize its education and employment programs.

CSC will review and consider all recommendations made by external and internal partners and stakeholders to improve employment training and education for those in federal correctional facilities.

There are currently a number of initiatives in progress that are planned to be implemented, evaluated and reported on, therefore an expert working group, as recommended by the CI, will not be introduced at this time. It may be considered later, once the current initiatives have been evaluated and, where appropriate, implemented. The Commissioner will provide an update to the Minister of Public Safety on progress in June 2021.

CSC agrees that digital literacy is a critical element of a modern education and has begun work toward improving it. For example, CSC will be implementing the Digital Education pilot project at Bath Institution by the end of this fiscal year. This digital Learning Management System will enable offenders to obtain specific high school credits through restricted internet connectivity to approved sites via a Virtual Private Network (VPN). CSC will review the pilot project and use what it learns to explore possible further expansion of online educational and training activities for offenders. Future improvements will be balanced with security requirements and are dependent on resource availability.

It should be noted that CSC has already developed and implemented comprehensive programs, intervention, educational and employment strategies so that offenders can acquire tools and skills they need to safely transition into the community. More specifically, institutional and community employment initiatives across the country have been enhanced for women offenders to meet their employment needs. A great example of this includes CSC continuing work with Indigenous communities and partners at the national, regional and local levels to respond to the needs of Indigenous offenders. The Indigenous Offender Employment Initiative continues to build on its successes since implementation commenced in 2017.

The relaunch of CSC's farm agriculture programs at Collins Bay and Joyceville institutions is another great example of supporting programs to enhance offender skills.

### **Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)**

The report recommends that the Minister of PS, jointly with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, create an expert Committee to deliberate on the ethical and practical matter of MAID in all places of detention.

The Minister is aware that the Department of Justice has recently reviewed the federal MAID legislation, in consultation with Canadians, experts, practitioners, stakeholders, Indigenous groups, as well as provinces and territories.

CSC is solely responsible for any matters related to the implementation of the MAID legislation in federal penitentiaries, and CSC and the PBC share responsibility for various release options for offenders related to their choice to access MAID. However, it is also recognized that the assistance of medical ethics and other experts reviewing this complex and deeply personal issue will be beneficial to inform MAID in a correctional institution setting.

The Minister of Public Safety has committed to conducting a review of the medical ethics of MAID in correctional settings by the end of 2021 to better understand and address any outstanding issues.

## Key Facts and Figures

### The Offender Population

At the end of calendar year 2020, CSC was responsible for 21,996 offenders: 12,588 were in custody and 9,408 were supervised in the community. Of the offenders in the community, offenders on day parole represented 17%; offenders on full parole represented 48%; offenders on statutory release represented 30%; and offenders with long term supervision orders represented 5%.

*(Source: Corporate Reporting System-Modernized - Data Warehouse. Data current up to 2020-12-27)*

### Operational Environment

CSC is responsible nationally for the management of:

- 43 institutions
  - six maximum security,
  - nine medium security,
  - five minimum security,
  - 12 multilevel security, and
  - 11 clustered institutions.
- 14 community correctional centres and
- 92 parole offices and sub-parole offices.

CSC is also responsible for managing four healing lodges (included in the 43 institutions) and works in partnership with Indigenous communities to support the reintegration of Indigenous offenders back into the community.

### CSC Workforce

CSC employs approximately 18,261 staff from a vast number of fields. As of January 21, 2021, CSC's front-line staff workforce included:

- 6,308 Correctional Officers;
- 448 Primary Workers;
- 1,252 Parole Officers;
- 473 Correctional Program Officers;
- 122 Indigenous Liaison Officers;
- 101 Indigenous Correctional Program Officers;
- 122 Social Program Officers;
- 893 Nurses; and
- 227 Psychology Staff.

## CSC Results

At year-end 2019 to 2020, the following are results in a number of different areas:

- CSC is continuing to see a decline in the overall federal custody population, from 14,886 at year-end in 2014 to 2015 to 13,720 in 2019 to 2020, a decrease of 8%. CSC is also seeing an increase in the number of offenders being managed in the community, from 8,075 at year-end in 2014 to 2015 to 9,382 in 2019 to 2020. This represents an increase of 16%.
- CSC is showing an increase in the number of offenders being released on day parole over the past six years, from 1,975 in 2014 to 2015 to 2,542 in 2019 to 2020, an increase of 29%. The number of offenders who were released on day parole decreased in the past year, from 2,683 in 2018 to 2019 to 2,542 in 2019 to 2020, a decrease of 5%.
- CSC is showing a decline in the number of revocations of conditional release over the past six years, from 2,503 in 2014 to 2015 to 2,285 in 2019 to 2020, a decrease of 9%. However, the number of revocations of conditional release have been increasing since 2017 to 2018, when they were at a six-year low of 2,131.
- CSC is also seeing a decrease in the number of revocations with an offence over the past six years, from 496 in 2014 to 2015 to 455 in 2019 to 2020, a decrease of 8%. The numbers of revocations with an offence have fluctuated over the past six years, with a low of 412 in 2016 to 2017.

## Previous Committee Summary Reports

### February 19, 2019 – PACP (2018 Fall Report of the Auditor General of Canada)

#### **REPORT ON HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Name of Committee:** Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP)  
**Date and Time:** Tuesday, February 19, 2019 – 8:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.  
**Subject:** Report 6, Community Supervision – Correctional Service of Canada, of Fall 2018 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada

#### **Witnesses:**

##### **Office of the Auditor General**

Andrew Hayes, Deputy Auditor General, Office of the Auditor General  
Nicholas Swales, Principal, Office of the Auditor General

##### **Correctional Service of Canada**

Anne Kelly, Commissioner  
Alain Tousignant, Senior Deputy Commissioner  
Larry Motiuk, Assistant Commissioner, Policy Sector  
Jennifer Wheatley, Assistant Commissioner, Health Services

#### **Overview**

In his opening remarks, Mr. Hayes explained what the audit examined and provided a summary of its findings. In her opening remarks, Commissioner Anne Kelly took a moment to mark the passing of the late Auditor General, Mr. Michael Ferguson. She explained how the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is experiencing a shift in how and where it is managing its offender population with a greater proportion of federal offenders serving their sentence in the community, and described some of the measures CSC has implemented in order to address this shift.

#### **Highlights of the Hearing Relevant to CSC**

In response to questions regarding the frequency of contact between community parole officers and offenders raised by MP Arya (LPC), MP Pat Kelly (CPC), MP Sarai (LPC) and MP Arseneault (LPC), the Commissioner noted that, in many cases, the issues identified by the Office of the Auditor General related to the lack of proper documentation of the visits and/or of any change in requirement to visit at a certain frequency and that, as a result, CSC is amending its practices and policies.

With respect to questions surrounding offender accommodations in the community raised by MP Christopherson (NDP), MP Sarai (LPC), MP Arseneault (LPC), and MP Yip (LPC), the Commissioner highlighted that much work has been done at the local and regional levels to address capacity issues and that CSC is working on a national long-term accommodation plan. Mr. Tousignant also noted that, in many cases, there were issues surrounding the availability of beds for specialized offender populations in each region and that CSC has reached out to a working group comprised of Community-Based Residential Facility (CBRF) owners and a representative from each region to discuss the matter. In response to a question from MP Kelly (CPC) with respect to maintaining data on housing requests, the Commissioner indicated that CSC has added structured fields to its Offender Management System to track said data. The Commissioner also specified that beds would be added to some CBRFs, in response to a question from MP Christopherson (NDP) as to whether new facilities would be purchased by CSC.

In response to questions regarding data on reconviction rates raised by MP Arya (LPC) and MP Kelly (CPC), the Commissioner noted that CSC is engaging in joint projects with Statistics Canada and Public Safety Canada and looking at reconviction rates, post federal custody. Mr. Motiuk added that CSC is exploring the use of automation technology to track data.

With respect to questions surrounding barriers to healthcare services in the community and the monitoring of health information raised by MP Mendez and MP Pat Kelly (CPC), Ms. Wheatley explained that CSC does provide health services in the community to offenders in the community, recognizing that there are gaps in terms of health coverage, and that CSC is tracking and identifying the barriers to accessing both health cards and services. In response to questions from MP Christopherson (NDP) concerning personal identification, the Commissioner explained that CSC is working with various stakeholders, including provincial health officials and Service Ontario, to reduce the barriers in accessing provincial cards.

In response to a question from MP Nuttall (CPC) concerning the treatment of offenders with substance use problems who return to the community, the Commissioner and Ms. Wheatley talked about the various measures CSC is taking to address the issue, such as the Take-Home Naloxone program, and its commitment to improving success rates.

### **Follow-Up**

1. Provide a breakdown of CSC's spending on community health, particularly on mental health, by region.
2. Provide a timeline for the implementation of the last recommendation of the Report regarding better data collection and working with Public Safety to track provincial/territorial reconviction rates, which the Chair (CPC MP Sorenson) noted was missing from the Management Action Plan.
3. Provide statistics on the number of offenders who did not complete their programming while incarcerated and who either continue and finish their programming in the community or do not complete their programming.

**Further Information:** For a detailed official transcript of the proceedings, consult the Committee website. Note that transcripts of tern take several business days before becoming available.

- [Committee website](#)

In some cases, the unofficial "Blues" of the hearing can be provided by CSC Parliamentary Relations, upon request.

## March 10, 2020 – SECU (Circumstances that Led to a Young Woman's Death)

### REPORT ON HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMITTEE MEETING

**Name of Committee:** Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)  
**Date and Time:** Thursday, March 3, 2020 – 8:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.  
**Subject:** Parole Board and the Circumstances that Led to a Young Woman's Death

### Witnesses:

#### **As Individuals**

Philippe Bensimon, Criminologist  
Dave Blackburn, Former Member at Parole Board of Canada

#### **As Individuals**

Catherine Latimer, Executive Director

### Overview

On March 12, 2020, the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) held their second meeting regarding their study on the Parole Board and the Circumstances that Led to a Young Woman's Death.

In their opening remarks, **Mr. Bensimon** outlined a brief history of the Parole Board of Canada (PBC). He noted that, in his opinion, the offender should have never served his Day Parole in a provincially-run halfway house. **Mr. Blackburn** spoke to his professional experience as a former PBC member as well as recent changes to the PBC appointment process which, he argued, played a factor in the circumstances leading to the incident being studied. He called for an independent study of Canada's parole system, which takes in to account how other countries administer parole. **Ms. Latimer** spoke to her experience working with offenders in the community; noting that incidents similar to the one being studied are incredibly rare. She expressed support for Private Member's Bill C-228 (*An Act to establish a federal framework to reduce recidivism*).

- [Private Member's Bill C-228](#)

### Highlights of the Hearing Relevant to CSC

In response to the inquiries from **MP Paul-Hus (CPC)**, **MP Shipley (CPC)**, **MP Damoff (LPC)**, **MP Lightbound (LPC)** and **Mr. Sikand (LPC)**, Mr. Blackburn expressed concerns regarding recent changes to the PBC appointment process. He argued that the change led to many members no longer working for the PBC, leading to a loss of experience in the organization. He referenced a letter that he and a group of former colleagues had sent to the Prime Minister's Office in 2017 to express these concerns. **MP Paul-Hus** requested that said letter be shared with the Committee. Mr. Blackburn continued that, although he has not read the relevant case files, the decisions made by the PBC in reference to this case were due to a lack of experience and judgement.

Mr. Bensimon, in response to **MP Paul-Hus**, **MP Morrison (CPC)**, **MP Michaud (BQ)**, **MP Trudel (BQ)** and **MP Harris (NDP)**, argued that the offender associated with this incident should not have been released to a provincially-run halfway house. Instead, he argued, the offender should have been released to a federally-run halfway house, which he felt could have offered a greater level of supervision. He noted that the decision regarding where the offender was released to could have been due to cost concerns. He also testified that CSC should hire more Community Parole Officers to ease case loads and, in turn, provide better supervision.

**MP Michaud**, **MP Harris**, **MP Paul-Hus** and **MP Dalton (CPC)** asked questions regarding CSC risk

assessments. In response, Mr. Bensimon spoke to his experience in the field. He noted that it is an inexact science and can never be fully accurate. Ms. Latimer agreed with this and reiterated the rarity of cases similar to the one being studied. Mr. Bensimon took issue with reoffending statistics cited by CSC Commissioner Kelly and PBC Chairperson Oades, noting that according to his experience, an average of eight murders are committed every year by offenders in the community.

**Follow-Up** *(To be verified against the transcript)*

Nil.

**Further Information:** For a detailed official transcript of the proceedings, consult the Committee website.




- [Committee website](#)


Note that transcripts of the hearing take several business days before becoming available. In some cases, the unofficial “Blues” of the hearing can be provided by CSC Parliamentary Relations, upon request.





## Committee Overview


### Committee Membership Profile


Conservative Party of Canada		
Name	Kelly Block	
Role	Chair	
Riding	Carlton Trail to Eagle Creek	
Province	Saskatchewan	
Preferred Language	English	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Willow Cree Healing Lodge (minimum)	
Year First Elected	2008	
Past Profession	Politics	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	
Name	Philip Lawrence	
Role	Member	
Riding	Northumberland to Peterborough South	
Province	Ontario	
Preferred Language	English	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Warkworth Institution (medium)	
Year First Elected	2019	
Past Profession	Lawyer, Financial Services	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	
Name	Len Webber	
Role	Member	
Riding	Calgary Confederation	
Province	Alberta	
Preferred Language	English	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Nil	
Year First Elected	2015	
Past Profession	Politics	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	
Name	Luc Berthold	


Conservative Party of Canada		
Role	Member	
Riding	Mégantic to L'Érable	
Province	Quebec	
Preferred Language	French	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Nil	
Year First Elected	2015	
Past Profession		
	Politiics	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	

Liberal Party of Canada		
Name	Lloyd Longfield	
Role	Vice-Chair	
Riding	Guelph	
Province	Ontario	
Preferred Language	English/French	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Guelph Parole Office	
Year First Elected	2015	
Past Profession	Financial Services	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	

Name	Greg Fergus	
Role	Member	
Riding	Hull to Aylmer	
Province	Ontario	
Preferred Language	English/French	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Outaouais Parole Office	
Year First Elected	2015	
Past Profession	Politics	
Statements relevant to corrections	Through his role as member of the Parliamentary Black Caucus, has demonstrated interest in corrections and policing reform and systemic racism.	

Liberal Party of Canada		
Name	Francesco Sorbara	
Role	Member	
Riding	Vaughan to Woodbridge	
Province	Ontario	
Preferred Language	English/French	
CSC Facilities in Riding	None	
Year First Elected	2015	
Past Profession	Financial Services	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	
Name	Jean Yip	
Role	Member	
Riding	Scarborough to Agincourt	
Province	Ontario	
Preferred Language	English	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Nil	
Year First Elected	2017	
Past Profession	Financial Services	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	
Name	Kody Blois	
Role	Member	
Riding	Kings to Hants	
Province	Nova Scotia	
Preferred Language	English	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Nil	
Year First Elected	2019	
Past Profession	Politics	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	

Bloc Québécois		
Name	Maxime Blanchette-Joncas	
Role	Vice-Chair	
Riding	Rimouski-Neigette, Témiscouata, Les Basques	
Province	Quebec	
Preferred Language	French	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Rimouski Parole Office	
Year First Elected	2019	
Past Profession	Politics	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	

New Democratic Party		
Name	Matthew Green	
Role	Member	
Riding	Hamilton Centre	
Province	Ontario	
Preferred Language	English	
CSC Facilities in Riding	Hamilton Parole Office	
Year First Elected	2019	
Past Profession	Politics	
Statements relevant to corrections	None	