

British Columbia
JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE JUSTICE
AND PUBLIC SAFETY SECTOR**
APRIL 2016-MARCH 2019

ANNUAL UPDATE, MARCH 31 2016

CONTENTS

Chair's message	3
Executive Summary	4
The Justice and Public Safety Council	5
Sector characteristics: context for plan renewal	6
Reported crime	7
Violent crime	8
Crime severity	9
Sector costs (provincial)	10
New case volumes (provincial)	11
Youth Justice	12
Indigenous people and the justice and public safety sector	13
Further indicators and metrics	14
Overview of Sector developments 2015-16	15
Increasing engagement on Indigenous justice issues	15
Collaboration and evidence-based approaches in combatting violence against women	16
A coordinated approach to improve access to justice	17
Improved case management and court scheduling	17
Continued strengthening of the BC Justice Summit process	18
Opportunities for reform dialogue at the federal-provincial level	18
Greater attention to mental health and justice	19
Court innovation	19
Progress in the development of evidence based policy	19
Updating the strategic plan	21

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019

Scope and limitations of the plan	21
Goals, objectives, and performance gaps	21
Reaffirmation and/or change of plan elements	26
Continuity of vision	26
Revision of identified performance gaps	26
Sector operational priorities for 2016-17	26
Indigenous Justice	26
Justice and Mental Health	27
Access to Justice	27
Violence against Women	27
Looking ahead	29
Plan Feedback	30
Appendix 1: Sector Vision	31
Appendix 2: Values of our sector	33
Appendix 3: Justice and Public Safety Council	34

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Lori Wanamaker,
FCPA, FCA

As Chair of the Justice and Public Safety Council, I am pleased to present the second update of the Council's strategic plan.

British Columbians are well-served by the people who make up our justice and public safety sector. Professionals in our sector perform many vital services: responding to and preventing crime; applying criminal law; helping families manage crises; helping women who have been victims of violence; supporting the legal foundations of BC business; and offering many other essential supports for our way of life.

I would like to reflect on two significant developments within our sector in the last year. The first is the healthy level of dialogue and collaboration between different elements that make up justice and public safety in BC. We have seen greater coordination of efforts to address access to justice issues in an inclusive manner. We have also seen meaningful, productive engagement over trauma-informed practice, mental health, and information sharing regarding family justice, domestic violence and child protection – engagement which has brought the judiciary, the justice professions, government, the NGO sector and subject matter experts around the same tables. We have much to accomplish, but our culture and openness to collaborate is in a healthy state to do just that.

Second, recently the federal government has moved several issues into the centre of reform discussions, including the safety of Indigenous women and girls. British Columbians have much to contribute to these questions. On behalf of the Council I look forward to taking up the challenge not just of responding, but of leading and innovating in the interests of the citizens and clients we serve.

I invite you to review and share this update. Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "LWanamaker."

Lori Wanamaker, FCPA, FCA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

British Columbia has in the past decade enjoyed declining crime rates, declining crime severity, declining violence, and declining case volumes – although some of these indicators have moved upwards slightly over the last year. Youth crime remains low. System costs are relatively stable after prior increases.

However, these benefits have not been enjoyed evenly across the population. What is being done right now is not yet enough to resolve the challenges which remain in the sector, whether those challenges relate to access, criminal victimization and trauma, mental health, the experience of women and Indigenous peoples in the sector, or other pressing matters. It is clear that leaders and participants in the sector must continue to enhance new ways of working together, particularly as so few of the major challenges we face can be solved independently.

The period from April 2015 to March 2016 has seen a number of significant developments in the sector. These developments are largely positive, and there is good reason to feel optimistic about the specific steps taken in the interest of the sector and its clients, and about the prospects for future success. These areas include Indigenous justice engagement, trauma-informed practice, access to justice, case management and court scheduling, court innovation, and evidence-based policy and operations (particularly as regards vulnerable populations and associated partnerships between sector institutions, human services providers and community groups). The same period has seen rich dialogue and strengthening of community across the sector, assisted by the continued maturation of the BC Justice Summit process, and by recent renewal of and energy within federal-provincial-territorial policy dialogue. This trend in productive dialogue is set to continue this year with several important discussions across the sector and between government and community as regards mental health.

For 2016-17 the Council reaffirms the essential elements of its plan, and the four goals of Fairness, Protection of People, Sustainability, and Public Confidence. The operational priorities the Council has identified for 2016-17 are Indigenous Justice, Access to Justice, and Justice and Mental Health (all previously identified); plus a new fourth priority area, Violence Against Women.

THE JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL

The Justice and Public Safety Council was established in April 2013 under the terms of the *Justice Reform and Transparency Act*. Members of the Council are appointed by British Columbia's Minister of Justice.

The Council's objectives under the provisions of the Act include:

- Development of a strategic vision for the justice and public safety sector;
- Establishment of an annual Justice and Public Safety Plan;
- Collection of information on the sector to assist in the Council's functions;
- Facilitation of the collection and sharing of information needed to enhance the ability to ensure careful management and prudent expenditure of public resources, engage in evidence-based decision making, make informed evaluations of performance, and design strategies to improve that performance;
- Promotion of collaboration and cooperation among participants in the sector; and
- Provision of advice and recommendations to the Minister.

The Act provides for the Council to produce (and refresh annually) a three-year plan for the sector to achieve progress towards its vision for the sector.

In its work, the Council consults broadly within the sector, including but not limited to leaders of key sector institutions and agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional bodies, subject matter experts, and participants at British Columbia Justice Summits. By law, the Council's annual plan is delivered at the end of March, and is made available to the public at the same time.

A list of the Council's current membership can be found in Appendix 3.

SECTOR CHARACTERISTICS: CONTEXT FOR PLAN RENEWAL

In refreshing its plan, the Council continues to track a number of important trends.

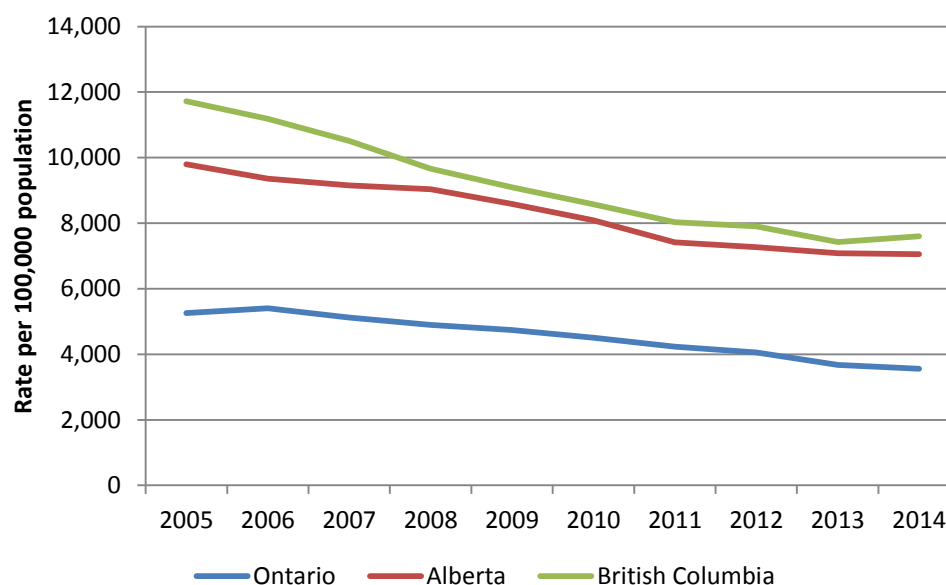
Overall, British Columbia has in the past decade enjoyed declining crime rates, declining crime severity, declining violence, and declining case volumes – although some of these indicators have moved upwards slightly over the last year. Youth crime remains low.

System costs are relatively stable after prior increases. However, these benefits have not been enjoyed evenly across the population, as Indigenous people continue to be incarcerated at a rate significantly greater than population would indicate, and form an increasing percentage of the custodial population.

REPORTED CRIME

Consistent with long term national patterns, crime in British Columbia has continued to decline. Calendar 2014 saw the first increase in the reported crime rate in eleven years, although the rates for this year and last year remain lower than levels reported at any other time since 1969. British Columbia's overall crime rate in 2014 showed a 2.4 per cent increase from 2013.

Figure 1: Reported crime incidents per 100,000 population (excluding traffic), BC 2005-2014 – Ontario and Alberta included as comparators¹



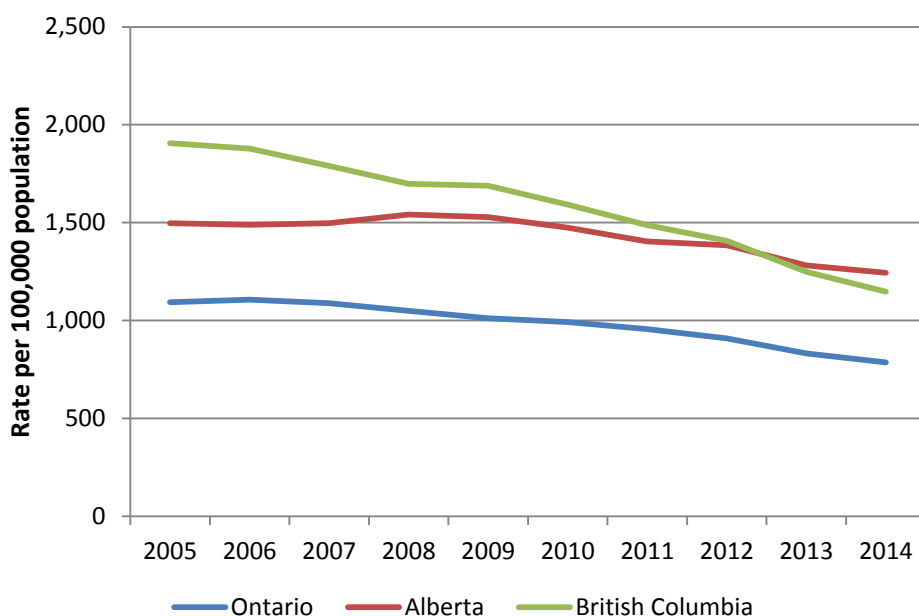
The vast majority of the reduction in the overall crime rate continues to be explained by reduction in reported property crime incidents, due to the high volume of property crime as a proportion of overall reported incidents.

¹ Source: *Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics*. Most recent data year is calendar 2014. These figures reflected reported crimes. They do not reflect crimes which are for one reason or another unreported to police, and they are therefore necessarily an incomplete picture of criminal occurrences. The rate of victimization, typically determined by population survey, is considered a more accurate picture of total criminal activity. However, victimization rates are currently measured nationally every five years – too infrequently to serve as a useful policy tool – and are not included here. The reader should also note that the crime rate is at best an incomplete measure of police workload, as it does not capture the range of proactive community or public order activity required of police agencies, enforcement of non-criminal statutes (e.g. *Motor Vehicle Act*) or non-criminal requests for service from the public.

VIOLENT CRIME

Violent crime, and particularly domestic and sexual violence which often involve greater complexity, is of great concern to the Council and remains high relative to rates in central Canada. However, the rate of violent crime incidents per 100,000 population has shown marked decline in recent years and is now below that of Alberta. This represents a decline of 40% in the rate of violent crime in BC since 2005, a period preceded by stable, high levels of violent crime.

Figure 2: Reported violent crime incidents per 100,000 population, BC 2005-2014 – Ontario and Alberta included as comparators²

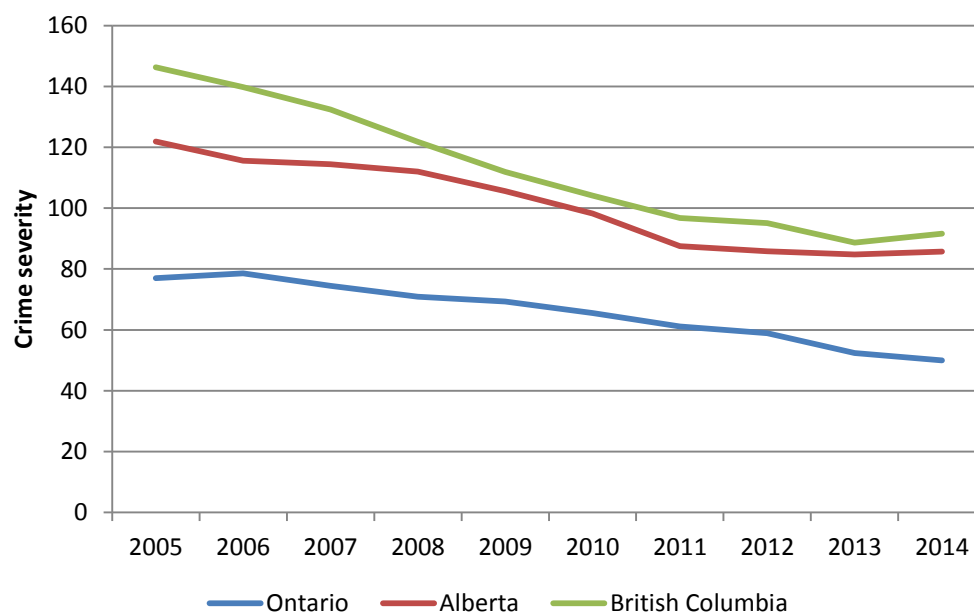


² Source: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. Most recent data year is calendar 2014. See caveats in footnote 1, above.

CRIME SEVERITY

The relative severity of crime has increased in the province for the first time since 2003. In 2014, British Columbia's crime severity index – a measure of the seriousness of criminal offences being committed which addresses some limitations of the traditional "crime rate" measure, specifically its lack of capacity to distinguish differences between, for example, homicide and mischief – rose by 3.4 per cent from the prior year. As in prior years, B.C.'s crime severity remains above that of Alberta and significantly greater than that of Ontario.

Figure 3: Crime Severity Index trends, BC 2005-2014 – Ontario and Alberta included as comparators³



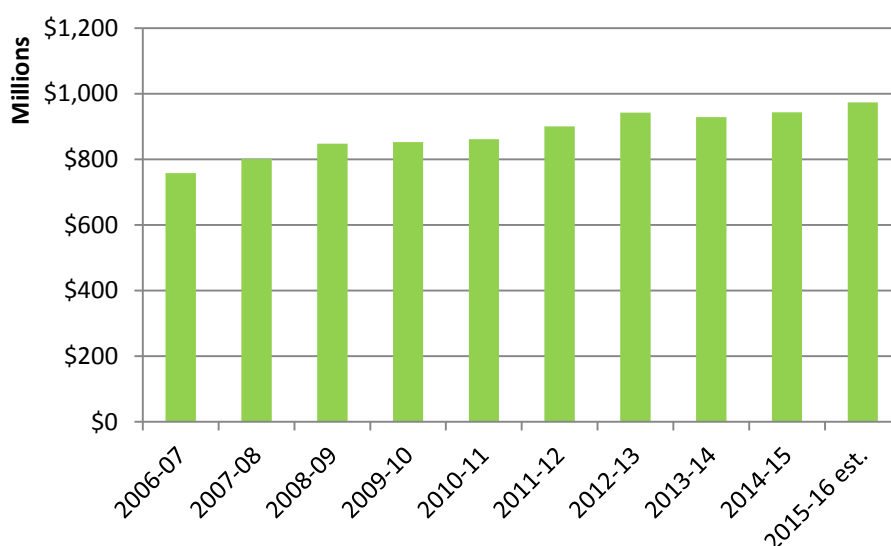
³ Source: *Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics*. Most recent data year is calendar 2014. The Police Reported Crime Severity Index (PRCSI) measures changes in the level of severity of crime in Canada from year to year. In the index, all crimes are assigned a weight based on their seriousness. The level of seriousness is based on actual sentences handed down by the courts in all provinces and territories. More serious crimes are assigned higher weights, less serious offences lower weights. As a result, more serious offences have a greater impact on changes in the index.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019

SECTOR COSTS (PROVINCIAL)

Expenditures on core provincial justice and public safety sector functions rose by approximately three per cent between 2014-15 and 2015-16, continuing a pattern of stability or only marginal increase (once inflation is taken into account) over the past four years.

Figure 4: Justice and public safety costs (provincial only), 2006/07-2015/16⁴

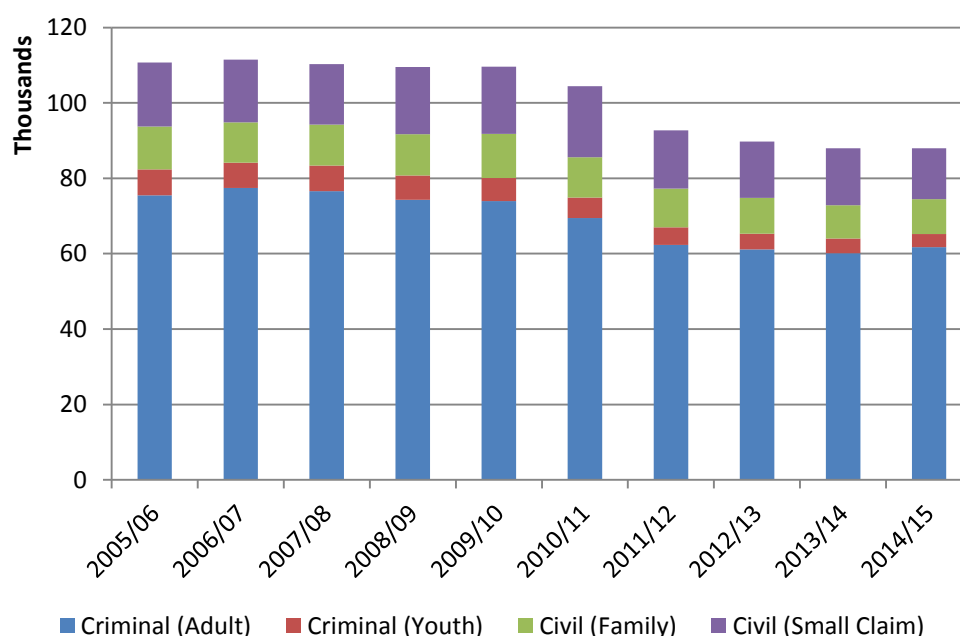


⁴ Source: *BC Government Justice and Public Safety Sector, Corporate Management Services Branch*. Most recent data year is fiscal 2015-16 (figures are actual expenditures, and estimated to year end for 2015-16 at March 1, 2016). This chart incorporates budget figures from the Ministries of Justice and Attorney General and of Public Safety and Solicitor General, and of their antecedent Ministries, and combines salary and operating costs, for core sector functions. Figures include amounts for Corrections, the Corrections work program, police services, community safety and crime prevention, RoadSafetyBC, justice transformation, justice services, prosecution services, and court services. Figures exclude amounts which have not consistently been funded via the justice and public safety ministry budget(s) for services (government corporate infrastructure and facilities) and programs (for example, emergency management, liquor control and licensing, and gaming policy and enforcement). The chart also excludes funds for the judiciary and federal and municipal budget figures for justice and public safety, which comprise a significant portion of the total public expenditure in the sector – in particular, the costs of municipal policing and federal enforcement.

NEW CASE VOLUMES (PROVINCIAL)

The annual number of new Provincial Court cases entering the system, which declined in the four years prior to 2013-14 by 22 per cent, appears now to be stabilizing. Of interest, adult criminal cases have increased in the last year after seven consecutive years of decline. It should be noted in interpreting these figures that the substantial decline in criminal cases which drove the steep decline after 2009 is commonly associated with changes in process for impaired driving, and thus may mask patterns related to other crime types.

Figure 5: New Provincial Court cases by type (excluding traffic) 2004/05-2014/15⁵

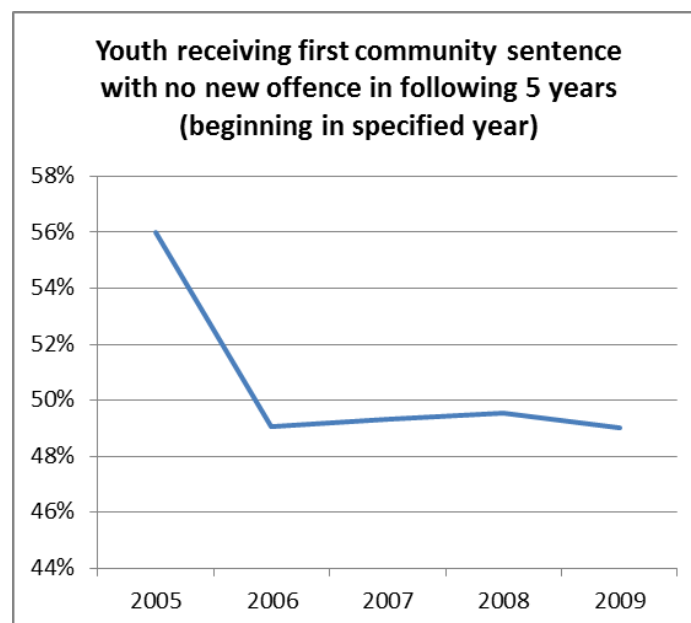


⁵ Source: BC Ministry of Justice, Court Services Branch.

YOUTH JUSTICE

Youth justice in recent years represents a success story in British Columbia. Youth crime continues to decline, and the number of youth in provincial custody remains at or near historical lows. However, the benefits of these trends remain unevenly distributed, with Indigenous youth having increased as a percentage of the remaining youth custody population in recent years. While no amount of youth involvement in the criminal justice system is acceptable, youth serving custodial sentences at any one time have declined in number to well below 100, numbers so low that annual fluctuations in those numbers have little statistical meaning. There are, as in the adult population, significantly more youth under community sentence. Here, too, there have been successes followed by a period of stability. By 2014 the percentage of youth reoffending within five years of a first community sentence had declined to 49% (having been at 56% four years prior).⁶

Figure 6: Youth receiving first community sentence with no new offence in following 5 years

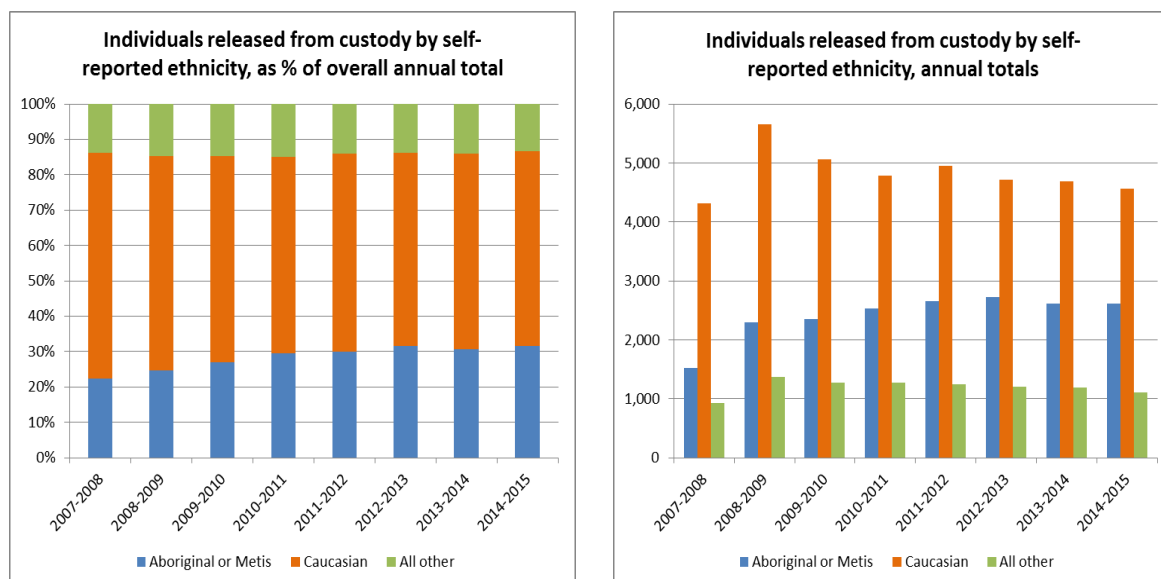


⁶ **Data source and considerations:** Government of British Columbia; BC Corrections Operations Network (CORNET), extracted through the Cognos business intelligence system. Percentage of Youth Justice clients (ages 12-17) receiving a first community sentence who are not convicted of a new offence within the following five years (includes offences in adulthood). A five-year follow-up period is used for this metric. The metric counts recidivism of individual clients; therefore, individuals who are admitted more than once in a calendar year will only be counted once.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND THE JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SECTOR

Indigenous people continue to be over-represented in the justice system as offenders and victims, a national pattern which is also present at the provincial level in British Columbia. One measure of over-representation is incarceration which, relative, to overall demographics is also an indicator of the success of the justice system in remediating the absolute fact of over-representation *per capita*. Taking self-reported ethnicity on release from custody as a proxy, unique episodes of custody for Indigenous people in BC (2014-15: approximately 32% of all custody releases) occurred at a rate approximately six times greater than expected given the percentage of the population which is Indigenous.⁷

Figure 7: Individuals released from custody by self-reported ethnicity, as percentage of overall annual total, and annual totals, BC 2007-08 to 2014-15



⁷ **Data source and considerations:** Government of British Columbia; BC Corrections Operations Network (CORNET), extracted through the Cognos business intelligence system. The rate of releases of individuals from a custody centre who self-report “Aboriginal” or “Metis” status in comparison to those who self-report “Caucasian,” or who self-report other categories. This is a measure of all releases, not unique releases of individuals for the following legal hold statuses: dual status, federal, immigration, not stated, and provincially sentenced. This measure does not include releases for clients on remand status. As this is a measure of all releases, not unique releases means that individuals who are released more than once in a given year will be counted more than once. The definition of release does not include a status change from remand to sentenced or sentenced to remand; however, it does include individuals released from custody to probation. Indigenous peoples were identified as 5.4% of the provincial population in the 2011 census. In 1996, Parliament enacted s.718.29(e) of the Criminal Code, which places a statutory duty on sentencing judges to consider an offender’s Indigenous circumstances in the determination of what constitutes a fit sentence. The leading authority on interpretation of this provision is *R. v. Gladue*, [1999] 1 S.C.R. 688.

FURTHER INDICATORS AND METRICS

In November 2015, the Council released its initial *Update on Performance Measurement for the Justice and Public Safety*, including data on ten key environmental indicators. This report may be found [online](#) on the Council's website.⁸

Recognizing the need to continue the development of measures linked to areas of concern and to specific objectives, but being cognizant of the limited resources available for this work and of the challenges of developing “net new” measures, the Council has identified two priority areas for indicator development in the next 12 months.

1. In light of the extensive discussions to come in 2016 at both Justice Summit events on “Justice and Mental Health,” there will be both a need and an opportunity to identify one or more measures of the circumstances and outcomes for mentally disordered and substance using individuals encountering the criminal justice system.
2. The Council acknowledges, both in this report and in its Update on Performance Measurement, the current scarcity of measures and indicators dealing with civil, family and administrative justice. Noting the interest of Access to Justice BC (ATJBC) in identifying informative metrics on access in civil and family matters, the Council looks forward to supporting and as appropriate partnering with ATJBC in the development of such metrics for common usage.

⁸ <http://www.justicebc.ca/shared/pdfs/pm-nov-2015.pdf>

OVERVIEW OF SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS 2015-16

The period from April 2015 to March 2016 has seen a number of significant developments in the sector. These developments are largely positive, and there is good reason to feel optimistic about the specific steps taken in the interest of the sector and its clients, and about the prospects for future success.

In introducing this overview, the Council makes two parallel observations. First, very clearly, what is being done right now is not yet enough to resolve the challenges which remain in the sector, whether those challenges relate to access, criminal victimization and trauma, mental health, the experience of women and Indigenous peoples in the sector, or other pressing matters. There is a genuine desire for more action, including in some cases where the issue has been well discussed and diagnosed, and this desire is accompanied at times by frustration. While certain challenges might be resolved with additional resources, it is also sometimes observed that we as a sector are failing to use the resources already at play as well as we should. These concerns must be acknowledged as real, as is the responsibility of the sector's leadership to address them.

Second, in responding to these concerns, and setting aside the question of whether additional resources become available, it is clear that leaders and participants in the sector must continue to enhance new ways of working together, particularly as so few of the major challenges we face can be solved independently by individual agencies or institutions. These ways include regular cross-sectoral dialogue as a means to inform, educate and support each other; mature, transparent discussions of sector data as a window on the effectiveness of reform; finding cross-disciplinary operational solutions to cross-disciplinary challenges; and continuing to find ways to put clients or system users at the centre of the services that are mandated, or offered in support of justice and public safety.

Noteworthy developments within the sector over the last year include the following.

INCREASING ENGAGEMENT ON INDIGENOUS JUSTICE ISSUES

The Council notes several promising developments which should lead to a variety of opportunities to make improvements in Indigenous peoples' experience within the sector.

The announcement of a federal commission of inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and the appointment of Canada's first Indigenous Minister of Justice, are positive developments which will assist in maintaining focus on the Indigenous experience of the sector in BC and elsewhere in Canada. The Council also acknowledges and welcomes the establishment of the Aboriginal Justice Council of British Columbia, an important development in strengthening institutional relationships around sector reform, and looks forward to working with the Council. In addition, the strong representation of Indigenous justice experts in planning and delivering the 4th and 5th BC Justice Summits is considered to be a key reason behind the continued momentum of the Summit dialogue and the quality of those events. The Council looks forward to further strengthening of this engagement in 2016-17.

COLLABORATION AND EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES IN COMBATting VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The past year saw several significant developments in work combatting violence against women and sexual violence. Implementation of the provincial government's Violence-Free BC initiative began to take shape, including the establishment of integrated Domestic Violence Units in collaboration with police agencies and victim services providers. The 5th BC Justice Summit addressed the impact that violent trauma has on the capacity of victims of violence to engage with the justice system's traditional methodologies, identifying a set of recommendations geared to the creation of a trauma-informed justice system (and so beginning to address an identified performance gap in the system)⁹. At the operational level, victim service organizations, the police community and the provincial government collaborated in the delivery of a major training conference in December 2015 on ways to prevent sexual and domestic violence.¹⁰ Taken together, the past year has seen significant progress in collaborative, evidence-based work on violence against women in British Columbia.

⁹ See Plan Goals and Objectives: Fair|Impartial, below, p. 22.

¹⁰ Joint organizers included the BC Society of Transition Houses, Ending Violence Association of BC, Police Victim Services of BC, BC Association of Chiefs of Police, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Government of British Columbia, BC Housing, and the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence (PODV).

A COORDINATED APPROACH TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Following the leadership of the Supreme Court of Canada and the work of the National Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters, in 2015 a provincial coordinating committee (Access to Justice BC) was formed under the leadership of the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal for British Columbia to consider improvements to the BC civil and family justice system, with a triple aim of improved user experience, improved outcomes for the population, and sustainability.¹¹ Access to Justice BC brings together judges, legal practitioners, mediators, public policy experts, NGOs and system users in consideration of these aims. The Council welcomes the establishment of Access to Justice BC, is strongly supportive of its key elements (a user-centered perspective of the system, multi-disciplinary approaches, and a commitment to experimentation) in pursuing its aims, and looks forward to a coordinated and supportive relationship contributing to improved access to justice for British Columbians.

IMPROVED CASE MANAGEMENT AND COURT SCHEDULING

Under the leadership of the Provincial Court, the Provincial Court Scheduling Project has led to the implementation of an Assignment Court model in seven court locations, with a specific focus on reducing delay and increasing event certainty in the scheduling of criminal cases. In related steps, in 2015 the provincial prosecution service (Criminal Justice Branch) substantially completed a number of process reforms that include enhanced Crown file ownership in criminal cases, quality control standards to streamline case management practices, including increased early file resolution and on-line charge assessment, and working co-operatively with the Provincial Court of British Columbia and Court Services Branch in support of the Provincial Court Scheduling Project. Cumulatively, these reforms are aimed at increased efficiency, reduced file churn and a more effective utilization of system resources. In welcoming these steps, the Council notes in addition that the majority of these changes address issues raised directly by Geoffrey Cowper QC in his 2012 review of BC's criminal justice system.

¹¹ While Access to Justice BC has taken civil and family matters as its initial focus, access to justice in criminal matters may be brought in to scope in the future.

CONTINUED STRENGTHENING OF THE BC JUSTICE SUMMIT PROCESS

With five Summits having been held since 2013, the process has continued to mature in terms of content and purpose, while retaining the engagement and commitment of participants from across the sector. As the elements of the Justice Reform and Transparency Act have been implemented, it is increasingly clear that the Summits have played an important role in ensuring that this series of leadership discussions has exhibited diversity and inclusion. As a consequence of this strong support and good faith engagement, the Summits have been able to respond to participants' interest in moving the discussion from system norms and strategy towards specific areas of collaboration and innovation. This new pattern of work was first applied at the 5th Summit (Fall 2015) in addressing trauma-informed practice as well as information sharing in related family, domestic violence and child protection proceedings. The Council looks forward continuation of this momentum at the 6th and 7th Summits in 2016, which will take as their focus "Mental Health and the Justice System."

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFORM DIALOGUE AT THE FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL LEVEL

Looking forward to 2016-17, several important contemporary areas for collaboration and innovation in the justice and public safety sector – including but not limited to addressing violence against Indigenous women and girls, response to mentally disordered and substance-dependent clients, and improving access to justice – are also areas where progress can be enhanced through dialogue between and amongst provincial justice systems and the federal government. In particular, the Council acknowledges the importance for British Columbia of the consultative process initiated in 2015 concerning the Commission of Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and notes the federal government's recent commitment to consult on legalization and regulation of the use of marijuana. The Council looks forward to supporting or facilitating efforts to engage justice actors, non-governmental participants and the public in developing effective reform strategies in these areas.

GREATER ATTENTION TO MENTAL HEALTH AND JUSTICE

2015-16 saw increased attention to the many significant issues related to the experience of mentally disordered persons in the justice and public safety sector. A major forum at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue in October 2015 saw representatives of the judiciary, justice and public safety professionals, forensic mental health specialists, public health experts, and the NGO sector converge in discussion around health, police, court, corrections and community responses to what some participants referred to as a “mental health crisis” within the sector. Efforts within the government setting are currently geared to provincial strategies related to mental health and substance dependency. For its part, the justice and public safety sector will congregate in two Summit discussions on Justice and Mental Health in June and November 2016. Noting the high level of engagement in dialogue, the Council echoes numerous sector participants in encouraging the conversion of this energy into concrete actions emanating from the Summits and from the provincial work on strategy.

COURT INNOVATION

2015-16 saw continued commitment to outcome-oriented innovation in BC’s court system, which includes such specialized approaches as Downtown Community Court, Victoria Integrated Court, Drug Treatment Court and First Nations Court. The Council notes the on-going, high level of reform interest in the potential for specialized court approaches, innovation which is welcome and necessary in considering how the sector is able to respond to some of the most vulnerable groups of people in the justice system. The Council also acknowledges consultative efforts between the executive and judicial branches of government to establish a framework for specialized courts which would together the objectives and design of such courts with considerations of resourcing and proportional benefit of these approaches.

PROGRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVIDENCE BASED POLICY

Noting that the challenges to information sharing and research in the justice and public sector are well known, British Columbia’s sector institutions continues to take important steps in building an empirical understanding of our system, many of which compare favourably with the situation in other Canadian jurisdictions. The Council recognizes

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019

efforts made in 2015-16 by the judiciary, the police community, and the provincial government in the active development of business intelligence, and encourages both continued localized efforts as well as dialogue between sector participants to enhance understanding of our data. The Council also notes the work done by the sector in collaboration with the local research community, which is now showing beneficial outcomes for provincial and national dialogues on justice. A recent example of this productivity is the prominence accorded research on mental disorders within British Columbia's corrections population, and on the Integrated Offender Management/Homelessness Intervention Project, at a recent national forum on criminal justice.

UPDATING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This is the second annual update of the three-year strategic plan initially developed by the Justice and Public Safety Council of British Columbia in March 2014.

The plan was and is based on the Council's vision for the justice and public safety sector. The plan emphasizes the strengths of the sector, and also identifies gaps between where the sector is today and where it should be to meet the needs of citizens.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE PLAN

The plan applies broadly to publicly-funded programs and services that contribute to the administration of justice, to the delivery of justice services, and to public safety in British Columbia, within or outside government – referred to collectively as “the sector.” The sector includes:

1. The formal justice system, which includes administrative law, civil law, criminal law, court processes, family law, prosecution, and related work.
2. The closely related functions of protection of the public, such as policing, corrections, crime prevention, and services to victims of crime.
3. Regulatory, protective and/or response functions such as motor vehicle licensing and fines, civil forfeiture, and coroner services.
4. The reform of provincial statutes, the modernization of which is of importance not just to public justice participants, but to users of the justice system.
5. The governing and administrative activity – the bureaucracy – which supports all of the justice and public safety work on which British Columbians rely.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE GAPS

The Council's plan, set out over the following pages, identifies specific gaps where the current reality of the sector does not match the aspirations of the vision. Against each goal and objective, “performance gaps” are set out, as identified through dialogue among sector participants.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE GAP(S)
OUR SECTOR IS FAIR	Accessible We offer services accessible to all regardless of means or location, provide meaningful redress, and ensure access to justice for vulnerable and marginalized people proactively.	Improved access to justice is needed in civil, family and administrative disputes, in both urban and rural settings. We need to better balance the application of public resources to increase access to justice for accused persons.
	Impartial We model integrity, fairness and natural justice in our procedures and in delivering services, treating people equally.	We require an integrated strategy to address over-representation of Indigenous people in the court and correctional systems. We need to increase our understanding of barriers to justice among women who are victims of violent trauma.
	Timely We work together to reduce systemic delay as an impediment to justice; we seek early resolution of individual processes wherever possible.	The administration of the court system must continue to be modernized to improve scheduling and decrease unproductive appearances. We need to further incorporate established risk/need-assessment practices beyond corrections, in prosecution and police policy.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE GAP(S)
OUR SECTOR PROTECTS PEOPLE	Prevention We offer early, appropriate and effective interventions to reduce antisocial behaviour, assisting people in rebuilding healthy, productive lives.	Cross-sector, community-based strategies are required to protect vulnerable populations. We need to address the factors associated with prolific offending, and also address the factors that make people more vulnerable to victimization. To improve road safety compliance, we need to better link critical information regarding high-risk drivers, such as driver records, prohibitions, administrative reviews and driver remedial actions.
	Protection We work together to reduce threats to public safety, protect complainants and victims of crime, and prevent re-victimization of the vulnerable by the system.	We need a coordinated, evidence-based framework for managing and supporting sexual and domestic violence cases through the courts, ensuring coordination with family process, and ensuring referrals to support services. We require better tools to increase the frequency with which missing persons are located.
	Systemic Approach We work across all levels of government to understand and address root causes of crime, and support and participate in effective alternative interventions and innovation.	Meaningful options need to be available to the courts in support of alternatives to incarceration consistent with <i>R v Gladue</i> . Coordinated efforts are required to ensure appropriate triage of mentally-disordered individuals, including adequate accommodation and treatment availability.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE GAP(S)
OUR SECTOR IS SUSTAINABLE	Focused efforts Based on measurable demand, we make evidence-based decisions to resource the system's necessary functions, ensuring these services are delivered efficiently.	We need better measures of demand and workload for sector processes around which resource planning can occur. Sustainable models for policing service delivery are required at the provincial, regional and municipal levels.
	Managed resources We allocate resources prudently across the system according to clear and demonstrated cause and effect.	All significant public investments, in cash or in kind, need to be evaluated against expected outcomes identified in advance. Savings or efficiencies created from reforms should be clearly identified through planning and measurement, and be reallocated where resources are most required.
	Effectiveness We measure and improve the return on investment of public resources, collectively and as institutions.	We require a methodology to define the cost per key output for each of the sector's major functions.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN 2016-2019

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE GAP(S)
OUR SECTOR HAS THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE	Adaptive We offer services and programs that are nimble; we solicit and respond to the needs of people and monitor the effectiveness of our programs	We need to establish, to report on, and to respond to feedback loops with sector client populations.
	Performance-focused We assume collective and respective responsibility for system performance, engaging British Columbians in dialogue as users and observers of the system.	Meaningful performance reports on core sector deliverables and services should be regularly published.
	Empowering People entering the system have sufficient opportunity and support to learn its rules and practices at their level of need; the public both understands and values the system; we treat the time of every participant as valuable.	<p>People must be better informed and educated about ways in which the sector can assist them in adapting to change and resolving disputes.</p> <p>More user-needs-driven information should be made available – and provided proactively – at the outset of proceedings.</p>

REAFFIRMATION AND/OR CHANGE OF PLAN ELEMENTS

CONTINUITY OF VISION

For the plan renewal applicable to the period 2016-17 to 2018-19, the Council reaffirms the relevance of its four goals for the sector – **fairness, protection of people, sustainability, and public confidence** – and their enduring relevance to the work of justice and public safety professionals in British Columbia. The Council also reaffirms the twelve objectives derived from these goals.

REVISION OF IDENTIFIED PERFORMANCE GAPS

Goal: PROTECTS PEOPLE | Objective: PROTECTION – In recognition of the currently accepted problem definition in the police community regarding the sharing of timely information on missing persons, the Council has refined its expression of the performance gap as a need for *better tools* with which to share information.

Goal: FAIR | Objective: TIMELY – In recognition of the ongoing but incomplete work done on court systems modernization, the Council has refined its expression of the performance gap to suggest that the administration of the court system must *continue to* be modernized to improve scheduling and decrease unproductive appearances.

SECTOR OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR 2016-17

The following areas have been reaffirmed by the Council as sector priorities for 2016-17.

INDIGENOUS JUSTICE

The problems affecting Indigenous peoples with respect to justice and public safety are well documented. Important issues to be addressed include the level of violence suffered by Indigenous women and families, and the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the court and correctional systems. In light of the development of the Aboriginal Justice Council of BC (AJCBC), the question of the establishment of a separate advisory board on Indigenous justice issues is in the Council's view now secondary to the importance of establishing strong institutional relationships between other sector actors and AJCBC on key issues of reform and service delivery.

JUSTICE AND MENTAL HEALTH

The prevalence of police encounters with mentally disordered people in the community, combined with the rates of mental disorder and substance dependency amongst the sentenced population, make clear the need for coordinated work in addressing the needs of mentally disordered British Columbians. The answers are complex, and the sector requires meaningful engagement with health and human services providers, as well as rigorous data to clarify and quantify the provincial situation.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Concerns over the ability of people to identify, obtain and afford services, understand and exercise their rights and obligations, and/or participate in proceedings on a level footing have been a continued focus amongst sector leaders over the past year. Recognizing these concerns are national in scope, the response must primarily be provincial. Accordingly the launch of Access to Justice BC as a coordinated response to these issues is a welcome development in working towards solutions to these challenges which place British Columbians' access to justice at the centre. While the organization of a response is a necessary step, the situation overall remains a priority for the sector.

In addition, the Council has added a fourth priority for 2016-17.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

With respect to violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual violence, it remains an important objective to establish the most effective means of managing criminal cases through the system. The sector has recently identified a common interest in ensuring our operations and policies are trauma-informed. Development and implementation of this and of other coordinated approaches is of great importance to the sector in 2016-17, a year which will also bring significant attention to the question of the safety of Indigenous women and girls. Additionally, we still require a means of measuring prevalence and repeat offending when these go unreported, so we may understand and implement what works best in protecting women from violence.

The Council continues, in support of these priority areas, to encourage efforts to collaborate and innovate in broadening the empirical grounding of our sector's policies and operations, through the individual and collaborative development of business analytics and transparent reporting. It is as important as ever to know "what works," and to understand how we can reliably and transparently determine "what works."

This is certainly important as a means to understand the efficiency of the investment of funds in the sector. But it is critical that empirical understanding be brought to the question of *effectiveness* as well. As ever, the development of the means of understanding sector data should be careful and inclusive, in recognition of the need to ensure accurate and fair accounts of the ways in which the sector works.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Council, in looking ahead to 2016-17, anticipates positive developments in a number of areas in the sector, including:

- The opportunity for sector participants to contribute to the consultation process of the Commission of Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.
- In following up on the recommendations of the 5th BC Justice Summit, forward movement in the development of trauma-informed practice in the criminal justice arena, and progress on information sharing practices where family justice, domestic violence and child protection processes intersect.
- Development of the work of Access to Justice BC in addressing significant barriers which still confront British Columbians as they engage our system.
- Important steps in the development of meaningful change in the ways in which our sector, in partnership, interacts with mentally disordered citizens – including the development of provincial strategies on mental health and substance use, and two sector-specific dialogues at the Spring and Fall 2016 Justice Summits.
- Continued enhancement of our sector's data analytic capacity, and continued exploration of ways in which we can enhance our understanding of the sector and its performance, and share that understanding with the public.

PLAN FEEDBACK

Comments are encouraged and may be emailed to justicereform@gov.bc.ca (after June 2016, council@justicereform.bc.ca). Written communication may be sent to:

The Chair
British Columbia Justice and Public Safety Council
c/o Justice and Public Safety Secretariat
1001 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC V8W 3V3

APPENDIX 1: SECTOR VISION

British Columbia is committed to a justice and public safety sector founded on the rule of law. The sector encompasses criminal, civil, family and administrative law. It is **fair**, **protects people**, is **sustainable**, and has the **public's confidence**.

GOAL 1: OUR SECTOR IS FAIR

Objectives

Accessible – We offer services accessible to all regardless of means or location, provide meaningful redress, and ensure access to justice for vulnerable and marginalized people proactively.

Impartial – We model integrity, fairness and natural justice in our procedures and in delivering services, treating people equally.

Timely – We work together to reduce systemic delay in the sector as an impediment to justice; we seek early resolution of individual processes wherever possible.

GOAL 2: OUR SECTOR PROTECTS PEOPLE

Objectives

Preventative – We offer early, appropriate and effective interventions to reduce and redress antisocial behaviour, assisting people in rebuilding healthy, productive lives.

Protective – We work together to reduce threats to public safety, protect complainants and victims of crime, and prevent re-victimization of the vulnerable by the sector.

Systemic approach – We work across all levels of government to understand and address root causes of crime, and support and participate in effective innovative interventions.

GOAL 3: OUR SECTOR IS SUSTAINABLE

Objectives

Focused – Based on measurable demand, we make evidence-based decisions to resource the sector's necessary functions, ensuring that services are delivered efficiently.

Managed – We allocate resources prudently across the sector according to clear and demonstrated cause and effect.

Effective – We measure and improve the value realized from public investment, collectively and as institutions.

GOAL 4: OUR SECTOR HAS THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE

Objectives

Adaptive – We offer services and programs that are nimble; we solicit and respond to the needs of people, respond to changes in communities, and monitor the effectiveness of our programs.

Performance-focused – We assume collective and respective responsibility for system performance, engaging British Columbians in dialogue as users and observers of the system.

Empowering – People entering the system have sufficient opportunity and support to learn its rules and practices at their level of need; the public both understands and values the system; we treat the time of every participant as valuable.

APPENDIX 2: VALUES OF OUR SECTOR

In a justice and public safety sector within a free and democratic society, the rule of law and principles of fundamental justice must guide the behaviour of the sector. Based on this foundation, the following values apply to work within the sector, such that our actions are:

Fair and equitable

Acting without discrimination with regard to ethnicity, age, religion, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, belief or socio-economic status

Open and responsive to change

Thinking critically about existing practice, considering information that challenges orthodoxy, and responding actively to environmental changes

Outcome-focused

Setting realistic objectives, assessing our work according to results, and working together to ensure our activities do not have unintended adverse consequences

Accountable

Engaging the public on the effectiveness of our work, and reporting regularly on meaningful aspects of our performance

Evidence-based

Managing operations and innovating through shared collection and analysis of data about what works, and by enabling rigorous research through partnership

Proportionate

Allocating resources in ways that are necessary and reasonable, according to agreed-upon risks, and taking action in consideration of the sector's goals as a whole

Transparent

Making information broadly available about the sector's functions, enabling constructive democratic dialogue about goals, outcomes, services and performance

APPENDIX 3: JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL

Under provisions of the *Justice Reform and Transparency Act*, Council members are appointed by Ministerial order and may include: an individual who is in a senior leadership role in the government and who has responsibility for matters relating to the administration of justice in British Columbia or matters relating to public safety, and includes any other individual the minister considers to be qualified to assist in improving the performance of the justice and public safety sector. The Council is supported by the Justice and Public Safety Secretariat. The current membership includes:

Lori Wanamaker (Chair)	Deputy Solicitor General, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Richard Fyfe (Vice-Chair)	Deputy Attorney General, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General
Lynda Cavanaugh	Assistant Deputy Minister, Court Services, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General
Joyce DeWitt-Van Oosten	Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Criminal Justice, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General
Brent Merchant	Assistant Deputy Minister, BC Corrections, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Clayton Pecknold	Assistant Deputy Minister, Policing and Security Programs, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Bobbi Sadler	Chief Information Officer, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Kurt Sandstrom	Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Legal Services, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General
Mark Sieben	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Children and Family Development