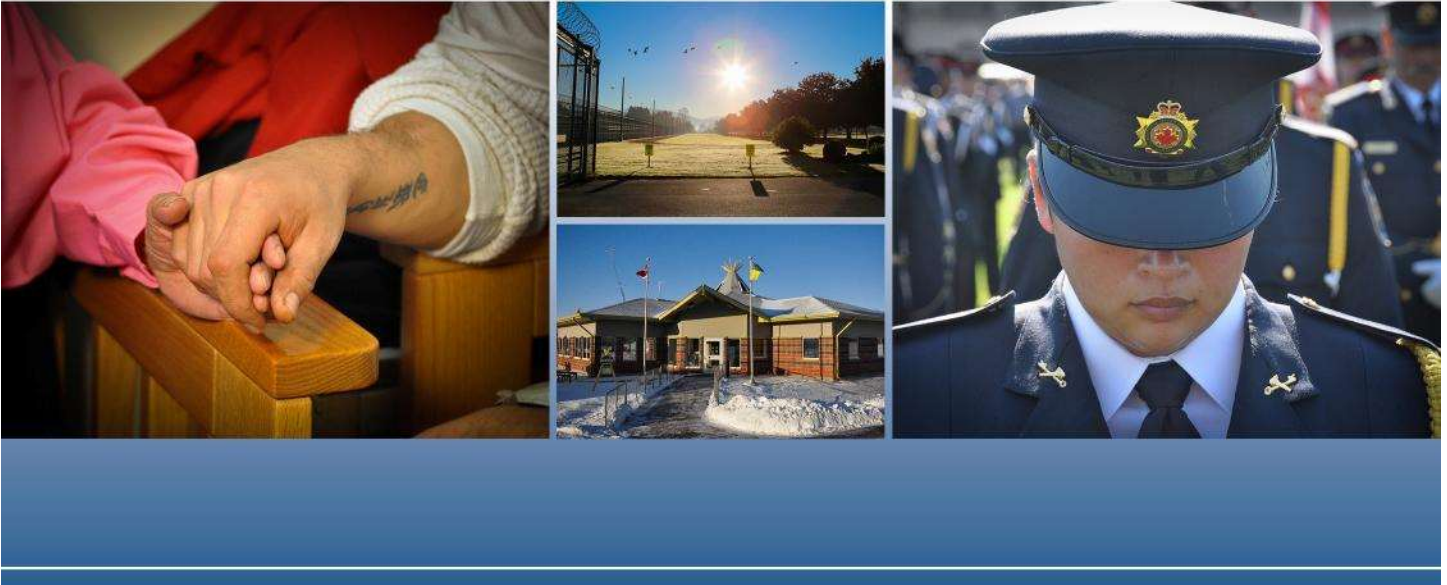




# CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.



## Ministerial Transition Material

JULY 2023

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## 1. Overview of CSC

### 1.1 Strategic Overview

#### Mission, Mandate

##### *Our Mission*

- The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), as part of the criminal justice system and respecting the rule of law, contributes to public safety by actively encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens, while exercising reasonable, safe, secure and humane control.

##### *Our Mandate*

- CSC is the federal government organization responsible for administering sentences of a term of two years or more, as imposed by the courts. CSC is responsible for managing federal correctional institutions of various security levels and for supervising offenders under conditional release and long-term supervision order in the community.
- CSC manages a complex and evolving federal correctional environment. Almost all federal offenders will eventually return to the community. Therefore, it is imperative that they are provided a safe and humane environment with access to programs and services so they can return to the community as law-abiding and contributing members of society. This creates greater public safety for all Canadians.

#### Legal Framework and External Oversight

- The Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA) provides CSC with its legislative framework:
  - CCRA, Part I – Institutional and Community Corrections;
  - CCRA, Part II – Parole Board of Canada (PBC); and
  - CCRA, Part III – Office of the Correctional Investigator.
- This legal framework is operationalized through the Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations (CCRR), Commissioner’s Directives and Institutional Standing Orders.
- In addition to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, approximately 70 other Acts and Regulations impact CSC (e.g., Criminal Code, Access to Information Act, Privacy Act, Official Languages Act, International Transfer of Offenders Act, etc.). For instance, CSC provides services to victims as per the CCRA in order to uphold rights as expressed in the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights.

## Partners and Volunteers

- A key priority for CSC is fostering productive relationships with diverse stakeholders, organizations and partners. The organization benefits from partnerships to fulfil its responsibilities to protect Canadian communities and ensure the safe reintegration of offenders.
- CSC works with federal stakeholders, as well as other levels of government, including the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Heads of Corrections table. CSC also works with the National Associations in Criminal Justice, a coalition of 22 not-for-profit national organizations to strengthen offender rehabilitation and community reintegration.
- Thousands of volunteers support CSC programs and initiatives, both in institutions and in the community. Volunteers provide essential support to CSC and offenders by offering activities such as tutoring, visits, sports, and social and spiritual events.
- Citizens also volunteer on numerous advisory committees, including the:
  - Citizen Advisory Committees that support CSC’s legislated mandate to ensure a “public presence” in federal corrections;
  - Regional and National Ethnocultural Advisory Committees that provide advice that supports the reintegration of ethnocultural offenders;
  - Regional Victim Advisory Committees that advise CSC and the PBC on victims’ issues; and
  - Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy that provides advice to CSC on the religious and spiritual care of offenders.
  - For Indigenous offenders, the National Indigenous Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations to CSC, as required under the CCRA.

## 1.2 Key Facts and Figures

### The Offender Population

- At the end of fiscal year 2022-23:
  - CSC was responsible for 21,384 offenders;
  - 13,054 were in custody;
  - 8,330 were supervised in the community.
- Of the offenders in the community:
  - offenders on day parole represented 18%;
  - offenders on full parole represented 48%;
  - offenders on statutory release represented 28%; and
  - offenders with long term supervision orders represented 6%.

### Operational Environment – Institutions and Community

- CSC manages:
  - 43 institutions (six maximum-security, nine medium-security, two minimum-security, 12 multilevel security and 11 clustered institutions);
  - 14 community correctional centres (CCCs);
  - 90 parole and district offices; and
  - Four CSC-operated healing lodges (included in the 43 institutions) and works in partnership with Indigenous communities (who operate six Section 81 Healing Lodges) to support the reintegration of Indigenous offenders back into the community.

### Financial Snapshot

#### Annual Budget

- As per the 2023-2024 Main Estimates, CSC's annual budget is **\$3.1 billion**. This represents an increase of **\$2.3M** or 0.1% over the previous year.
- The net increase of **\$2.3M** represents an increase of **\$15.2M** in Operating Expenditures, a decrease of **(\$16.2M)** in Capital Expenditures and an increase of **\$3.3M** in Statutory Expenditures (EBP).
- The main factors contributing to the changes in funding levels include (but are not limited to): **\$14.2M** increase related to *Transforming Federal Corrections* (Bill C-83); **\$11.8M** increase in funding related to changes in prices and volume of goods and services being procured; **\$9.8M** increase in funding to support pressures related to COVID-19;
- Decreases **(\$22.8M)** are related to funding for class action lawsuits; and the decrease **(\$16.2M)** related to the reprofile of unused 2020-21 and 2021-22 funding for the completion of capital projects.

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## CSC Workforce

CSC employs more than 21,200 employees from a vast number of fields. As of March 31, 2023, CSC's front-line staff workforce include:

- 7,038 Correctional Officers (CX01 and CX02);
- This includes Dog Handlers, and excludes Correctional Managers (CX04
- 597 Primary Workers;
- 1,436 Parole Officers;
- 496 Correctional Program Officers;
- 285 Indigenous officers
- 128 Social Program Officers;
- 972 Nurses; and
- 221 Psychology Staff.

## CSC Results

- At year-end, the following are results in a number of different areas:
- The number of admissions increased in 2022-23 (6,981), as compared to the previous year (6,323 in 2021-22).
- CSC continues to see increasingly positive results related to offenders, in general and for Indigenous offenders, who were not re-admitted to federal custody on a new sentence within five years following their sentence expiry date. This trend continues to head in a positive direction; overall results were 85.3% in 2018-29 and are now 88.6% in 2022-23. For Indigenous offenders, the results were 79.3% in 2018-19 and are now 81.2% in 2022-23.
- Overall, outcomes for Indigenous and Black offenders have been improving consistently over the last decade.
- The percentage of successful transitions to lower security (successful if no reclassification to higher security within 120 days) fell within the target range (90.1% - 93.3%), with a result of 90.9% in 2022-23.
- Since 2017-18, the number of escapes from federal custody has been declining and remains low with 11 escapes in 2022-23; which represents a decrease of 42% since the high of 19 escapes in 2017-18.
- The number non-natural deaths in custody (20), which includes those still under review or investigation, was within the same range as those in the last five years (the median is 20).

### 1.3 Commissioner's Biography

Anne Kelly was appointed Commissioner of the CSC on July 31, 2018.

Ms. Kelly started her career with CSC in 1983 as a case management officer. Over the years she had a variety of assignments, mostly in the Ontario Region, at the institutional, community and national levels, including case management supervisor, unit manager and project officer at National Headquarters.

Ms. Kelly was also the deputy warden at Mountain Institution in the Pacific Region for a period of two years, from 1996 to 1998. Following her return to national headquarters in 1998, she held the positions of director of Institutional Reintegration Operations, director general of Offender Programs and Reintegration, and acted as assistant commissioner, Correctional Operations and Programs. Ms. Kelly was appointed Deputy Commissioner for Women in July 2004.

In September 2006, Ms. Kelly was appointed Regional Deputy Commissioner, Pacific Region, where she served for five years until her appointment as Senior Deputy Commissioner in 2011.

Anne is a recipient of the Exemplary Service Medal and Bar and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.





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## 2. Issue Notes

### 2.1 Overrepresentation of Indigenous Offenders

#### Overview

- The overrepresentation of Indigenous and Black people in the criminal justice system and correctional institutions is a reflection of the systemic disparities that all levels of government must work to fix.
- We share the concerns about the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in federal institutions and are committed to taking actions to address systemic factors that have contributed to the disproportion, which includes:
  - Hiring a Deputy Commissioner for Indigenous Corrections in May 2023.
  - The creation of Indigenous Interventions Centres to provide streamlined support to Indigenous offenders, from the commencement of their sentence.
  - The streamlining of the Section 84 release process to remove barriers to early release to Indigenous communities.
  - The implementation of several reintegration initiatives that support Indigenous offenders as they transition to a life in the community, including project funding for Indigenous organizations delivering trauma and life skills interventions.
  - Implementing the Indigenous Offender Employment Initiative in Prairie, Ontario and Pacific regions.
  - Culturally relevant correctional programming for Indigenous offenders and Inuit men offenders as well as training for staff.
- Work is ongoing to develop a culturally appropriate and Indigenous-informed security classification process, in partnership with universities and Indigenous communities.

#### Progress

- The percentage of Indigenous offenders who were granted a discretionary release at the time of their first release increased by 13% in the past decade, from 27% in 2012-13 to 40% in 2022-23.
- In 2022-23, 81% of Indigenous offenders did not return to federal custody within five years of reaching the expiration of their sentence which is an increase from 79% in 2018-19.
- Since 2017, increased efforts to address Indigenous over-incarceration by enhancing culturally relevant and appropriate programs and support for Indigenous offenders, both in custody and on conditional release.

## 2.2 Implementation of Section 81 Releases (Healing Lodges)

- Healing lodges offer services and programs that reflect Indigenous culture in an environment that incorporates Indigenous peoples' traditions and customs.
- There are currently 10 healing lodges in Canada:
  - 4 are CSC-operated
  - 6 are operated by Indigenous organizations and/or communities through Section 81 agreements.
- CSC continues to enhance collaboration with Indigenous partners to create more opportunities for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities to help support the successful reintegration of Indigenous offenders.
- This includes working with and funding Indigenous organizations and communities, while also working towards creating additional agreements in accordance with Section 81 of the CCRA to ensure that Indigenous offenders have access to culturally relevant programming and supports to expedite their safe return to the community.
- The CSC's Indigenous Offender Reintegration Contribution Program Terms and Conditions (IORCP) was also established to enhance collaboration through contribution payments to recipients for the implementation of tailored approaches that are responsive to the over-representation and unique circumstances of Indigenous offenders in projects for knowledge sharing, knowledge/capacity building, implementation readiness and project implementation.

### Progress

- In 2017, CSC strengthened the Section 81 funding arrangement to better support operations and respond to the needs of Indigenous governing bodies or Indigenous organizations managing Healing Lodges.
- Since 2018, CSC has renewed or extended all existing agreements with Indigenous governing bodies/Indigenous organizations in the Quebec and Prairie Regions to provide ongoing access to culturally responsive environments pursuant to section 81 of the CCRA.
- In July 2022, CSC introduced policy changes relating to the management of Section 81 agreements.
- These are intended to reduce barriers to the full utilization of existing agreements and the creation of new agreements through relationship-building and renewed partnerships with Indigenous communities and organizations.
- There was a 17% increase in bed utilization from 2022 to 2023.
- Currently, approximately 75% of Healing Lodge beds are occupied by federal offenders.

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## 2.3 Correctional Interventions for Black Offenders

- In 2022-23, Black persons represented 9.2% of the overall incarcerated population, despite representing about 3% of the Canadian population.
- CSC created an Ethnocultural Action Framework to better support ethnocultural offenders, including those who are Black and other racialized groups.
- Over 60 staff members have been identified as Ethnocultural Site Coordinators to provide key support to offenders, including those who are Black or part of other racialized groups, at the site level on a volunteer basis.
- We continue to provide Black offenders with interventions and services aimed at supporting their reintegration. This includes:
  - Addressing cultural, employment and mentorship needs;
  - Receiving support from community service providers and volunteers, when possible;
  - Providing culturally-relevant materials for personal development purposes;
  - When appropriate, recommending and facilitating Day Parole to “other locations”, which may include offenders’ home communities, or locations with increased access to relevant supports for successful reintegration.
- Additionally, CSC finalized qualitative research, in collaboration with Nipissing University, to better understand the experience of ethnocultural offenders, including Black offenders. In 2022, CSC also released an exhaustive quantitative research project on ethnocultural offenders that considered diversity trends in the incarcerated population; admission profiles; in-custody experiences; and release outcomes.
- CSC is also working on developing a Black Offender Strategy to identify new opportunities to address the unique lived experiences and barriers faced by federally sentenced Black individuals. This strategy will initially identify and determine ways to incorporate expand successful practices across the country and, where possible, anchor them in policies, procedures and practice nationally.
- The work will be finalized in the 2023-24 fiscal year. It will support CSC’s actions under the Anti-Racism Framework, as well as commitments to the Correctional Investigator’s recommendations in the 2021-22 Annual Report. In addition, it will contribute to the Government of Canada’s efforts under Canada’s Black Justice Strategy, being led by Justice Canada, to address the overrepresentation of Black people in Canada’s criminal justice system.

- In March 2023, CSC launched an Expression of Interest for Black, ethnocultural and racialized community groups, experts or organizations interested in providing services, interventions and supports to ethnocultural offenders, including Black and other racialized offenders. CSC is pleased to expand the list of people and organizations that it works with to support these equity-deserving groups.

### Progress

- The percentage of Black offenders who were granted a discretionary release at the time of their first release increased by 17% in the past decade, from 31% in 2012-13 to 48% in 2022-23.
- The rate of Black offenders who had their conditional release suspended while on supervision in the community decreased by over 11% between 2018-19 and 2022-23.
- Between 2018-19 and 2022-23, the rate of Black offenders who have been convicted of a serious or violent conviction while on supervision in the community decreased by 36%.
- In 2022-23, 92% of Black offenders were not re admitted to federal custody within five years following the end of their sentence. This reflects a positive trend where, in 2018-19, when this percentage was 87%.
- Research suggests that correctional programs respond equally well to the needs of ethnocultural offenders.
- Ethnocultural offenders show a decreased likelihood of recidivism after participating in correctional programs and comparable post-release outcomes.
- Findings from a recent evaluation (2021) indicated that those who completed the Community Program (CP) experienced significant reductions in the likelihood of being returned to custody, either for any reason or for a new offence, relative to CP incompleters and eligible non-participants.
- Those who completed the Community Program experienced an 81% decrease in the likelihood of a revocation for any reason compared to eligible non-participants, while those who completed the community maintenance program experienced an 86% decrease in the likelihood of a revocation for any reason compared to those with no exposure to it.
- The evaluation found that the effectiveness of the Community Program did not vary across offender subgroups, indicating that White offenders, Black offenders, Indigenous offenders, and other Ethnocultural offenders all experienced comparable reductions in the likelihood of a revocation. The same results were also observed for the Community Maintenance Program.

## 2.4 Structured Intervention Units

### Implementation

- In June 2019, Bill C-83 - *An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and another Act* received Royal Assent. Bill C-83's purpose was to, among other things, eliminate administrative segregation and create Structured Intervention Units (SIUs).
- SIUs are used for offenders who cannot be safely managed within a mainstream inmate population.
- An inmate can 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 stay in the mainstream inmate population would interfere with an investigation, and where no reasonable alternative to the transfer to the SIU exists.
- SIUs are meant as a temporary measure with the goal to return inmates to a mainstream inmate population as soon as possible. They are used as a last resort.
- In an SIU, inmates continue to have access to rehabilitative interventions and mental health care.
- Inmates in SIUs are offered the opportunities for a minimum of four hours outside of their cell every day and two hours of opportunities to interact with someone such as an Elder, chaplain, counsellor, compatible inmate, parole officer, teacher, volunteer, etc.
- SIUs are part of a historic transformation of the federal correctional system that are fundamentally different from the previous model.

## Actions Taken

- CSC has introduced an enhanced staffing model for the SIUs, which include the addition of Behavioural Skills Coaches, Data Analyst and Activity Coordinator and Security Intelligence Analysts. It provides additional intervention options to inmates with specific needs, greater SIU national population management insight and more accurate data.
- CSC is working with external organizations to implement innovative approaches to increase interventions and additional options for time out of cell and interactions with others. An example includes the Dad HERO program being offered at most SIU locations by the Canadian Families and Corrections Network.
- CSC is also improving real-time monitoring of time out of cell and interaction with others to identify and respond to issues, while also addressing regional differences.
- CSC is also enhancing SIU employee onboarding training and reviewing the SIU policy to clarify roles and procedures.
- CSC has gathered best practices from all SIU sites and have shared a national compendium with all regions, for them to assess if these practices could be implemented in other sites, while considering their local realities.

## Consultation

- CSC continues to work with stakeholders to ensure ongoing feedback of the SIU model and make adjustments to sustain this major transformation.
- CSC will consult with internal and external stakeholders on the new SIU policy suite, currently in development.
- CSC is strongly committed to the successful implementation of this model and welcomes the ongoing contributions from partners and oversight bodies.
- Institutions across the country have been hosting Open House events to introduce community partners to the SIU and explore opportunities for them to provide services and supports to SIU inmates.

## Oversight

- One important difference between the administrative segregation regime and the SIU model is that an inmate's confinement in an SIU is subject to review by an external body, the Independent External Decision Makers (IEDMs), under specific circumstances.
- IEDMs across the country provide oversight of an inmate's conditions and duration of confinement in an SIU; they also review cases as per their legislated mandate and provide their recommendations and decisions to CSC for consideration and/or action. Their decisions are binding.
- In specific circumstances, IEDMs have the authority to decide whether an inmate should be transferred out of an SIU or to make recommendations for CSC to alter the inmate's conditions of confinement.
- Even if the IEDM finds that CSC has taken all reasonable steps, if the inmate has been in the SIU without those opportunities for ten consecutive days following their decision, the IEDM must determine more generally if the inmate should be transferred out of an SIU.
- As of March 31, 2023, there have been approximately 5298 conditions of confinement referrals made to IEDM for review.
- Of those reviewed by an IEDM (2995), the IEDM concluded 80% of the time that CSC had taken all reasonable steps to provide inmates with the opportunity for four hours out of their cell with two hours of interaction with others. In the remaining decisions, the IEDMs have made recommendations to CSC.
- Once a decision from an IEDM where they were not satisfied is received, CSC has seven days to act upon it. In more than 80% of those cases, the IEDMs were satisfied with the actions taken by CSC.
- In addition to the IEDMs, we continue to work with the SIU Implementation Advisory Panel and the Office of the Correctional Investigator to provide accountability and transparency of the operationalization of SIUs.

## 2.5 High Profile Offenders

### Overview

- Policy CD-701 on Information Sharing outlines a process by which case management staff must flag High Profile Offenders in CSC's system and brief up on events accordingly within CSC.
- As defined in policy, a high-profile offender is an offender whose offence dynamics elicited or have a potential to elicit a community reaction in the form of significant public and/or media interest.
- CSC has a process in place to notify the Minister's Office ahead of events that may attract media attention. These include transfers, Parole Board of Canada hearings, release dates (Day Parole, Full Parole, Statutory Release), Temporary Absences, etc.
- CSC is currently working to implement the measures described in the Ministerial Directive issued on July 20, 2023.
- As per the Ministerial Directive, the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs will be notified directly and formally of any high-profile offender being transferred to a lower security level. These communications will also be shared to ministerial staff for their information.



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## Security Classification

- As per our policy, CSC must review the security classification of inmates at least every two years for medium and maximum-security inmates.
- CSC is required to ensure all offenders are placed in institutions that match their security level. This is in line with one of the CCRA's guiding principles to use the least restrictive measures consistent with the protection of society, staff members and offenders.
- CSC's approach to both initial security classification and subsequent security reclassification includes the use of evidence-based assessment instruments along with the professional judgment of specialized staff and psychological assessments, if applicable.
- A change to the security classification of offenders is based on the assessment of their risk related to institutional adjustment, escape risk, and risk to public safety in the case of an escape. These factors are set out in law and policy.

## Inmate Transfers

- Transfers of inmates from one institution to another may occur for many reasons, including when an offender's security classification is reviewed.
- When transferring an offender, CSC takes into account the degree and type of control they require to ensure the ongoing safety of the public (including victims), offenders, and our staff as well as the availability of programs and interventions.
- All transfers of inmates to lower levels of security occur only after CSC has duly considered public safety.
- An inmate can be returned to a higher security level at any point if deemed necessary to ensure the safety of the public or our institutions.
- Decisions around offender specific cases and CSC operations fall under the purview of CSC. The Minister does not have a role or authority in security classification or transfer of offenders.
- The decision to reclassify, and ultimately transfer an offender from maximum to medium requires the authorization from:
  - Deputy Warden, for all cases except those serving a life sentence for murder or Dangerous Offenders
  - Warden, for those serving a life sentence or Dangerous Offenders
  - Assistant Commissioner of Correctional Operations and Programs or Deputy Commissioner for Women (for women offenders), for those serving a life sentence for murder and inmates convicted for a terrorism offence within the first 2 years from initial security classification

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## 2.6 Victim Notification Process

- CSC is committed to upholding victims' rights and taking a victim-informed approach when making decisions or recommendations regarding offenders and we work to uphold rights to information, participation and protection under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*.
- Victim considerations are taken into account in case management and decision-making. This includes reviewing all victim statements on file, whether submitted in court or directly to CSC/PBC.
- At any time in an offender's sentence, a victim can submit a new or updated statement to CSC for consideration.
- CSC provides information and notifications to victims based on provisions in the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* for individuals who meet the definition of a victim under the law: an individual who has suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss as the result of the commission of the offence.
- Victims may register to receive information on matters relating to offenders, including transfers, temporary absences, conditional release and PBC hearings.
- Victims are consulted as part of the decision-making process for conditional release decisions, but not prior to transfers. When completing the assessments, recommendations and decisions for transfers, case management staff consider "victim concerns" noted in Victim Statements submitted to CSC/PBC, including Victim Impact Statements submitted to the court, to which they have access. Victim concerns must be included in the overall assessment for transfers prior to the decisions.
- As per policy (Commissioner's Directive 784, Victim Engagement), the Victim Services Unit notifies victims of transfers to a medium- or maximum-security institution (or unit within the same institution) the day that the offender is transferred or as soon as possible afterward. The CCRA does not specify advance notification for transfers from maximum-security institutions to medium.
- The CCRA allows CSC to notify victims of transfers to minimum-security institutions/units or Healing Lodges before they occur and if the victim's interest outweighs the offender's right to privacy. When it is possible, the Victim Services Unit notifies registered victims two days in advance of the transfer.
- The Victim Services Unit notifies registered victims of temporary absences at least 16 days prior to the occurrence, unless not practicable to do so.
- The Victim Services Unit notifies victims of the month and year of review dates under the authority of the PBC in order to invite them to provide victim statements for consideration in case preparation. The PBC informs victims of the actual date of upcoming hearings.
- On average, CSC has more than 8,000 registered victims and completes more than 30,000 notifications a year.

## 2.7 Dry Cells

- CSC is committed to keeping contraband out of federal penitentiaries to ensure a safe and secure environment for staff, inmates and visitors.
- Dry cells are used as a last resort when there are reasonable grounds to believe an inmate is carrying contraband in their digestive system.
- Dry cells are one of many tools used by CSC to prevent the introduction of contraband into federal penitentiaries.
- Amendments to the CCRA were passed by Parliament that addressed the Court's decision to ensure that the use of dry cells comply with the Charter.
- The Government of Canada is enhancing its reporting mechanisms, continue to ensure adequate necessities, including nutritious food and toiletry articles, are provided to inmates in these cells, and give significant consideration to their mental and physical well-being.
- In August 2022, a Ministerial Direction was issued to CSC to provide clarity on the use of dry cells while the government develops regulations to supplement the current law (CCRA).
- At the same time, we continue to explore new technologies and additional tools to detect the presence of contraband.
- Currently, body scanners are being piloted at Edmonton Institution for Women and Bath Institution.
- The pilot has proven successful to date and the information we are gathering will help inform next steps, including our procurement strategy for purchasing additional body scanners to implement them more widely across other institutions in the future.

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## 2.8 Supporting Commitments – Oversight Bodies

### Access to Information / Privacy Commissioner and Information Commissioner

- CSC is committed to providing Canadians with timely responses to Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) requests.
- CSC works diligently to ensure the privacy of Canadians is protected and that information is shared in compliance with all existing laws, policies, and guidelines.
- CSC continues to receive a high volume of *Access to Information Act* (ATIA) and *Privacy Act* (PA) requests that are increasingly complex in nature. CSC is steadfast in its commitment to addressing a backlog of outstanding requests while taking measures to transform how it responds to requests.
- CSC has teams and processes in place to address outstanding complaints as quickly and thoroughly as possible.
- The reduction of the backlog remains a core priority for CSC and additional measures are being taken to address this. The ATIP division has developed a comprehensive Strategic Action Plan, including adding additional resources to support CSC's compliance with its obligations under the ATIA and PA. This will help to address the backlog, reduce complaints and assist CSC in responding to requests in a timely manner. This plan focuses on four pillars:
  - (1) Our Resources and People;
  - (2) Our Infrastructure;
  - (3) Our Culture and Practices; and
  - (4) Our Results.
- While respecting the independence of both the Office of the Privacy Commissioner and the Office of the Information Commissioner, CSC has forged and continues to nurture a strong relationship with both offices in order to respond to the needs of Canadians and contribute to the open government commitment.

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## Office of the Auditor General

### Systemic Barriers

- On May 31, 2022, the Auditor General tabled their report entitled Systemic Barriers. The audit period was from April 1, 2018, to December 31, 2021. It focusses on whether CSC programs respond to the diversity of the offender population to support their timely, safe, and successful reintegration to the community and includes an examination of policies and practices to promote workplace equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Key findings included, amongst others, that there was a higher rate of placement at higher security levels for Indigenous and Black offenders on admission into custody, there were questions about the reliability of the Custody Rating Scale and that the workforce does not fully reflect diversity of offender population and lack of established timelines to reach its goal of reflecting this diversity.
- All recommendations have been accepted and actions are underway or implemented to address existing barriers. This includes:
  - Creating a new Deputy Commissioner for Indigenous Corrections – Kathy Neil was appointed in May 2023.
  - Ongoing work to develop a culturally appropriate and Indigenous-informed security classification process in collaboration with the University of Regina and Indigenous communities.
  - Collaboration with external experts to examine the validity of the Custody Rating Scale for Indigenous, Black men, and all women offenders to ensure initial placements are at the appropriate security level
  - Implementation of an Anti-Racism Framework and Actions supported by a dedicated team in place to carry out this essential work.
  - Through these actions, we will work to support the timely, safe and successful reintegration of Black and Indigenous offenders to advance reconciliation and build safer communities for all.
  - The House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts is currently preparing a report on the issue. The report is expected to be tabled by Fall 2023.

### **Office of the Correctional Investigator (OCI)**

- The OCI provides independent oversight of CSC. They do this by impartially investigating individual and systemic concerns. The intent is to resolve all complaints received by offenders. The OCI also makes recommendations to CSC on policy and procedures.
- The OCI's Annual Report is tabled in the House of Commons. The report always contains recommendations to which CSC is required to provide specific and detailed responses. The commitments from CSC's responses have an internal monitoring and progress reporting framework. The OCI is regularly updated on CSC's progress in the implementation of its commitments. CSC has implemented over 90% of the commitments put forward in its responses to the OCI's recommendations in the last 10 years.
- The 2021-2022 Annual Report recommendations are centred around several themes: the need to address systemic racism and cultural bias; the overrepresentation of Indigenous, Black, and racialized offenders and the security classification and assessment tools for these populations; and security classifications for women offenders; dry cell placements; the Service's substance use and harm reduction measures, including the Prison Needle Exchange Program and the Overdose Prevention Service; monitoring and reporting on stays within Structured Intervention Units (SIUs); and the Mother-Child program.

## Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime (OFOVC)

- The Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime (OFOVC) is an independent resource for victims in Canada. The Office was created in 2007 to ensure the federal government meets its responsibilities to victims of crime.
- Victims can [contact the Office](#) to learn more about their [rights under federal law](#) and the [services available to them](#), or to [make a complaint](#) about any federal agency or federal legislation dealing with victims of crime.
- In addition to its direct work with victims, the Office also works to ensure that policy makers and other criminal justice personnel are aware of victims' needs and concerns and to identify important issues and trends that may negatively impact victims. Where appropriate, the Ombudsman may also make [recommendations to the federal government](#).
- The OFOVC tables an annual report in Parliament. CSC's National Victim Services Program maintains a strong collaborative relationship with the OFOVC.

## Parliamentary Committees

- CSC supports the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs in meeting their parliamentary responsibilities by:
  - preparing cards for responses on correctional issues during Question Period;
  - preparing responses to written questions, Library of Parliament Requests, Petitions, Adjournment Proceedings (Late Shows) or Senate Delayed Questions from parliamentarians where CSC is implicated; and
  - preparing the Minister to respond to questions on correctional issues when they are called to do so before Parliamentary Committees.
- CSC officials are also regularly called to appear before standing committees of the Senate and the House of Commons as part of any study or review they may undertake where CSC is involved.

**Key Parliamentary Committees** which regularly consider issues relating to CSC are:

- **The House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)** reviews the legislation, policies, programs and expenditure plans of government departments and agencies responsible for public safety and national security, policing and law enforcement, corrections and conditional release of federal offenders, emergency management, crime prevention and the protection of Canada's borders.

Of interest, in the current Parliament a motion was to be introduced which would have the Committee study the recent transfer of a High-Profile Offender.

- **The House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP)** reviews and reports on the Public Accounts of Canada and all reports of the Auditor General of Canada. The Committee also has the general mandate to study and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management and operation of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada.

Earlier this year, the Commissioner appeared before this committee to discuss the Auditor General's report on *Systemic Barriers*.

- **The Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights (RIDR)** deals with issues relating to human rights generally as may be referred to it by the Senate. Within this broad policy field, the Committee focuses on examining, exploring and monitoring issues of human rights.

During the 43rd Parliament, RIDR tabled before Parliament a report entitled the *Fourth Report: Human Rights of Federally-Sentenced Persons* (June 16, 2021). Parliament was dissolved before a Government Response was required. However, the committee has subsequently re-requested a Government Response which is due to the Senate by October 5<sup>th</sup>.



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## 2.9 Ongoing Initiatives

### Organization Culture Audit

- The objective of this audit is to provide reasonable assurance that CSC's actual culture is aligned with its desired culture, while assisting in determining the root cause for why this may not be occurring.
- This audit is an important way to help guide the organization in adopting measures that will help improve the culture and the way the Service works.
- The audit criteria will examine the: Tone from the top; Engagement of Middle Managers; Open Dialogue; Clear Communication; Employee Engagement; and Recognition and Consequences.
- The 2022 Public Service Employee Survey is also an invaluable tool to help identify what CSC is doing well and the areas where improvement is required.
- The audit is substantially completed. Staff input was obtained through a survey (3,413 respondents), 37 focus groups and 115 individual interviews.
- Audit report is planned to be published publicly during the Winter of 2023-24.

### Health Centre of Excellence - Progress

- **March 2018:** The Government of Canada announced that CSC would undertake a study to create a Health Centre of Excellence (HCoE) that will replace the Shepody Healing Centre.
- **August 2018:** A working group comprised of senior officials from National and Atlantic Regional Headquarters conducted an exploratory study, which resulted in a proposal to build a new facility.
- **2020 and 2021:** CSC and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) developed a Request for Proposal (RFP) to start the pre-design phase of the project.
- **Fall 2021:** Contract was awarded for the pre-design phase.
- **May 2022:** CSC Health, Operations, Corporate Services and other affiliated Managers were engaged in a three-day town hall session, "Imagining the Way Forward", to kick off the pre-design phase of the project.
- **July to December 2022:** Many sessions were held to review current issues and identify opportunities for improvement at the new HCoE, including health programs, administration, security, patient programs, Indigenous services, women offenders, facility management, IT and other services (institutional support, maintenance, food services etc.).

- **December 2022:** The Commissioner held a virtual town hall with management in the Atlantic region to provide a progress update.
- **Winter 2023:** Focus group sessions were held to identify Functional Program Space Requirements, specific to health programs, administration, security, patient programs, indigenous services, women offenders, facility management, IT and other services (institutional support, maintenance, food services etc.).
- **Summer/Early Fall 2023:** The site of the HCoE will be selected, the procurement options analysis will be completed the TB submission will be started.
- **Summer 2024:** Predesign phase is scheduled to be completed. As part of this phase, options will be proposed and reviewed for site selection, while zoning and code regulations will be reviewed.
- **Fall 2024:** Design phase (to start following the completion of the pre-design). This phase requires a tender process to retain a design firm. Stakeholder input and reviews are required throughout this phase.
- **Fall 2027:** Construction tendering
- **2028:** Beginning of construction

Construction timelines will be refined based on the selected construction procurement model that will be identified at the end of the pre-design phase.

### **Anti-Racism Framework and Action Plan**

- CSC strives to build a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization, where everyone feels welcomed.
- Racism and discrimination have absolutely no place at CSC and CSC has no tolerance for these behaviours.
- 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.
- CSC has an Anti-Racism Framework and Action Plan in place. It has three pillars: employees, offenders and stakeholders. This includes engagement with these groups.
- One initiative in the plan, for example, is a project to develop Indigenous-informed risk assessment processes and tools, from the group up, in partnership with universities and with Indigenous peoples.
- A dedicated Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Team was created to lead and monitor CSC efforts.
- Anti-racism is a standing agenda item at executive committee meetings to ensure progress and ongoing action.

## Sexual Coercion and Violence

- CSC has a zero-tolerance approach for sexual violence of any kind in our institutions.
- Our fundamental responsibility is to provide safe environments to support inmates in becoming law-abiding citizens.
- As part of our comprehensive approach to responding to incidents of sexual coercion and violence, we promulgated a new, stand-alone policy:
- Commissioner’s Directive (CD) 574 – Sexual Coercion and Violence: Provides clear direction to employees on their role and responsibilities to prevent, identify, respond to, investigate, and monitor incidents and/or allegations of sexual assault towards offenders in federal custody.
- All sexual assaults and/or allegations of sexual assault, must be reported.
- Institutional management has an obligation to ensure that the police are notified immediately regarding any sexual assaults or allegation of sexual assault.
- Working on increasing prevention and awareness through education to prevent these situations from occurring and ensuring inmates know how to come forward if they feel they are being victimized.
- CSC is supporting research to better understand and inform additional measures to address this issue.
- CSC is also developing a tool for parole officers.

## Gender Diverse Offenders

- CSC is committed to ensuring that gender diverse offenders are given the same protections, dignity and rights as other offenders, consistent with the Canadian Human Rights Act.
- We provide education, awareness and guidance to staff and offenders in an effort to ensure that the health, safety and dignity of everyone is respected at all times.
- In May 2022, following extensive consultations, CSC issued a new CD 100 – Gender Diverse Offenders, setting CSC’s official direction. This CD:
  - provides overarching policy direction on procedural changes that reflect CSC’s commitment to meeting the needs of its gender diverse offender population.
  - applies to all staff working directly or indirectly with gender diverse offenders, including contractors and volunteers.
  - outlines the responsibilities of employees and decision-makers to ensure the gender-related needs of offenders are captured and met regardless of the CSC facility where they reside.
  - provides that requests for accommodation are offender-driven and ensures that offenders are involved in the development and review of their accommodation measures throughout their sentence, as needed.

## CORCAN

- CORCAN, as a key rehabilitation program of CSC, aids in the safe reintegration of offenders by providing employment-related interventions and reintegration supports. CORCAN is available to all offenders.
- CORCAN provides the opportunity for offenders to develop employment skills through vocational and on-the-job skills training in five business lines (Manufacturing, Textiles, Construction, Services, and Agriculture) during their incarceration. In addition, vocational training is offered with third party certification across a larger scope of occupations.
- Research demonstrates that offenders who participate in CORCAN employment and employability programs are more likely to find employment in the community, as well as offenders that are employed in the community are less likely to reoffend or return to federal custody.

### *Progress*

- In 2022-23, on-the-job training opportunities at federal correctional institutions were offered through employment assignments to 14,334 offenders, including 2,628 offenders participating in CORCAN on-the-job employment assignments.
- CORCAN Community Industries offered on-the-job and vocational training through transitional employment at seven locations across the country.
- 16, 412 vocational training certificates earned throughout the 2022-2023 fiscal year, including:
  - 9, 618 for non-Indigenous male offenders
  - 1, 085 for non-Indigenous female offenders
  - 4, 764for Indigenous men
  - 945 for Indigenous women.

## **Infrastructure**

- CSC continues to modernize its physical infrastructure.
- CSC has undertaken the development of a Real Property Portfolio Strategy to identify short, medium, and long-term strategies to work towards the optimization of its portfolio. The Real Property Portfolio Strategy will ensure enhanced stewardship of Correctional Service Canada facilities to meet its mandate.
- CSC has prepared its Accommodation Plan 2020-2025 which will help define its accommodation needs and guide future investment decisions for its owned facilities.
- Structured Intervention Units at designated men's institutions and all five women's regional institutions opened as scheduled on November 30, 2019. The Structured Intervention Unit model intends to be a fundamental shift in correctional interventions for inmates who cannot be maintained in the mainstream population for security or other reasons.
- CSC will be implementing a strategy starting in 2023 to reduce suspension points within offender cells at maximum, medium and multi-level security levels to significantly reduce the risk of suicide attempts.

## **Contraband Prevention – Body Scanners and Drones**

- CSC recognizes the importance of keeping contraband out of institutions.
- CSC relies on staff professionalism and attentiveness, in combination with detection equipment, search practices and a variety of approved techniques to prevent the entry of drugs and contraband.
- CSC uses a number of tools and strategies to prevent contraband from entering its institutions. These include intelligence gathering and analysis, searches of offenders, staff, visitors, cells, vehicles and other areas, as well as various search tools.
- CSC also works closely with local police agencies and communities to stop contraband and unauthorized items from entering its institutions.

### *Body Scanners*

- In July 2022, body scanners were deployed at Edmonton Institution for Women and Bath Institution as part of a pilot program to further supplement current contraband detection methods.
- As a condition of this pilot, inmates must voluntarily consent to a body scan.
- A tender process is underway and we anticipate awarding the contract to the successful vendor in Summer 2024.

### **Digital Initiatives**

- CSC is modernizing its education programs and increasing offenders' access to digital education and computer-based learning. In 2020, CSC launched the Digital Education Project (DEP) pilot in the Ontario Region. The pilot was first launched at Bath Institution and has since expanded to most minimum and medium institutions within the Ontario Region, and to Dorchester Institution in the Atlantic Region.
- The pilot provides an opportunity for CSC to innovate in the area of computer-assisted learning in a controlled manner and offers opportunities for offenders to gain foundational computer skills needed for increasing literacy levels. Educational content is delivered and managed through a digital Learning Management System, which enables offenders to complete courses through restricted internet access.

### *Virtual Correctional Program Delivery*

- CSC is exploring ways to establish a sustainable approach to deliver correctional programs to offenders using virtual formats. In 2021, CSC implemented the virtual correctional program delivery pilot in several regions across the country. CSC continues to monitor the results of the pilot to assess the technological requirements and limitations of virtual delivery in the institutions and in the community.

### *Video Visits*

- Inmates at all CSC institutions have had access to visits through live video on an institutional computer since January 2018.
- Video visitation provides inmates with another technology-based method to communicate with their community supports, which contributes positively to their successful rehabilitation and reintegration.
- It was implemented as a result of recommendations by the Correctional Investigator to provide inmates with the opportunity to enhance family and community ties when in-person visitation is difficult or not possible.
- It is also part of the continuous modernization of program and service delivery for offenders. CSC has observed a steady increase in the number of video visits since its introduction.



## Harm Reduction

- One of the CSC's top priorities is ensuring that incarcerated offenders have access to quality, safe, patient-centred health care.
- CSC is legislatively mandated, under the CCRA, to provide essential health care and reasonable access to non-essential health care.
- CSC provides primary care, including mental health care, in all 43 institutions, and psychiatric inpatient care in five treatment centres for men, and one treatment centre for women.
- Canadians across the country have been impacted by the tragic and ongoing opioids crisis, and those living within our federal institutions are no exception.
- Consistent with the Government of Canada's Canadian Drugs and Substance Strategy and recommendations by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Correctional Service of Canada has adopted a treatment and harm reduction approach aligned with community standards that treats problematic substance use as a health issue.
- CSC has a number of harm reduction measures to better support those living with problematic substance use.
- This includes the Opioid Agonist Treatment, the expansion of the Prison Needle Exchange Program, and the establishment of the world's only prison-based Overdose Prevention Service sites.
- Problematic substance use is first-and-foremost a health issue, and we continue to work to break down stigma, while providing effective and appropriate treatments.
- CSC's provision of these services continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts have resumed to continue the implementation of Prison Needle Exchange Program and Overdose Prevention Service at additional sites across the country.

### Medical Assistance in Dying

- One of CSC's top priorities is ensuring that those who are incarcerated in Canada's federal institutions have access to quality, safe, patient-centred and culturally-responsive care. This is underscored by CSC's legislative mandate and the CCRA, which includes providing essential health care and reasonable access to non-essential health care to federal inmates, in keeping with professional standards.
- As part of this, CSC is responsive to the needs of offenders, including quality and compassionate palliative and end of life care.
- Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) is a complex and deeply personal matter and CSC ensures a robust and compassionate process for those who may wish to access these services. Once an individual makes such a request, a physician or nurse practitioner will meet with them to discuss relevant information, offer referrals to support services (such as mental health professionals, Chaplains, Elders, etc.), and schedule the individual for an eligibility assessment.
- It should be noted that CSC's guidelines require that an external Physician or Nurse Practitioner perform an eligibility assessment, and that the procedure be completed externally to CSC, namely, in a community hospital or health care facility, other than in exceptional circumstances.

## Offender Management System Modernization

- The Offender Management System (OMS) is used to manage information about offenders under CSC's care. Staff at all levels of the organization use it daily. It supports the Parole Board of Canada and is used to share offender information electronically with other stakeholders such as the Canadian Police Information Centre, Passport Canada, and Infopol. Data is also shared with non-governmental organizations and individuals that provide services such as Community-Based Residential Facilities, community supervision, and employment services.
- The OMS Modernization (OMS-M) project plans to replace it with a new software platform. Replacing the current OMS provides CSC with an opportunity to advance and modernize corrections with advances in information technology.
- A new OMS will enhance case management approach that will allow staff to collaborate and share data that inform risk assessments, receive updates on an offender more effectively, and to develop a common view of an offender case file across institutions and throughout an offender's sentence.
- Data captured by OMS is a critical, strategic asset needed to conduct reviews, support strategic planning, enable research on CSC policies, procedures and guidelines, and support Audit and Evaluation functions.
- CSC will target the following three outcomes through OMS-M:
  - Increased efficiency in the delivery of offender management services;
  - Improved effectiveness in processing and managing offenders; and,
  - Enhance flexibility to meet evolving legislative needs and stakeholder demands.
- Following the successful completion of a prototype contract issued in September 2022, Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), on behalf of CSC, has exercised a five-year contract option with Abilis Solutions for the implementation of a modernized OMS solution.