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CANADA

REPORT 6, COMMUNITY SUPERVISION —CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA, OF THE 2018 FALL REPORTS OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Honourable Kevin Sorenson, Chair

**APRIL 2019
42nd PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION**

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NOTICE TO READER

Reports from committee presented to the House of Commons

Presenting a report to the House is the way a committee makes public its findings and recommendations on a particular topic. Substantive reports on a subject-matter study usually contain a synopsis of the testimony heard, the recommendations made by the committee, as well as the reasons for those recommendations.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

has the honour to present its

SIXTY-SECOND REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(3)(g), the Committee has studied Report 6, Community Supervision—Correctional Service Canada, of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada and has agreed to report the following:



REPORT 6, COMMUNITY SUPERVISION— CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA, OF THE 2018 FALL REPORTS OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

BACKGROUND

Purpose of the Audit

In the fall of 2018, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) released a performance audit whose aim was to determine whether Correctional Service Canada (CSC) “adequately supervised offenders in the community, and accommodated them when required, to support their return to society as law-abiding citizens.”¹ However, the audit did not examine “activities for offenders on long-term supervision orders that were conducted after the offenders’ sentences ended” or “the Parole Board of Canada’s activities.”²

Correctional Service Canada

According to the OAG, CSC “is the federal government agency that administers adult offenders’ sentences of two years or more, as imposed by the courts.... nearly all [offenders] serve a portion of their sentences under supervision in the community.”³ As such, CSC “manages federal correctional institutions, parole offices, and community correctional centres” and supervises “all offenders under various forms of community release.”⁴

1 Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG), [Community Supervision—Correctional Service Canada](#), Report 6 of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, para. 6.6.

2 Ibid., para. 6.8.

3 Ibid., para. 6.1.

4 Ibid., para. 6.2.



Definitions

Of the 9,100 federal offenders on release in March 2018, 2,800 required supervised housing, and were subject to the following types of release:⁵

- **“Day parole:** A conditional release that allows offenders to participate in community activities, with a nightly return to a residential facility.
- **Full parole:** A conditional release that allows offenders to serve the remainder of their sentences in locations of their choice in the community.
- **Statutory release:** A release required by law. Most offenders, except those serving a life or indeterminate sentence, must be released with supervision after serving two thirds of their sentences, if parole was not already granted.
- **Long-term supervision order:** Orders imposed on a very small number of offenders who present a high risk of reoffending even after their sentences end.”⁶

Furthermore, there are two categories of community-based residential facility:

- **“Community residential facilities** are owned by non-governmental agencies and provide special housing, counselling, and supervision to offenders;
- **Community correctional centres** are operated by [CSC]. They are designed for offenders on release who need a high degree of structure or who have complex needs.”⁷

These facilities sometimes lack adequate space, and offenders approved for conditional release “may wait for space that suits their needs, risk, and desired location to become available, or may agree to be released to a facility in a different location.”⁸

5 Ibid., para. 6.14.

6 Ibid., see Definitions.

7 Ibid., para. 6.15.

8 Ibid., para. 6.16.

Supervision of Offenders

CSC “advises the Parole Board of Canada whether an offender’s risk can be managed in the community,” and may develop “an offender’s release plan” and “recommend special conditions, such as a residency requirement.”⁹ According to CSC data, “the first year after release is when offenders are most likely to reoffend or breach a condition of their release.”¹⁰

The OAG noted that the “number of offenders in the community increased by 17% between the 2013-14 and 2017-18 fiscal years. During this same period, the overall offender population remained stable,” however, the number of “offenders under community supervision is expected to keep rising.”¹¹ In 2017-2018, CSC “spent \$160 million, or 6% of its overall spending, on the community supervision program.”¹²

Access to Health Care

CSC “must facilitate offenders’ continued access to health care as they transition from a correctional institution to the community.”¹³ Offenders therefore require health cards, but “CSC does not pay for offenders to renew or replace health cards.”¹⁴ In exceptional cases, CSC “has committed to providing essential health services to address gaps or delays in provincial health service coverage.”¹⁵

Data on the Results of the Supervision Program

According to the OAG, CSC “compiles performance measurement data on its community supervision program and reports the results both internally and externally;” for example, “the reconviction rate is a key measure for assessing CSC’s performance.”¹⁶

9 Ibid., para. 6.42.

10 Ibid., para. 6.43.

11 Ibid., para. 6.4.

12 Ibid., para. 6.5.

13 Ibid., para. 6.53.

14 Ibid., para. 6.54.

15 Ibid., para. 6.55.

16 Ibid., paras. 6.65 and 6.66.



Hearing

On 19 February 2019, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts (the Committee) held a hearing on this audit. In attendance, from the OAG were Andrew Hayes, Deputy Auditor General and Nicholas Swales, Principal. From CSC were Anne Kelly, Commissioner; Alain Tousignant, Senior Deputy Commissioner; Larry Motiuk, Assistant Commissioner, Policy; and, Jennifer Wheatley, Assistant Commissioner.¹⁷

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing in the Community

Available Housing for Offenders

The OAG found that “the number of offenders requiring community-based residential facilities rose by 21% over the five-year period from the 2013-14 fiscal year to the 2017-18 fiscal year” and that “CSC did not increase the number of housing spaces to keep pace with demand.”¹⁸ An internal review released by CSC in January 2017 “observed that spaces for male offenders in community residential facilities were at 85% capacity, with some geographic areas at full or almost full capacity.”¹⁹

As a result, some community correctional centres (which normally receive offenders with more complex needs) were required to receive offenders who had been refused by community residential facilities, which meant that offenders with different needs were housed together. According to the OAG, CSC “was running out of the space it needed to effectively accommodate offenders in the community.”²⁰

Wait Times for Housing

The OAG found that CSC “did not know the amount of time that offenders had to wait in correctional institutions for available housing in the community.”²¹ However, the OAG

17 House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 19 February 2019, [Meeting No. 127](#).

18 OAG, [Community Supervision—Correctional Service Canada](#), Report 6 of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, paras. 6.24 and 6.25.

19 *Ibid.*, para. 6.25.

20 *Ibid.*, para. 6.28.

21 *Ibid.*, para. 6.29.

was able to determine that “the average wait time for a day parole offender to be released into the community in the 2014-15 fiscal year was 13 days, with a range of 0 to 105 days. In the 2017-18 fiscal year, the average wait time increased to 24 days, with a range of 0 to 264 days.”²²

The OAG also noted that “[offenders] released at their statutory release date with a residency condition are prioritized for housing,” because CSC is obliged by law to “provide them with a placement in the community by their release dates.” Consequently, “lower-risk offenders who are granted day parole and have a higher chance of successfully reintegrating as law-abiding citizens are the group most affected by the lack of housing available in the community.”²³

Data to Measure Offender Displacement

As reported by the Auditor General to the Committee, the issue of inadequate data collection and use is a persistent problem facing federal organizations. Given the significance of sound data in the delivery and accurate assessment of program effectiveness, the Committee has made this issue one of its core priorities.

Again, regarding data, the OAG found that CSC “did not maintain data on how many offenders were not placed in their requested communities,” or on the reasons for this or the types of specialized housing that offenders needed in community-based residential facilities. Moreover, CSC-operated community correctional centres “were distributed unevenly across the country. This likely resulted in offenders with complex needs being released to locations far from their requested communities and from the supports they needed for reintegration.”²⁴

Plans to Meet Demand for Housing

The OAG observed that in 2017, CSC had forecasted that within 10 years, “the number of offenders requiring community-based residential facilities would increase by another 13% across Canada,” with an increase of 32% in Ontario. Because it can take two years “from site selection with a community partner to the time the first offender is

22 Ibid., para. 6.31.

23 Ibid., para. 6.30.

24 Ibid., para. 6.33.



placed at a new facility,” this forecast “meant that housing shortages were likely to worsen.”²⁵

Finally, despite “capacity pressures, growing demand, and lengthening wait times, CSC did not take a proactive, long-term approach to address its housing shortages.”²⁶

The OAG therefore recommended that CSC should “take a proactive, long-term approach to accommodation in community-based residential facilities. It should ensure that its accommodation space is of the right type, in the right location, and available at the right time.”²⁷

According to its Management Action Plan, CSC stated its agreement with the recommendation and committed to the creation of a “multi-year national community accommodation monitoring approach, to be updated regularly by National Headquarters,” as well as the “Implementation of the Offender Accommodation Management (OAG) solution,” which is expected to “provide a comprehensive Correctional Operations solution for both bed-inventory management and the matching of offenders to community facilities, including [the] tracking of refusals and waitlists.”²⁸

When questioned about this matter, Anne Kelly, Commissioner, responded as follows:

[A] great deal of work is being carried out at the local and regional level to increase the number of beds available in the community. The district directors are working very hard in their regions. They know the offenders and they know what type of beds the offenders need.

However, there was no national plan. I fully agree with the Auditor General on this point. We need to know what's happening across the country. In addition, if something in the regions is blocking the increase in the number of beds, we can help the regions at the national level. This makes a great deal of sense to us. We're working with this in mind.²⁹

Therefore, the Committee recommends:

25 Ibid., para. 6.35.

26 Ibid., para. 6.37.

27 Ibid., para. 6.38.

28 Correctional Service Canada, [Management Action Plan](#), pp. 1-2.

29 House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 19 February 2019, [Meeting No. 127](#), 0940.

Recommendation 1—On a plan for housing in the community

That, by 31 December 2019, *Correctional Service Canada* present the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report outlining the progress made regarding its new multi-year national community accommodation monitoring approach and the Offender Accommodation Management solution. Additionally, that a final report be presented by 30 April 2020.

Supervision of Offenders

The OAG used representative sampling to examine “the case management files of 50 offenders to review the parole officers’ monitoring activities for the first year after the offenders were released to the community.”³⁰

The OAG “found that parole officers did not always meet with offenders in accordance with Correctional Service Canada’s (CSC) standards for supervising offenders in the community.”³¹ In nearly 40% of the cases examined, the parole officers did not meet with the offenders, or met with them too frequently over a short period, or did not monitor their compliance with their conditions of release. Similar deficiencies were noted in a 2010 CSC internal audit.³²

Thus, the OAG recommended that “Correctional Service Canada should ensure that parole officers monitor offenders at least as often as its standards require and monitor the special conditions imposed by the Parole Board of Canada.”³³

According to its action plan, CSC committed to developing a performance indicator to monitor frequency of contact, as well as to amending Commissioner’s Directive 715 to:

- add a responsibility to the District Director to monitor, on a monthly basis, the compliance with the frequency of contacts and the special conditions;

30 OAG, [Community Supervision—Correctional Service Canada](#), Report 6 of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, para. 6.45.

31 Ibid., para. 6.46.

32 Ibid., paras. 6.47 and 6.48.

33 Ibid., para. 6.49.



- provide clarification of frequency of contact requirements for offenders who reside in a Community-Based Residential Facility; and
- strengthen the requirements to document the monitoring of special conditions, and the need to further document when exceptions to the frequency of contact requirements are warranted, or when requirements are not met.³⁴

In response to questions about the monitoring of offenders, the Commissioner provided the following:

We accept the Auditor General's findings and recommendations. As I said before, in some cases, it's a question of documentation. In other cases, again on the frequency of contact, if the frequency changes during the month and it's not properly documented, unfortunately the Auditor General will be looking for four contacts a month when actually there are two that are required.

As a result, we're amending our policy. We've added a responsibility to the district directors to monitor compliance with the frequency of contact.³⁵

Therefore, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 2—On the timely and complete supervision of offenders

That, by 31 December 2019, *Correctional Service Canada* present the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report outlining the progress made with regard to A) ensuring that parole officers monitor offenders at least as often as its standards require; and B) monitoring the special conditions imposed by the Parole Board of Canada. Additionally, that a final report be presented by 30 April 2020.

Offenders' Access to Health Care

Sharing Health Information Within Correctional Service Canada

In almost all of the 50 cases examined by the OAG, “the release plan included some health information” about the offender. However, in only five cases was all of the required health care information provided, and in only one case was the health information shared four months in advance of the offender’s hearing for release, as

34 Correctional Service Canada, [Management Action Plan](#), p. 3.

35 House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 19 February 2019, [Meeting No. 127](#), 0915.

required by internal policy.³⁶ As a result, “parole officers developed release plans without being fully aware of offenders’ health care needs.”³⁷

The OAG therefore recommended that CSC “should ensure that it shares all relevant health care information with the parole officers responsible for preparing the release plan and for monitoring progress against that plan, and that it does so in a timely manner.”³⁸

According to its action plan, CSC stated that it will

- Conduct a review of the policy pertaining to the sharing of health information with parole officers;
- Conduct periodic reviews of case management files to ensure that relevant health information [is] shared in accordance with policy; and
- Initiate a quality improvement project that examines the comprehensiveness of the information shared and whether the information [is] appropriately integrated into the community strategy.³⁹

On this matter, Jennifer Wheatley, Assistant Commissioner, explained as follows:

Any risk-related or management information that needs to be shared with the parole officers to manage and supervise the offender safely in the community is then shared prior to release, from health to operations. As the commissioner mentioned, we're reviewing that process, because we know information sharing is happening, but it's sometimes happening outside of the process, so we're reviewing the process to make sure the documentation is appropriate.⁴⁰

Consequently, the Committee recommends:

36 OAG, [Community Supervision—Correctional Service Canada](#), Report 6 of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, para. 6.59.

37 *Ibid.*, para. 6.60.

38 *Ibid.*, para. 6.61.

39 Correctional Service Canada, [Management Action Plan](#), p. 4.

40 House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 19 February 2019, [Meeting No. 127](#), 1010.



Recommendation 3—On health care information

That, by 30 June 2020, *Correctional Service Canada* present the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report outlining its progress with regard to sharing all relevant health care information with the parole officers responsible for preparing the release plan, and for monitoring progress against that plan, in a timely manner.

Health Cards

Of the 50 offenders whose files were examined by the OAG, 18 “did not have health cards at release. For 6 of these offenders, provincial rules did not allow health cards to be issued until the offenders left the correctional institution.” However, according to the OAG, “CSC did not meet its responsibility to ensure continued access to health services when it released the other 12 offenders without health cards.”⁴¹

Thus, the OAG recommended that CSC “should assist offenders in obtaining health cards before they are released to the community. In provinces or territories where health cards cannot be obtained by persons who are incarcerated, Correctional Service Canada should work with offenders to obtain health cards once they are released.”⁴²

In its action plan, CSC committed to amending Commissioner’s Directives 712 and 715 to introduce new responsibilities for both the institutional and community parole officers, respectively, to assist inmates in obtaining required pieces of identification. Furthermore, the Offender Management System will be modified to allow parole officers to document the actions taken to assist the offender in obtaining appropriate pieces of identification, including their health card.⁴³

When questioned about this matter, Jennifer Wheatley explained that the requirement and process for acquiring health cards (and, in turn, health care) can vary depending upon the jurisdiction in question:

Like a lot of things in Canada, it depends on the province. Some provinces will reinstate health care immediately upon release if you were in that province prior to being incarcerated. If you are released to a province you weren't residing in before, some provinces will do the three-month coverage and other provinces won't. It's province by

41 OAG, [Community Supervision—Correctional Service Canada](#), Report 6 of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, para. 6.63.

42 Ibid., para. 6.64.

43 Correctional Service Canada, [Management Action Plan](#), pp. 5-6.

province. We're tracking the barriers to accessing both the health card and the services on a province by province level.⁴⁴

Therefore, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 4—On health cards

That, by 31 July 2019, *Correctional Service Canada* present the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report outlining how it has improved A) assisting offenders in obtaining health cards before they are released to the community; and B) assisting offenders in provinces or territories where health cards cannot be obtained by persons who are incarcerated, once they are released.

Measurement of Results

The OAG found that CSC “publicly reported several performance measures for its community supervision program,” but that “few of them measured CSC’s success against its mandate to successfully reintegrate offenders into society as law-abiding citizens.”⁴⁵

For example, these measures “did not include data on offences requiring incarceration in provincial or territorial facilities.” CSC officials explained to the OAG that “such data on convictions was excluded because it was difficult to gather.” The OAG noted, however, “that information about convictions was available to the public.”⁴⁶

The OAG therefore recommended that CSC “should broaden its measures of the successful reintegration of federal offenders as law-abiding citizens after they complete their sentences to better reflect its mandate.”⁴⁷

According to its action plan, CSC intends to:

- actively support the Department of Public Safety in its efforts to develop recidivism measures which incorporate adult reconviction information from federal, provincial, and territorial jurisdictions.

44 House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 19 February 2019, [Meeting No. 127](#), 1025.

45 OAG, [Community Supervision—Correctional Service Canada](#), Report 6 of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, para. 6.72.

46 *Ibid.*, para. 6.74.

47 *Ibid.*, para. 6.77.



- (in collaboration with Public Safety) continue to explore research that examines broader measures of offender reintegration (including employment, income, and health outcomes) using the Statistics Canada Data Linkage Environment.⁴⁸

In response to questions about this matter, the Commissioner admitted to these deficiencies and further explained the planned collaborations to help address them:

At this point, it's true. Once offenders have completed their sentences, we don't follow them up. However, we are working with both Public Safety Canada and [Statistics Canada] to look at an automated way of capturing that data. We do routine studies as well. With the social data linkage project with [Statistics Canada], we hope to be able to cover both post-release employment and income as well as health outcomes and also, obviously, readmissions to both province and territories.⁴⁹

Again, given the importance this Committee places on sound data collection and use, it thus recommends:

Recommendation 5—On the measurement of results

That, by 31 December 2019, *Correctional Service Canada* present the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report outlining its progress with regard to measuring the successful reintegration of federal offenders as law-abiding citizens after they complete their sentences to better reflect its mandate.

CONCLUSION

The Committee concludes that Correctional Service Canada did not provide enough community housing to offenders in the proper right locations, nor did it properly supervise offenders in the community to ensure their successful reintegration as law-abiding citizens. Therefore, the Committee has made five recommendations for the Correctional Service of Canada to make sure that the return of offenders to society leads to better public safety outcomes.

48 Correctional Service Canada, [Management Action Plan](#), p. 7.

49 House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 19 February 2019, [Meeting No. 127](#), 0910.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED DEADLINES

Table 1—Summary of Recommendations and Deadlines

Recommendation	Recommended action	Deadline
Recommendation 1	<i>Correctional Service Canada</i> should present the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report outlining the progress made regarding its new multi-year national community accommodation monitoring approach and the Offender Accommodation Management solution. Additionally, a final report should be presented.	31 December 2019 and 30 April 2020
Recommendation 2	CSC should present the Committee with a report outlining the progress made regarding A) ensuring that parole officers monitor offenders at least as often as its standards require; and B) monitoring the special conditions imposed by the Parole Board of Canada. Additionally, a final report should be presented.	31 December 2019 and 30 April 2020
Recommendation 3	CSC should present the Committee with a report outlining its progress with regard to sharing all relevant health care information with the parole officers responsible for preparing the release plan, and for monitoring progress against that plan, in a timely manner.	30 June 2020



Recommendation	Recommended action	Deadline
Recommendation 4	CSC should present the Committee with a report outlining how it has improved A) assisting offenders in obtaining health cards before they are released to the community; and B) assisting offenders in provinces or territories where health cards cannot be obtained by persons who are incarcerated, once they are released.	31 July 2019
Recommendation 5	CSC should present the Committee with a report outlining its progress with regard to measuring the successful reintegration of federal offenders as law-abiding citizens after they complete their sentences to better reflect its mandate.	31 December 2019

APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

The following table lists the witnesses who appeared before the Committee at its meetings related to this report. Transcripts of all public meetings related to this report are available on the Committee's [webpage for this study](#).

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Office of the Auditor General	2019/02/19	127
Andrew Hayes, Deputy Auditor General		
Nicholas Swales, Principal		
Correctional Service of Canada		
Anne Kelly, Commissioner		
Alain Tousignant, Senior Deputy Commissioner		
Larry Motiuk, Assistant Commissioner, Policy		
Jennifer Wheatley, Assistant Commissioner, Health Services		

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 127 and 131](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Kevin Sorenson, P.C., M.P.
Chair

