

Chapter 28

Justice—Community Rehabilitation of Adult Offenders Follow Up

1.0 MAIN POINTS

We followed up the Ministry of Justice's (Ministry) actions on the seven recommendations we made in 2011 about rehabilitating adult offenders serving a community sentence. We had audited the delivery of the Ministry's processes in the Regina Qu'Appelle Region (Region) to rehabilitate adult offenders likely to repeat crimes, including serious violent crimes.

Following the audit, the Ministry worked with a consultant to help it determine how to meet our recommendations. The Ministry also reviewed processes in two of its other regions to help it assess the impact changes to its processes would have across the province.

We found the Ministry has made progress, but still has more work to do on all seven recommendations. The Ministry continues to work on consistently following its case management policies, including completion of timely risk assessments and integrated case plans,¹ having sufficient contact with offenders, and preparing regular progress reports for offenders. The Ministry needs to do more work to select and evaluate rehabilitation services provided by other agencies, monitor access to priority community rehabilitation programs, and evaluate the effectiveness of its rehabilitation programs.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Justice (Ministry) carries out its corrections services under *The Correctional Services Act* and *The Correctional Services Administration, Discipline and Security Regulations, 2003*. The Ministry's mission states that the Ministry promotes safe and secure communities.² Its responsibilities include delivering programs for individuals in conflict with the law. The Ministry uses a variety of programs and services to rehabilitate offenders in correctional centres and in the community.

Effective May 25, 2012, the responsibilities of corrections and policing in Saskatchewan became part of the Ministry of Justice.

In 2011-12, the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing spent approximately \$14 million on adult community operations.³ In 2013-14, the Ministry of Justice is budgeted to spend \$34 million on community corrections for youth and adult offenders.⁴ The Ministry has seven regions.

¹ A documented strategy for managing the offender throughout the court ordered disposition(s). Source: Ministry's Integrated Case Management Policy.

² Ministry of Justice Plan for 2013-14, p. 3.

³ Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, *11-12 Annual Report*, p. 28.

⁴ Ministry of Justice, *13-14 Estimates*, p. 103.



3.0 COMMUNITY REHABILITATION OF ADULT OFFENDERS– FOLLOW UP

In 2011, we assessed the Ministry's processes to rehabilitate adult offenders in the community. Our *2011 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 3, concluded that during 2010, the Ministry had adequate processes to rehabilitate adult offenders likely to repeat crimes (including serious or violent crimes) who were serving a community sentence in the Regina Qu'Appelle Region with the following exceptions:

- ▮ Policies were not consistently followed for the timely completion of risk assessments and integrated case management plans, for providing sufficient contact between high-risk adult offenders and probation officers or alternates, and for preparing of regular progress reports on adult offenders
- ▮ Management did not monitor whether high-risk adult offenders had timely access to priority community rehabilitation programs
- ▮ A policy was not in place to evaluate rehabilitation programs for high-risk adult offenders
- ▮ Criteria were not in place to select rehabilitation services provided by other agencies and to evaluate whether high-risk adult offenders benefit from these services

We made seven recommendations.

To conduct this review, we followed the *Standards for Assurance Engagements* published in the *CICA Handbook – Assurance*. To evaluate the Ministry's progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. Management agreed with the criteria in the original audit. We based our findings on our examination of the Ministry's policies, procedures, and management reports.

4.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out the recommendations and the Ministry's actions up to December 31, 2012.

4.1 Increasing Use of Relevant Rehabilitation Strategies

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) consistently follow its policy requiring risk assessments and case plans for adult offenders to be completed within six weeks of starting community sentences. (2011 Report – Volume 1)

Status – Not Implemented

The Ministry continues to struggle with completing timely risk assessments and case planning for adult offenders serving a community sentence. We found that the six-week requirement for completing risk assessments and case planning is not often met in the Region.

Since our 2011 audit, the Ministry has made some revisions to clarify its policies and completed its own reviews of its operations across the province to determine an overall strategy for meeting our recommendations and improving its community operations.

After the completion of our audit in 2011, the Ministry worked with a consultant to help determine how to meet our past recommendations and improve its community rehabilitation operations. The consultant's report highlighted that the Ministry has made significant progress towards evidenced-based practice. It also indicated that risk assessment and case planning are not occurring on a timely basis. It recommended improvements to the Ministry's rehabilitation processes, including areas such as setting clear direction for community operations, application of case management practices, human resources and training, supervision and quality assurance, working with provincial corrections institutions and partners, enhancing management information systems, and program evaluation. The Ministry is reviewing these recommendations to help it assess what changes it will make to its operations.

During 2012-13, the Ministry also completed its own reviews of offender files in two of its other regions. The Ministry's reviews found risk assessments and case plans often did not meet the Ministry's standards for timeliness, which is consistent with the results of our follow up work. However, the Ministry's work also showed that proper application of its rehabilitation practices leads to positive outcomes such as reduced recidivism rates (i.e., rate than an offender repeats crimes). The Ministry's reviews found that one of the other two regions reviewed followed many of the Ministry's evidence-based rehabilitation practices. This region also had lower recidivism rates than the other region reviewed and the provincial average, which provides some evidence to support the Ministry's overall strategy for rehabilitation.

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) consistently follow its policy to use integrated case plans for adult offenders that coordinate rehabilitation strategies between the community and provincial correctional centres. (2011 Report – Volume 1)

Status – Not Implemented

The Region continues to use different case plans than the provincial correctional centres. Case plans to be used for community rehabilitation sentences are developed at the start of the community sentences. As a result, integrated case plans are not used to coordinate rehabilitation strategies between the community and the provincial correctional centres. The consultant's report also made recommendations about the need to better coordinate the efforts of community and provincial correctional centres. The Ministry advised us that it is developing a standard format for case plans that will be used in both provincial correctional centres and the community to facilitate integrated case planning.



We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) consistently follow its supervision policy for high-risk adult offenders in the community to have required contacts with probation officers or alternates. (2011 Report – Volume 1)

Status – Not Implemented

Supervisors and management monitor the amount of contact between the probation officers and offenders. The amount of contact was not sufficient to meet the Ministry's supervision policy. This was consistent with the Ministry's reviews of files at two other regions this year. The consultant's report also made recommendations about adequate contact with offenders.

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) use criteria to select rehabilitation services provided by other agencies and evaluate if high-risk adult offenders in the community benefit from these services. (2011 Report – Volume 1)

Status – Not Implemented

The Ministry has not developed a policy or other guidance for selecting or evaluating rehabilitation services provided by other agencies. The Ministry also has not performed evaluations to determine if high-risk adult offenders in the community benefit from these services. The consultant's report made several recommendations around program evaluation and working with partners.

4.2 Working to Deliver Rehabilitation at the Right Time

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) monitor whether high-risk adult offenders have timely access to priority community rehabilitation programs. (2011 Report – Volume 1)

Status – Not Implemented

The Ministry does not monitor whether high-risk adult offenders have timely access to priority community rehabilitation programs. The Ministry continues to monitor the number of offenders who complete a program. It did not analyze the capacity of the program compared to the need for the program to determine if additional programming is required to meet offender needs. The consultant's report also indicated a need to develop sufficient program capacity including working with partners. The Ministry is

working to create reports that will assist decision-making using information collected in an automated tracking system.

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) consistently follow its case management policy to prepare regular progress reports on adult offenders in the community.

(2011 Report – Volume 1)

Status – Not Implemented

We found progress reports were not always completed as frequently as required by the Ministry's policies. This is consistent with the Ministry's review in two other regions. The consultant's report recommended reassessments of risk should be completed whenever there is a significant change in the offender's circumstances. Such reassessments should then be used to update the offender's progress and rehabilitation plan by completing progress reports.

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) establish a policy to evaluate rehabilitation programs for high-risk adult offenders in the community. (2011 Report – Volume 1)

Status – Not Implemented

The Ministry continued to review programs prior to adoption. The Ministry did not have a process to carry out further program evaluations once they were adopted (i.e., periodic revalidation). As described in **Section 4.1**, the Ministry's review of files in one region found lower recidivism rates than in the rest of the province, supporting effectiveness of the Ministry's strategies and programs. While this is positive feedback for the Ministry, further work is needed to assess the effectiveness of individual programs. The consultant's report included recommendations to improve program evaluation and certain programs.