

Chapter 30

Corrections and Policing – Rehabilitating Adult Inmates

1.0 MAIN POINTS

By October 2018, the Ministry made little progress towards implementing the three remaining recommendations we first made in our 2008 audit regarding rehabilitating adult inmates.

The Ministry did not effectively monitor the proportion of inmates accessing planned rehabilitation programs, or the re-offence rates in relation to rehabilitation programs. The Ministry also did not consistently follow its policy surrounding assessment of inmates' needs, and did not always provide inmates with relevant rehabilitation programs consistent with those assessments. For almost one-quarter of the inmate case files we tested, correctional facilities did not provide inmates with relevant rehabilitation programming before their release into the community.

At October 2018, the Ministry was evaluating changes to its risk assessment and case management processes, with a goal towards improving how it addresses inmates' needs.

Research indicates that inmates receiving treatment in rehabilitation programs have lower re-offending rates than offenders who do not receive treatment.¹ Rehabilitated inmates have more opportunities to return to work and contribute to their community.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Under *The Correctional Services Act, 2012*, the Ministry of Corrections and Policing is responsible for providing correctional services and programs, including the rehabilitation of inmates.

The Ministry, through its Custody, Supervision and Rehabilitation Services Division, designs and provides programs aimed at reducing reoffending and improving the ability of offenders to reintegrate into their communities.² Before releasing inmates into the community, the Ministry must address the needs of inmates to reduce the risk of danger to the public.

This chapter describes our fourth follow-up of the Ministry's actions on recommendations we first made in 2008. In our *2008 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 2, we identified areas where the Ministry could improve its processes to rehabilitate adult inmates in provincial corrections centres. We made four recommendations. In our three subsequent follow-ups of the Ministry's actions on these recommendations, we found the Ministry had implemented one of the four recommendations by March 31, 2010 (the time of our first follow-up) and has made little progress since.

To conduct this audit engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance (CSAE 3001)*. To evaluate the Ministry's progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria

¹ www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/prnpls-rhbltn/index-en.aspx (9 October 2018).

² Ministry of Corrections and Policing, *Annual Report for 2017-18*, p. 5.



from the original audit. The Ministry's management agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

In this follow-up audit, we interviewed staff responsible for the rehabilitation of adult inmates. To test key aspects of the rehabilitation processes, we reviewed policies, examined a sample of inmate case files, and reviewed evaluations of rehabilitation programs.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at October 12, 2018, and the Ministry's actions up to that date. We found no change in status of the three remaining recommendations—the Ministry had partially implemented the recommendations.

3.1 Lack of Progress to Monitor Rehabilitation Programs and Rates of Re-offending

We recommended that the Ministry of Corrections and Policing (formerly known as the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) monitor the proportion of inmates accessing planned rehabilitations programs before the inmates are released into the community and enhance access to rehabilitation if required. (2008 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement August 28, 2008)

Status – Partially Implemented

We recommended that the Ministry of Corrections and Policing (formerly known as the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) monitor re-offending rates in relation to rehabilitation programs to better evaluate its rehabilitation of inmates. (2008 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement August 28, 2008)

Status – Partially Implemented

The Ministry did not effectively monitor the proportion of inmates accessing planned rehabilitation programs, or re-offence rates in relation to rehabilitation programs.

In early 2018, the Ministry hired additional correctional staff to monitor offender case management and began using a spreadsheet to monitor and track various information about inmates, including risk assessments, eligibility for rehabilitation programs, and the rehabilitation programs completed by inmates. However, the Ministry did not have a process to monitor the proportion of inmates accessing planned rehabilitations programs before the inmates are released into the community.

The Ministry also maintains inmate information in its IT system (Criminal Justice Information Management System). However, the Ministry developed a spreadsheet to

track information about inmates because of lack of system functionality in its IT system. It used the spreadsheet to monitor inmate rehabilitation programs.

Our testing of 30 items in the spreadsheet found the information for seven items did not agree with information in the Ministry's IT system. Inaccurate information in the spreadsheet limits the effectiveness of the Ministry's monitoring of rehabilitation programming.

Consistent with our 2015 follow-up, the Ministry continued to work on developing functionality within its IT system to analyze, evaluate, and report on information related to inmates and their rehabilitation. Management indicated that the delay in improving the IT system's functionality was due to the significant amount of time required to complete such work. At October 2018, the Ministry had not established a deadline for completing these IT system improvements.

We found that the Ministry's monitoring and reporting of re-offending rates in relation to rehabilitation programs was limited to predominantly one correctional centre, and only for specific programs. As we reported in 2015, management indicated that it planned to expand these processes province-wide. The Ministry expects to complete this expansion by March 31, 2019.

The Ministry cannot effectively monitor inmates' access to rehabilitation programs or re-offence rates without appropriate monitoring processes and accurate information. Without appropriate monitoring processes, correctional facilities cannot make necessary adjustments to enhance inmates' access to programs—increasing the risk of rehabilitation programs not meeting inmates' needs, and reducing their successful re-entry into society.

3.2 Compliance with Policy Inconsistent

We recommended that the Ministry of Corrections and Policing (formerly known as the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) consistently comply with its policies to assess inmates' needs (primary and secondary) and plan relevant programs. (2008 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement August 28, 2008)

Status – Partially Implemented

The Ministry did not consistently follow its policy surrounding assessment of inmates' needs, nor always give inmates relevant rehabilitation programs consistent with those assessments.

The Ministry's case management policy requires correctional staff to complete assessments of inmate's risks and needs within 28 days of an inmate's admission to a correctional facility. In 2017-18, the stay of inmates ranged from 1 day to 1,923 days, with inmates staying an average length of 172 days.

For 9 of 30 inmate case files we tested, correctional staff did not complete the inmate assessments consistent with policy guidelines. For these inmates, correctional staff did assessments between 15 days to 120 days later than the guidelines expect. The expected length of stay for these nine inmates was between 65 to 573 days. In addition, we found



that for 7 of these 30 files, correctional facilities did not provide inmates with relevant programs (based on their assessment) before their release into the community.

While the Ministry hired additional correctional staff in 2018 to monitor offender case management, the Ministry does not have an effective mechanism to monitor timely completion of inmate assessments.

As described in **Section 3.1**, correctional staff began using a spreadsheet in 2018 to monitor and track information relating to inmate risk assessments. However, the spreadsheet did not track dates for completing assessment of inmates' needs. The Ministry only maintained this information in its IT system—emphasizing the need for the Ministry to complete development of functionality in this system.

The Ministry indicated that it was reviewing its risk assessment and case management processes. This included evaluating which rehabilitation programs are effective across Canada. The Ministry plans to use this analysis to evaluate changes to its processes to improve how it addresses inmates' needs. Management also indicated that they plan to work with correctional staff to identify ways to improve the timeliness of inmate assessments, and to provide correctional staff with training addressing case management practices.

If the Ministry does not assess inmates' needs within a reasonable period, it increases the risk of the Ministry not providing inmates with relevant rehabilitation programming before their release to the community. Inmates that do not receive relevant rehabilitation programming are at higher risk of re-offending.